

**THE
HOLY
BIBLE**

In the Language of Today

**AN
AMERICAN
TRANSLATION
by William F. Beck**

*The Holy Bible in the Language of Today:
An American Translation*

. . . a rare combination of meticulous scholarship and readability. Dr. William F. Beck, thoroughly trained in both Hebrew and Greek, spent most of his professional life on this distinctive translation. He examined hundreds of ancient manuscripts, newly discovered papyri, and archaeological findings—every available shred of evidence—to make his translation accurate, precise, and true to the exact meaning of the original texts. On the other hand, he was just as concerned “to have God speak to the hearts of people in their language.” The result is a translation true to the original texts that makes the Scriptures come alive for today’s reader.

This gifted Bible scholar admired the warmth and color of the ancient Hebrew language as well as the Koiné Greek of the New Testament, the language of the people in Jesus’ day. He labored faithfully to translate these special qualities of the original Bible languages into the English of Twentieth Century Christians.

(Continued on back flap)

(Continued from front flap)

During his life, Dr. Beck published a variety of materials to help people better understand the Bible including a textbook on New Testament manuscripts and a harmony of the Gospels, but *The Holy Bible in the Language of Today: An American Translation* is considered his crowning achievement. He died in 1976 soon after completing his work on the Old Testament. He had finished his translation of the New Testament thirteen years before.

Holman Bible Publishers
Nashville, TN

ISBN-0-87981-082-3

**Praise for *The Holy Bible in the Language of Today:*
*An American Translation:***

“No Bible communicates to Americans as well as Beck’s.”

—Norm Lewis
Director of Ministries
Western Conservative Baptist Seminary

“I’m glad you undertook the big task of printing it. I consider it the best of the modern translations and we shall do what we can to promote it.”

—Editor
The Lutheran Journal

“We are enjoying our new Bible, the most readable copy we have had, ever. We love it. It’s my work Bible now.”

—A pastor in Oregon

“This new translation is long overdue. . . . We are going to make it available through our Bible-Science program, because we believe that it is sound in its theology and is a translation in the language of the people.”

—*Bible-Science Newsletter*

THE HOLY BIBLE

In the Language of Today

AN AMERICAN TRANSLATION

by WILLIAM F. BECK

Holman Bible Publishers
Nashville

U.S. Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Bible. English. Beck. 1976.
The Holy Bible in the language of today.

I. Beck, William F. II. Title.
BS195.B33 220.5'2 77-3429
ISBN-0-87981-082-3

Published by
Holman Bible Publishers
Nashville, Tennessee 37234

Copyright © 1976 by Mrs. William F. Beck. All rights reserved.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 86 85 84 83 82 81
Printed in the United States of America



This is the word for "cross" in papyrus 75, our oldest manuscript of Luke. It is found in this special form at Luke 9:23; 14:27; 24:7.

If you spell out this Greek word, it is *stauron*. But the letters *au* are omitted and their omission is indicated by the line above the word. Then the *r*, which in Greek has the form of a *p*, is superimposed on the *t* so that we have a head suggesting a body on a cross.

"Cross" is the only word in the manuscript selected for such a special design. The Savior, crucified for us, is the reason why the Bible was written—

and why it is here translated.

READ THIS BIBLE

Out of the heavens God comes to us in our Bible—
in the Old Testament

He promises His Son as the Lamb
that substitutes for us sinners
and gives His life to pay for our sins.

in the New Testament

His Son becomes our flesh and our sins,
dies for our sins to make us righteous,
rises from the dead and gives us everlasting life.

This is the truth God's Spirit is telling every sinner—
to win a sinner, we say what the Spirit says
and say it in the sinner's language.

In this Bible the Spirit talks to us
exactly as he did in the Hebrew and Greek text
but here in the language of our hearts.

Read this Bible
look at your Savior on the cross,
believe His blood washes you clean from every sin,
and live with Him forever!

William F. Beck

P R E F A C E

The Holy Bible in the Language of Today, an American Translation by Dr. William F. Beck, has already been acclaimed by scholars as a readable and faithful translation of both Old and New Testament texts. The New Testament was published first in 1963; now it is possible to release the Old and New Testaments in one volume.

Dr. Beck, well trained in both Hebrew and Greek, spent the major portion of his professional life translating the Bible, meticulously working through ancient manuscripts and newly discovered papyri to get the exact meaning from the original texts. The results of his labors are immediately apparent in this translation into simple, precise English.

William F. Arndt, noted New Testament scholar and co-translator of *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, calls Dr. Beck's translation a grand piece of work. Other scholars have echoed this commendation.

Dr. Beck was not content to confine his translation to the *textus receptus* of the beloved King James Version. Rather, he diligently compared many of the 5,000 manuscripts of the New Testament, including recent discoveries which have illuminated the meaning of the sacred text. He examined every scrap of lexicographical, grammatical, and archaeological evidence.

The passion of the translator's life was to make God's Word clear to everyone, to tell the gospel message in such a way that no one can fail to understand it. His goal was "to have God talk to the hearts of people in their language."

Dr. Beck completed his translation of the Old Testament in 1966, the year of his death. From 1971 to 1975, Dr. Elmer B. Smick, Professor of Old Testament at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts, and Dr. Erich H. Kiehl of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, carefully went over Dr. Beck's translation, making both stylistic alterations and changes dictated by the latest manuscript evidence.

Dr. Beck appreciated the warmth and earthiness of the ancient Hebrew as well as the Koine Greek of the New Testament, the street language of the people, and he and his scholarly collaborators sought to render Holy Scripture into equivalent English idiom. As the Lord Jesus took on human flesh to identify Himself with needy men, so the Bible, as Dr. Beck envisioned it, must speak to us with our Lord's vital touch. The translators also realized the international significance of the English language, which over 250 million people now employ as their mother tongue and which 600 million more can understand.

In addition to the labors of Professors Smick and Kiehl, the final task of preparing Dr. Beck's manuscript for publication fell to the Revs. Herman Otten and Phillip B. Giessler. In addition, suggestions were made by such scholars as Walter A. Maier, Jr., Robert D. Preus, Martin H. Scharlemann, Raymond F. Surburg, James Voelz, Harold Buls, G. Waldemar Degner, Robert Hoerber, Horace Hummel, and Oswald Skov.

The publisher takes great pride in presenting this excellent translation to the Christian world.

The Names and Order of the Books of the OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

THE OLD TESTAMENT

	Page		Page
Genesis	1	Ecclesiastes	768
Exodus	63	Songs	778
Leviticus	113	Isaiah	785
Numbers	149	Jeremiah	868
Deuteronomy	199	Lamentations	948
Joshua	243	Ezekiel	956
Judges	272	Daniel	1018
Ruth	304	Hosea	1037
I Samuel	309	Joel	1049
II Samuel	349	Amos	1054
I Kings	384	Obadiah	1064
II Kings	423	Jonah	1066
I Chronicles	461	Micah	1069
II Chronicles	497	Nahum	1077
Ezra	539	Habakkuk	1081
Nehemiah	551	Zephaniah	1085
Esther	569	Haggai	1089
Job	579	Zechariah	1091
Psalms	622	Malachi	1103
Proverbs	733		

THE NEW TESTAMENT

	Page		Page
Matthew	1	Philemon	273
Mark	44	Hebrews	274
Luke	71	James	286
John	116	I Peter	291
Acts	149	II Peter	296
Romans	191	I John	299
I Corinthians	208	II John	304
II Corinthians	224	III John	305
Galatians	235	Jude	306
Ephesians	242	Revelation	308
Philippians	248		
Colossians	252		
I Thessalonians	256		
II Thessalonians	260	Psalms for Different Needs and Occasions	329
I Timothy	262	We Learn from the Psalms	332
II Timothy	267	Maps	341
Titus	271		

**THE
OLD TESTAMENT**

THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES

COMMONLY CALLED

GENESIS

God Creates the World

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ¹The earth was desolate and uninhabitable, and it was dark on the deep sea, but God's Spirit hovered over the waters.

²Then God said, "Let there be light!"^a And there was light. ³God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. ⁴and God called the light day and the darkness night. Evening came and then morning—the first day.

⁵Then God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate them."¹ ⁶God made the expanse and separated the water below the expanse from the water above it. And so it was. ⁷God called the expanse the sky. Evening came and then morning—the second day.

⁸God said, "Let the waters under the sky come together in one area, and let the dry ground appear." And so it was. ⁹God called the dry ground land, and the water that had gathered sea. And God saw it was good.

¹⁰God said, "Let the earth produce grass, plants bearing seeds, and fruit trees above the ground that bear their own kind of fruit with their seeds in it." And so it was. ¹¹The earth produced grass,

plants bearing their own kind of seeds, and trees that bear their own kind of fruit with their seeds in it. And God saw it was good. ¹²Evening came and then morning—the third day.

¹³Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, to mark appointed signs, times, days, and years, ¹⁴and to serve as lights in the expanse of the sky to shine on the earth." And so it was. ¹⁵God made two large lights, the larger one to control the day and the smaller one to control the night, and the stars. ¹⁶And God put them in the expanse of the sky to shine on the earth ¹⁷and to control day and night and separate the light from the darkness. And God saw it was good. ¹⁸Evening came and then morning—the fourth day.

¹⁹God said, "Let there be swarms of living things swimming in the water and birds flying around in the air over the earth." ²⁰And so God created the big sea monsters and every kind of living creature moving around and living in swarms in the water and every kind of winged bird. And God saw they were good. ²¹God blessed them and said, "Produce young and multiply and fill the water in the sea, and let there be many birds on the earth."

¹
^{3 3 Co 4:8}
^{11-12 Heb}
^{6:7}

^a The New Testament in many places quotes or alludes to verses and phrases from the Old Testament. Words in italics are quoted in the New Testament. The center-column references, listed by chapter and verse on each page where these occur, show where such a quotation is to be found in the New Testament.

²²Evening came and then morning—the fifth day.

²⁴God said, "Let the earth produce different kinds of living creatures: cattle, creeping things, and wild animals." And so it was. ²⁵And God made the different kinds of wild animals, the different kinds of cattle, and all kinds of things that creep on the earth. And God saw they were good.

²⁶Then God said, "Let us make man in *Our image, like Ourselves*, that they might rule over the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, and the cattle, over all the earth and everything that moves on the earth."

²⁷And God created man in *His image*: in God's image He created him; He created them male and female. ²⁸And God blessed them. "Have children," God told them, "and multiply and fill the earth and control it; and rule over the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, and every living thing that moves on the earth."

²⁹"I give you," God said, "every plant that has seeds anywhere on the earth and every tree that has fruit with its seeds. They will be your food. ³⁰And I give all green plants as food to all the land animals, to all the birds in the air, and to everything that moves and lives on the earth." And so it was.

³¹And God saw that everything He made was very good. Evening came and then morning—the sixth day.

2 And so the heavens and the earth and everything in them were finished.

¹On the seventh day, God finished from all His work of creating; and He stopped working on the seventh day. ²And God blessed the

seventh day and made it holy because on that day He stopped from all the work He did in creating the world.

God Makes Man

"This is the history of heaven and earth when they were created in the day when the LORD God made earth and heaven. ¹There was yet on earth no shrub in the field, and no plant had come up yet in the field, because the LORD God had not let it rain on the ground. (There was no man to work the ground.) ²And so springs would gush from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground.

³The LORD God formed man out of the ground and breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and so man became a living being.

⁴The LORD God planted a garden in Eden in the east, and there He put the man He formed. ⁵The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—a delight to see and good for food—and the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and bad.

⁶A river started in Eden to water the garden, and outside it divided into four branches. ⁷The name of the first was Pishon. It flowed around in the whole country of Havilah, where there was gold. ⁸And the gold of that country was good. There were also bdellium and onyx stones. ⁹The name of the second river was Gihon. It flowed around in the whole country of Cush. ¹⁰The name of the third river was Tigris. It flowed east of Assyria. And the fourth river was the Euphrates.

¹¹The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to

²⁶ Cf 1:26;

²⁷ Ja 3:9

²⁷ Cf 1:26;

²⁸ Mt 19:4;

²⁸ Mk 10:6

²

² Heb 4:4;

⁷ 10

⁷ 1 Co 15:

⁹ 45-47

⁹ Rv 2:7; 22:

^{2, 14, 19}

work it and take care of it. ¹⁶The LORD God gave the man an order: "Eat as you like from any tree in the garden. ¹⁷but don't eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and bad. The day you eat from it you will certainly die."

¹⁸Then the LORD God said, "It isn't good for the man to be alone. I will make him a helper such as he needs."

¹⁹When the LORD God had formed out of the ground every animal in the field and every bird in the air, He brought them to the man to see what he would call them, and whatever the man called a certain living being that became its name. ²⁰And so the man gave a name to all the cattle, the birds in the air, and every wild animal. But no helper such as he needed was found for the man.

²¹So the LORD God had the man fall into a deep sleep, and while he was sleeping, He took out one of his ribs and filled up its place with flesh. ²²Out of the rib He had taken from the man the LORD God made a woman and brought her to the man.

²³"Now this is bone from my bones," the man said, "and flesh from my flesh. She will be called woman because she was taken from man." ²⁴*This is why a man leaves his father and his mother and lives with his wife, and they become one flesh.* ²⁵The man and his wife were both naked but didn't feel ashamed before each other.

Adam and Eve Sin

3 The snake was the smartest of all the wild animals the LORD God had made. He asked the woman, "Did God really say, 'Don't eat from any tree in the garden?'"

²"We may eat of the fruit of the

trees in the garden," the woman answered the snake. ³"But God did say, 'Don't eat of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden, and don't touch it, or you will die.'"

⁴"You're not going to die," the snake told the woman. ⁵"No, God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you'll be like God and know what is good and bad."

⁶When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good to eat, a delight to look at, and what anyone would want in order to get wise, she took some of its fruit and ate it. Then she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

⁷Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked. They sewed together leaves from a fig tree and made skirts for themselves.

⁸At the time of day when there was a breeze, they heard the LORD God walking in the garden, and the man and his wife hid from the LORD God among the trees in the garden. ⁹The LORD God called the man. "Where are you?" He asked him.

¹⁰"I heard You in the garden," he answered, "and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid."

¹¹"Who told you you are naked?" He asked him. "Did you eat some fruit of the tree I ordered you not to eat?"

¹²"The woman You gave me," the man answered, "she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

¹³Then the LORD God asked the woman, "What did you do?"

"The snake tricked me," the woman answered, "and so I ate."

¹⁴Then the LORD God said to the snake, "Because you did this, cursed are you among all the

26 Mt 10:5;

Mk 10:7;

1 Co 8:10;

Eph 5:31

3

1 Rv 12:9;

20:2

4 2 Co 11:3

13 2 Co 11:3

animals, tame and wild. You will crawl on your belly and eat dirt all your life. ¹⁵And I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your descendants and her Descendant. He will crush your head, and you will bruise His heel."

¹⁶To the woman He said, "I will give you much trouble when you're pregnant, and in pain you will give birth to children. You will long for your husband, and he will rule over you."

¹⁷To the man He said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate some fruit of the tree when I ordered you, 'Don't eat of it,' cursed is the ground on account of you. Weary from work you will eat your food as long as you live. ¹⁸The ground will grow thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants in the field. ¹⁹In the sweat of your face you will eat bread till you go back to the ground, because you were taken from it. You are dust and will turn back to dust."

²⁰The man called his wife Eve^b because she became the mother of every living person.

²¹The LORD God made tunics from skins for the man and his wife and clothed them.

²²Then the LORD God said, "See, man has become like one of Us by knowing what is good and bad. But now I don't want him to reach and take fruit also from the tree of life and eat it and so live forever." ²³So the LORD God sent him out of the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴He drove the man out and placed Cherubim east of the garden of Eden with flaming swords whirling to

guard the way to the tree of life.

Cain and Abel

4 The man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and had a child by the name of Cain; and she said, "I have gotten a man, the LORD."

²Then she had another child, Abel, Cain's brother. Abel grew up to be the shepherd of a flock, but Cain became a man who worked the ground.

³After some time Cain brought some products of the ground and made an offering to the LORD. ⁴And Abel also brought some firstborn animals of his flock, especially some of the fat pieces. The LORD looked kindly at Abel and his offering. ⁵but He didn't look kindly at Cain and his offering. Then Cain got very angry and wouldn't look up.

⁶"Why are you angry," God asked Cain, "and why are you looking down. Isn't it true that if you do right you are accepted? ⁷But if you don't do right, sin is crouching at your door and wants to get you; but you should control it."

⁸Cain said to his brother Abel, ⁹"Let's go outside."^c While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

¹⁰Then the LORD asked Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?"

"I don't know," he answered. "Should I watch over my brother?"

¹¹"What did you do?" He asked. "Your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground. ¹²And now you are cursed and must leave the ground that has opened her mouth to drink your brother's blood drop-

15 Ro 16:20;
Rv 12:9
17-18 Heb
6:8
22 Rv 2:7; 22:
2, 14, 19
24 Rv 2:7; 22:
2, 14, 19
4
4 Heb 11:4
10 Jn 5:4

^b "Living" or "Life"

^{c-c} Supplied from Gk and other versions: lacking in Heb

ping from your hands. "When you work the ground, it will no longer give you what it can produce. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth."

"My punishment is more than I can stand," Cain told the LORD. "Today You are driving me from the land, and I must hide from You and be a restless wanderer on the earth, and anyone who finds me can kill me."

"The LORD told him, "No,^d anyone who kills Cain will be punished seven times." And the LORD put a mark on Cain to keep anyone who met him from killing him.

"Cain went away from the LORD and lived in the land of Wandering, east of Eden. "Cain and his wife had a child by the name of Enoch. And Cain built a town and called the town Enoch, after his son.

"Enoch was the father of Irad. Irad was the father of Mehujael. Mehujael was the father of Methushael, and Methushael was the father of Lamech.

"Lamech married two women. The name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other was Zillah. "Adah was the mother of Jabal. He was the father of those who live in tents and have cattle. "His brother's name was Jubal. He was the father of all who play the lyre and the pipe. "Zillah was the mother of Tubal-cain, who by hammering made all kinds of cutting instruments of copper and iron. Tubal-cain's sister was Naamah.

"Lamech said to his wives:

"Adah and Zillah, listen to me;
Lamech's wives, hear what I say:

I killed a man for wounding me

and a young man for bruising me.

"If Cain is avenged seven times,
then Lamech seventy-seven times."

Seth

"Adam and his wife had another son, and she called him Seth, saying, "Since Cain killed Abel, God has given me another child in his place." "Seth also had a son, and he called him Enosh.

Then people started to preach in the LORD's name.

Adam's Descendants

5 This is a record of Adam's descendants. When God created man, He *made him like God*. "He created them male and female. And when He created them, He blessed them and called them man.

"When Adam was 130, he had a son who was like himself, the image of himself, and he called him Seth. "After Seth was born, Adam lived 800 years and had sons and daughters. "And Adam lived to be 930 and then died.

"When Seth was 105, he became the father of Enosh. "After Enosh was born, Seth lived 807 years and had sons and daughters. "And Seth lived to be 912 and then died.

"When Enosh was 90, he became the father of Kenan. "After Kenan was born, Enosh lived 815 years and had sons and daughters. "And Enosh lived to be 905 and then died.

"Kenan was 70 when he became the father of Mahalalel. "After Mahalalel was born, Kenan lived 840 years and had sons and daughters. "And Kenan lived to be

5
1 Jk 2:9
2 Mt 19:4
Mt 10:6

^d Gk and other versions: Heb Therefore

910 and then died.

¹⁵Mahalalel was 65 when he became the father of Jared. ¹⁶After Jared was born, Mahalalel lived 830 years and had sons and daughters. ¹⁷And Mahalalel lived to be 895 and then died.

¹⁸Jared was 162 when he became the father of Enoch. ¹⁹After Enoch was born, Jared lived 800 years and had sons and daughters. ²⁰And Jared lived to be 962 and then died.

²¹When Enoch was 65, he became the father of Methuselah. ²²After Methuselah was born, Enoch walked with God for 300 years and had sons and daughters. ²³Enoch lived to be 365. ²⁴Enoch walked with God, and then he was gone, because God took him away.

²⁵When Methuselah was 187, he became the father of Lamech. ²⁶After Lamech was born, Methuselah lived 782 years and had sons and daughters. ²⁷And Methuselah lived to be 969 and then died.

²⁸When Lamech was 182, he had a son, ²⁹and he called him Noah,^e saying, "He will comfort us as we work and are weary because the LORD has cursed the ground." ³⁰After Noah was born, Lamech lived 595 years and had sons and daughters. ³¹And Lamech lived to be 777 and then died.

³²When Noah was 500, he became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

The World Is Wicked

6 When the people on earth were getting numerous and they had daughters,^f the sons of God saw how beautiful the

daughters of men were, and they married the women they liked best.

¹Then the LORD said: "My Spirit ¹will not forever struggle with people for what is right,^f because they are flesh. But they will still have a hundred and twenty years."

²In those days, as well as later, there were tyrants^g on the earth, when the sons of God had intercourse with the daughters of men and they had children. These were the heroes who were famous in the old days.

³The LORD saw that the people on earth were very wicked and in their hearts were always thinking only evil. ⁴Then the LORD was sorry He made people on the earth, and He felt sick at heart. ⁵"I will wipe off the ground the people I created," the LORD said, "people, cattle, creeping things, and birds of the air, because I'm sorry I made them."

⁶But the LORD was gracious to Noah.

⁷This is the history of Noah. Noah was altogether righteous among the people of his time. Noah walked with God. ⁸And Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

⁹But the world was getting worse and worse in God's sight and was filled with crime. ¹⁰And God saw the world was corrupt because everybody on earth was living a rotten life.

The Ark

¹So God said to Noah: "I have decided all people must die because they've filled the world with crime, and now I'm going to destroy them and the world. ²Make yourself an

^e "Rest"

^{f-f} Gk shall not abide forever in these people

^g Or giants; meaning of Heb word uncertain; see Num. 13:33

ark of cypress wood. Make rooms in the ark. And cover it inside and outside with pitch. ¹⁵This is how you should make it: The ark should be four hundred fifty feet long, seventy-five feet wide, and forty-five feet high. ¹⁶Make an opening for light in the ark, extending eighteen inches from the top. Put the door in the side of the ark. Build it with lower, second, and third stories. ¹⁷I'm going to bring a flood on the earth to destroy every being that breathes and lives under the sky. Every being on earth must die. ¹⁸But I will make My covenant with you: You will go into the ark, and your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives will go with you. ¹⁹Take two of every kind of living being, of every animal, into the ark to keep them alive with you; they must be a male and a female. ²⁰Two of every kind of bird, every kind of animal, and every kind of creature moving on the ground will come to you to be kept alive. ²¹And get every kind of food to be eaten, and gather it for yourself and for them to eat."

²²Noah did this. He did it just as God ordered him.

7 "You and your whole family," the LORD told Noah, "go into the ark, because I have seen how righteous you are before Me among the people of today. ²Take with you seven pairs of every clean animal, a male and its female; and a pair of the unclean animals, a male and its female; ³also seven pairs of the birds of the air, male and female, so they can have young ones living all over the earth. ⁴There are seven days left; after that I will make it rain forty days, and I will wipe off the earth every living thing I made."

⁵Noah did just as the LORD ordered him.

The Flood Comes

⁶Noah was 600 years old when the flood came on the earth. ⁷Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives went into the ark to escape from the water of the flood. ⁸Clean animals and unclean animals, birds, and everything that moves on the earth ⁹came in pairs, male and female, to Noah into the ark as God had ordered Noah.

¹⁰After 7 days the flood came on the earth. ¹¹In the 600th year of Noah's life, on the 17th day of the second month, all the springs of the great deep broke open, the windows of heaven were opened. ¹²and for 40 days rain poured down on the earth. ¹³That was the day when Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, with Noah's wife and his sons' three wives, went into the ark. ¹⁴they and every kind of wild and tame animal, every kind of living thing that moves on the earth, every kind of fowl, every bird that flies. ¹⁵Two by two they came to Noah into the ark, everything that had in it the breath of life. ¹⁶Those that came in were male and female; some of every kind of animal came as God had ordered him. Then the LORD closed the door behind him.

¹⁷For 40 days the flood came on the earth, and the waters increased and raised the ark so that it rose high above the ground. ¹⁸As the waters grew to be mighty and very deep on the earth, the ark floated on the water. ¹⁹The waters rose so very, very high on the earth they covered all the high mountains under the sky. ²⁰rising 23 feet above the mountains and covering them.

²¹Every living thing that moved on

6-7 Mt 24:
28-29;
Lk 17:27

earth died, birds, tame and wild animals, everything that swarms over the earth, and all the people. ²Everything that had in its nostrils the breath of life and that was on dry land died. ³He wiped out everything that lived on the earth, men, animals, creeping things, and birds in the air; they were wiped off the earth. Only Noah and those with him in the ark stayed alive.

The Flood Ends

⁴When the waters had risen on the earth for 150 days,

8 ¹God thought of Noah and every wild and tame animal with him in the ark, and so God made a wind blow over the earth, and the water went down. ²The springs of the deep and the windows of heaven were closed, and the rain pouring from the sky was stopped. ³Little by little the waters continued to leave the earth, so that at the end of the 150 days ⁴the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat on the 17th day of the seventh month. ⁵The waters got less and less till the 10th month; on the first day of the 10th month the tops of the mountains could be seen.

⁶After 40 days Noah opened the window he made in the ark, ⁷and he let a crow fly out. It flew back and forth till the water on the ground dried up. ⁸Meanwhile he let a dove fly away to find out if the waters on the ground had gone down. ⁹But when the dove couldn't find a place to set her foot because there was water all over the earth, she came back to him to the ark, and he put out his hand and took her back into the ark with him.

¹⁰After waiting another 7 days, he

again let the dove fly out of the ark. ¹¹The dove came to him toward evening, and there in her beak was the fresh-plucked leaf of an olive tree! Then Noah knew the waters had gone down on the earth.

¹²After waiting another 7 days he let the dove fly out once more, but she didn't come back to him again.

¹³By the first day of the first month of the 601st year of Noah the waters on the ground had dried up. Then Noah took off the roof of the ark, looked out, and saw the ground was dry. ¹⁴On the 27th day of the second month the ground was dry.

¹⁵Then God spoke to Noah: ¹⁶"Come out of the ark with your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives. ¹⁷Bring out with you every kind of living being that is there with you, birds, animals, and everything that moves on the earth, and let them spread out on the earth, have young, and multiply on the earth."

¹⁸Noah went out with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives. ¹⁹All the animals, all the creeping things, and all the birds, everything that moved on the earth, went out of the ark according to their families.

²⁰Noah built an altar to the LORD and took some of every kind of clean animal and every kind of clean bird and made a burnt offering on the altar. ²¹When the LORD smelled the pleasant odor, He said to Himself, "Never again will I curse the ground on account of man although man's thoughts are evil from his youth, and never again will I kill every living thing as I did. ²²As long as the earth stands, sowing and harvesting, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will not stop."

The Covenant

9 God blessed Noah and his sons. "Have children and become many and fill the earth," He told them. "All the animals on earth and all the birds in the air, that is, everything that moves on the ground, as well as all the fish in the sea, will fear you and be terrified by you. You are given control over them. You may eat anything that lives and moves. I have given you all of them as I have given you the green plants. 'But don't eat meat in which there is life, that is, blood. 'And I will certainly punish anyone, animal or man, who pours out your blood and kills you; I will punish anyone who kills another. 'If anyone kills a man, he should be killed by a man because God made man like Himself. 'But you are to have many children, spread out, and become many on the earth."

"God told Noah and his sons: "I am making My covenant with you and your children after you and with every living being that is with you: birds, domestic animals, and all wild animals that are with you, as many as came out of the ark, yes, all the animals on earth. "I will keep My covenant with you: Never again will the waters of a flood destroy every living being; never again will there be a flood to destroy the world."

"God said: "This is the sign of the covenant I am making with you and every living being that is with you, for all ages to come: "I have put My rainbow in the clouds to be a sign of the covenant between Me and the world. "Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow is seen in the clouds, "then I will remember My covenant with

you and every living being of every kind of flesh: Never again will the waters become a flood and destroy every living thing. "When the rainbow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember there's an everlasting covenant between God and every living being of every kind of flesh on earth. "That," God told Noah, "is the sign of the covenant I am making with everything that lives on earth."

Noah's Curse and Blessing

"Noah's sons, who came out of the ark, were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And Ham was the father of Canaan. "These were Noah's three sons from whom came the people who spread out all over the earth.

"Noah started as a farmer and planted a vineyard. "He drank some wine and got drunk and uncovered himself in his tent. "When Ham, Canaan's father, saw his naked father, he told his two brothers about it outside.

"But Shem and Japheth took the outer garment and, laying it over their shoulders, walked backwards and covered their naked father. With their faces turned away they didn't see their naked father.

"Noah woke up from his wine and found out what his youngest son had done to him. "Then Noah said, "Cursed be Canaan; he will be the lowest slave to his brothers." "And he added: "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem. Canaan will be his slave. "May God make room for Japheth, and may he live in the tents of Shem; and let Canaan be his slave."

"Noah lived 350 years after the flood. "And Noah lived to be 950 and then he died.

Descendants of Noah's Sons

10 The following are the descendants of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, who were born to them after the flood.

¹Japheth's sons were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshek, and Tiras. ²Gomer's sons were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. ³Javan's descendants were Elishah, Tarshish, the people of Cyprus and of Rhodes.^b ⁴From these the maritime nations spread out in their countries, each according to his language, according to their families in their nations.

⁵Ham's sons were Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. ⁶Cush's sons were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. And Raamah's sons were Sheba and Dedan. ⁷Cush was the father of Nimrod. He began to be a great man on the earth. ⁸He was a great hunter before the LORD, and so people said, "Like Nimrod, a great hunter before the LORD." ⁹Nimrod began his kingdom with Babylon, Erech, and Accad, all of them in the country of Babylonia. ¹⁰From that country he went out to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-ir and Calah, ¹¹and Resen, which was a great city, between Nineveh and Calah. ¹²From Egypt came the people of Lud, Anam, Lehab, Naphtuh, ¹³Pathrus, Casluh (from these came the Philistines), and Caphtor. ¹⁴Canaan's first son was Sidon, and then he had Heth. ¹⁵Also the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, ¹⁶the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites, ¹⁷the Arvadites, the Zemarites, the Hamath-

ites. Later the Canaanite families spread out ¹⁸till the territory of the Canaanites extended from Sidon toward Gerar as far as Gaza and toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim as far as Lasha. ¹⁹These were Ham's sons according to their families and languages, in their countries and nations.

²⁰Shem, Japheth's older brother, also had children, being the ancestor of all the sons of Eber.ⁱ ²¹Shem's sons were Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram. ²²Aram's sons were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. ²³Arpachshad had a son named Shelah, and Shelah had a son named Eber. ²⁴Eber had two sons; the name of the one was Peleg,^j because in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan. ²⁵Joktan was the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazar-maveth, Jerah, ²⁶Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ²⁷Obal, Abimael, Sheba, ²⁸Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were Joktan's sons. ²⁹They lived from Mesha toward Sephar, as far as the eastern mountains. ³⁰These were Shem's descendants according to their families and languages in their countries according to their nations.

³¹These were the families of Noah's sons according to their descent among the nations. And from these the nations branched out in the world after the flood.

The Confusion of Languages

11 The whole world talked one language with the same words. ²As people traveled in the east, they found a plain in the country of Babylonia and lived there.

"Come," they said to one

^bGk: Heb Dodanites ⁱThat is, the Hebrews ^j"Division"

another. "let us make bricks, and let us burn them hard." They used bricks for stones and asphalt for mortar.

"Then they said, "Come, let us build a city for ourselves and a tower with its top in the sky, and let's make ourselves famous to keep from getting scattered all over the earth."

⁵The LORD came down to see the city and the tower the people built. "Look, one people!" the LORD said. "And they all talk one language. And this is only the beginning of what they'll do. Now nothing they plan to do will be too hard for them. ⁷Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, so that nobody can understand what the other one is saying."

⁸So the LORD scattered them from there all over the earth, and they had to stop building the city. ⁹This is why it was called Babylon, because the LORD there made a babble of the language of the whole world. And from that place the LORD scattered them all over the earth.

Shem to Abram

¹⁰The following are Shem's descendants. Shem was 100 when he became the father of Arpachshad 2 years after the flood. ¹¹After Arpachshad was born, Shem lived 500 years and had sons and daughters.

¹²When Arpachshad was 35, he became the father of Shelah. ¹³After Shelah was born, Arpachshad lived 403 years and had sons and daughters.

¹⁴When Shelah was 30, he became the father of Eber. ¹⁵After Eber was born, Shelah lived 403 years

and had sons and daughters.

¹⁶When Eber was 34, he became the father of Peleg. ¹⁷After Peleg was born, Eber lived 430 years and had sons and daughters.

¹⁸When Peleg was 30, he became the father of Reu. ¹⁹After Reu was born, Peleg lived 209 years and had sons and daughters.

²⁰When Reu was 32, he became the father of Serug. ²¹After Serug was born, Reu lived 207 years and had sons and daughters.

²²When Serug was 30, he became the father of Nahor. ²³After Nahor was born, Serug lived 200 years and had sons and daughters.

²⁴When Nahor was 29, he became the father of Terah. ²⁵After Terah was born, Nahor lived 119 years and had sons and daughters.

²⁶When Terah was 70, he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran. ²⁷The following are Terah's descendants. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran, and Haran was the father of Lot. ²⁸While his father Terah was with him, Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, in the country of his relatives.

²⁹Abram and Nahor married. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran, who was the father of Milcah and Iscah. ³⁰Sarai was barren; she had no children.

³¹Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot, Haran's son, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and together they left Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the country of Canaan. But when they came to Haran, they lived there.

³²Terah lived to be 205 and then died in Haran.

In the Promised Land

12 The LORD said to Abram, "Leave your land, your relatives, and your father's home, and go to a land I will show you.

"I will make you a great nation. I will bless you and give you a great name, and you will be a blessing. "I will bless those who bless you, and curse anyone who curses you, and in you all the people in the world will be blessed."

"Abram went as the LORD told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was 75 when he left Haran. "Abram took his wife Sarai, his brother's son Lot, all the property they had gotten and the persons they had added in Haran, and they left to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to Canaan, "Abram traveled through the country to the place at Shechem, as far as the oak of Moreh. The Canaanites were then in the country.

"The LORD appeared to Abram. "I'm going to give this land to your descendants," He said. Abram built an altar for the LORD, who had appeared to him.

"Then he moved away to the hills east of Bethel, and he put up his tent there with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east, and there he built an altar to the LORD and called on the LORD's name. "Again he moved, and he kept on moving toward the Negeb.

Abram in Egypt

"Then there was a famine in the land, and the famine was so severe that Abram went down to Egypt to stay there awhile. "When he was almost in Egypt, Abram told his wife Sarai, "I know you're a

beautiful woman. "When the Egyptians see you, they'll say, 'This is his wife,' and they'll kill me but let you live. "Please say you're my sister, so that I'll get along well because of you and stay alive thanks to you."

"When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw the woman was very beautiful. "And when Pharaoh's officers saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and the woman was taken to Pharaoh's palace. "For her sake he treated Abram well, and Abram got flocks and herds, male donkeys, men and women slaves, female donkeys, and camels.

"But the LORD inflicted great diseases on Pharaoh and his household on account of Sarai, Abram's wife. "Then Pharaoh summoned Abram. "What did you do to me?" he asked. "Why didn't you tell me she's your wife?" "Why did you say, 'She's my sister,' and let me take her to be my wife? Well, there's your wife; take her and get out."

"Then Pharaoh gave his men orders about him, and they escorted him, his wife, and everything he had out of the country.

Lot Leaves Abram

13 So Abram left Egypt with his wife and everything he had and went to the Negeb, and Lot went with him. "Abram was very rich in cattle and silver and gold. "Moving from place to place, he went from the Negeb as far as Bethel, to the place between Bethel and Ai where his tents had been the first time. "the place where he had first made the altar, and there Abram called on the LORD's name.

"Lot, who went with Abram, also had flocks, herds, and tents. "And

12
1 Act 7:3
3 Act 3:25
G1 3:8, 16
4 Heb 11:9
7 Act 7:5;
(G1 3:16)

the land couldn't support them if they lived together, because they had too much livestock to be able to live together. "The men who watched Abram's herds quarreled with those who watched Lot's herds. And the Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the country at that time.

"Please let's have no quarrel," Abram told Lot. "between me and you or between my herdsmen and yours, because we're related. "Doesn't the whole land lie before you? Please move away from me. If you go left, I'll go right, and if you go right, I'll go left."

"Then Lot looked and saw how the whole Jordan valley was well watered all the way to Zoar (before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah); it was like the LORD's garden or like the land of Egypt. "So Lot chose the whole Jordan valley for himself. He moved eastward, and so they parted from each other. "Abram lived in the land of Canaan while Lot lived in the cities of the valley, and he moved his tents as far as Sodom. "The men of Sodom were wicked, sinning against the LORD in the worst way.

"After Lot moved away from Abram, the LORD said to Abram: "Look around, and from where you are turn north, south, east, and west. "because all the land you can see I will give you and your descendants forever. "I will give you many descendants, like the dust on the ground. If anyone could count the dust of the ground, your descendants might also be counted. "Go and travel through the length and breadth of the land, because I will give it to you."

"Abram moved his tents and went to live by the oaks of Mamre at

Hebron, and there he built an altar to the LORD.

Abram Rescues Lot

14 When Amraphel was king of Babylonia, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of Nations, "they went to war against Bera, king of Sodom, Birsha, king of Gomorrah, Shinab, king of Admah, Shemeber, king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (Zoar). "All these gathered as allies in the valley of Siddim, now the Salt Sea. "For 12 years they had been subject to Chedorlaomer, and in the 13th year they rebelled. "In the 14th year Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him came and defeated the Rephaites at Ashteroth-karnaim, the Zuzites at Ham, the Emites in the plain of Kiriathaim, "and the Horites in the hill country of Seir, going as far as El-paran, near the desert. "Turning there, they came to the Fountain of Justice (Kadesh), and they defeated the whole territory of the Amalekites and also the Amorites living at Hazazon-tamar.

"Then the king of Sodom, the king of Gomorrah, the king of Admah, the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (Zoar) went out and marched into battle against them in the valley of Siddim. "against Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, Tidal, king of Nations, Amraphel, king of Babylonia, and Arioch, king of Ellasar, five kings against four. "The valley of Siddim was full of asphalt pits, and as the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah were fleeing, they fell into them, and the rest fled to the hills.

"The enemy took all the livestock and all the food in Sodom and Gomorrah and left. "As they left,

¹³
15 Acts 7:5;
(G1.3.18)

they also carried off Lot and his livestock. He, the son of Abram's brother, had been living in Sodom.

¹³One who escaped came and told Abram the Hebrew, who was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, a brother of Eshcol and Aner, Abram's allies.

¹⁴When Abram heard that his nephew had been captured, he called out his 318 trained men, born in his own household, and pursued the enemy as far as Dan. ¹⁵He and his men divided their forces and attacked them at night, defeated them, and pursued them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus. ¹⁶He brought back all the livestock and also brought back his nephew Lot and his livestock with the women and the other people.

¹⁷After Abram had defeated Chedorlaomer and the kings with him and had come back, the king of Sodom came to the valley of the Plain (which is the king's valley) to meet him. ¹⁸Then Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God Most High, brought out bread and wine ¹⁹and blessed Abram. "May God Most High, Maker of heaven and earth, bless Abram," he said. ²⁰"and blessed be God Most High, who put your enemies in your hands."

Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

²¹The king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the people, but keep the livestock for yourself."

²²"I have raised my hand to the LORD, God Most High, Maker of heaven and earth," Abram answered the king of Sodom. ²³"and I've sworn not to take even a thread or a shoestring. I won't take anything that's yours, so you can't say, 'I made Abram rich.' ²⁴Nothing

except what the men have eaten and what belongs to the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their share."

Promise and Covenant

15 After this the LORD spoke to Abram in a vision. "Don't be afraid, Abram." He said. "I am your Shield. Your reward is very great."

²⁵"Lord GOD," Abram asked, "what will You give me? I'm leaving no children, and Eliezer of Damascus will get the property of my household. ²⁶You have given me no children," Abram added, "so a member of my household will get my property."

"He will not get it," the LORD told him, "but your own child will get your property." ²⁷Then He took him outside. "Now look at the sky," He said, "and count the stars if you can." Then He told him, "That is how many descendants you will have."

"Abram believed the LORD, and so the LORD counted it to him as righteousness.

²⁸"I am the LORD," He told him, "who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to be your own."

"Lord GOD," he asked, "how can I be sure I will get it?"

²⁹"Get Me a three-year-old cow," He told him, "a three-year-old she-goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon."

³⁰He got all these for Him. Then he cut each animal into halves and laid each half against the other; but he didn't cut the birds in pieces. "The birds of prey came down on the meat of the animals, but Abram drove them away.

³¹As the sun was going down,

14
17-20 Heb 7:
1-10
22 Rv 10:5-6
15
5 Ro 4:18;
Heb 11:12
8 Ro 4:2, 9,
22-24;
Gl 3:6;
Je 2:20

Abram fell into a deep sleep. A great darkness came over him and terrified him.

"You should know," God told Abram, "your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, where they will be slaves and be mistreated four hundred years. But I will punish the people they will serve, and after that they will leave and take much property with them. You yourself will die in peace and be buried at a ripe old age. The fourth generation will come back here—not till then will the sin of the Amorites have run its course."

After the sun had gone down and it was very dark, there was a smoking firepot and a flaming torch that passed between those pieces.

On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram. "To your descendants," He said, "I will give this land from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates: the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites."

Hagar

16 Abram and his wife Sarai had no children. Sarai had an Egyptian maid by the name of Hagar. So Sarai said to Abram, "Since the LORD didn't let me have any children, marry my maid. Maybe she can give me a son."

Abram did what Sarai told him. After Abram had lived in Canaan 10 years, Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar, her Egyptian maid, and gave her to her husband Abram to be a wife. He lay with

Hagar, and she conceived. When she saw she was going to have a child, she despised her mistress.

"I've been wronged," Sarai told Abram, "and it's your fault. I put my maid in your arms. Now that she sees she's going to have a child, she despises me. May the LORD decide whether I am wrong or you."

"Your maid is in your hands," Abram told Sarai. "Do what you like with her." Then Sarai mistreated her so that she ran away.

The LORD's Angel found her at a spring of water in the desert, the spring on the way to Shur. "Hagar, Sarai's maid," He said, "where did you come from, and where are you going?"

"I'm running away," she answered, "from my mistress Sarai."

"Go back to your mistress," the LORD's Angel told her, "and humbly submit to her." The LORD's Angel added: "I will give you many descendants, too many to be counted." Then the LORD's Angel told her: "You're going to have a child; you'll have a son, and you'll call him Ishmael because the LORD heard your cry of distress. He will be like a wild donkey; his hand will be against everybody, and everybody's hand will be against him. He will live in defiance of all his relatives."

She gave the LORD who talked to her the name El-roi,^k because she said, "Have I here really seen the back of Him who cares for me?" "This is why the well is called Beer-lahai-roi.^l It's there between Kadesh and Bered.

Hagar bore a son for Abram, and his son that Hagar bore him

12 Rv 11:11
13-14 Act 7:
6-7
16 1 Th 2:16
18 Rv 9:14:
18:12

^k "God-Who-Cares-for-Me"

^l "Well-of-the-Living-One-Who-Cares-for-Me"

Abram called Ishmael. ¹⁶Abram was 86 when Hagar bore him Ishmael.

The Covenant Reaffirmed

17 When Abram was 99, the LORD appeared to him. "I am God Almighty," He told Abram. "Live before Me and be perfect. ²And I will make My covenant with you, and I will make you the father of very many people."

³Then Abram bowed down to the ground, and God told him: "This is My covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations, ⁴and you will no more be called Abram but Abraham,^m because I made you a father of many nations. ⁵I will give you very many descendants and make nations of you, and kings will come from you. ⁶I will keep My covenant with you and with your descendants after you in their ages—an everlasting covenant it will be. I will be your God and the God of your descendants. ⁸I give you and your descendants this land you're living in as a stranger: all Canaan is to belong to them forever. And I will be their God."

⁹Then God said to Abraham: "You and your descendants in the coming ages should keep My covenant. ¹⁰This is My covenant you and your descendants after you should keep with Me: Circumcise every male. ¹¹Circumcise the flesh of your foreskins, and that will be the mark of My covenant with you. ¹²When a boy is eight days old, circumcise every one of your males in the coming ages, whether he is a boy born in the household or bought from any foreigner who is not one of

your descendants. ¹³Circumcise every boy born in your household or bought with your money. And My covenant in your flesh will be an everlasting covenant. ¹⁴If a man is not circumcised, that person must be cut off from his people. He has broken My covenant.

¹⁵"Don't call your wife Sarai." God told Abraham: "her name is now Sarah.ⁿ ¹⁶I will bless her and by her give you a son; I will bless her, and she will be the mother of nations and of kings of people."

¹⁷Abraham bowed down to the ground and laughed. "Does a man have a child when he's a hundred years old?" he said to himself. "And is Sarah going to have a child when she's ninety?" ¹⁸Then Abraham said to God, "May Ishmael live before You!"

¹⁹"Yes," God said. "but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac, and I will keep My covenant with him, an everlasting covenant with his descendants. ²⁰I have heard you also in regard to Ishmael. I will bless him and give him children, so that he will be the father of very many people, of twelve princes, and of a great nation. ²¹But My covenant I will keep with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear for you at this time next year."

²²When God finished talking to him, He went up from Abraham.

²³Abraham took his son Ishmael and everyone born in his household and everyone he had bought, every male in his household, and circumcised their foreskin that day as God had told him. ²⁴Abraham was 99 when he was circumcised. ²⁵and his son Ishmael was 13 when he was

17
5 Ro 4:17
7 Lk 1:55;
G1 2:16;
2 Co 8:16;
Rv 21:3, 7
8 Acth 7:5;
(G1 2:16);
2 Co 8:16;
Rv 21:3, 7
10-11 Adm
7:5;
Ro 4:11

^m Abram: "High Father"; Abraham: "Father of Many"

ⁿ "Princess"

circumcised. ²⁶Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised the same day. ²⁷And all the men of his household, whether born in the household or bought from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

Abraham Has Visitors

18 The LORD appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre as he was sitting at the entrance of his tent during the heat of the day.

²He looked up, and there he saw three men standing not far from him. When he saw them, he ran from his tent door to meet them, and he bowed down to the ground. ³"My lord," he said, "if you're kind to me, please don't pass by your servant. ⁴Somebody will get a little water; then wash your feet, and rest under the tree. ⁵Let me get a bit of food for you to refresh yourselves; then go on. It was for this you were passing by your servant."

"Do as you say," they answered.

"So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah. "Quick," he said, "get three measures of fine flour, knead it, and make cakes."

⁷Then Abraham ran to the herd, took a calf that was tender and good, and gave it to his servant, who quickly prepared it. ⁸Then he took cheese and milk and the veal he had prepared and set these before them. Then he waited on them under the tree as they ate.

"Where is your wife Sarah?" they asked him.

"There in the tent," he answered.

"*"I will certainly come back to you."* He said, "*at about the time it takes to have a child, and then your wife Sarah will have a son.*"

Sarah was listening at the tent door behind Him. ¹¹Abraham and Sarah were old and getting along in years, and Sarah had had her change of life. ¹²And so Sarah laughed to herself. "Now that I'm worn out," she said, "and my lord is old too, should I again enjoy myself?"

¹³The LORD asked Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Can I really have a child when I'm so old?' ¹⁴*Is anything too wonderful for the LORD? I will come back to you at about the time it takes to have a child, and then Sarah will have a son.*"

¹⁵"I didn't laugh," Sarah lied, being afraid.

"No," He said, "you did laugh."

Abraham Prays for Sodom

¹⁶The men started to leave. They looked down at Sodom as Abraham was walking with them to see them off.

¹⁷The LORD said: "Should I hide from Abraham what I'm going to do, ¹⁸seeing that Abraham is bound to become a great and mighty nation and *in him all the people in the world will be blessed?* ¹⁹I have known him as a friend, so that he may order his children and his family after him to keep the LORD's ways and do what is right and fair, so that the LORD may do for Abraham what He promised him."

²⁰The LORD continued: "The outcry over Sodom and Gomorrah is so great, and their sins are so terrible, ²¹I'm going down to see whether or not they've done everything I'm told by those who cry to Me. I want to know."

²²The men left and went on to Sodom while Abraham kept stand-

18
10 Ro 9:9
12 1 Pt 3:6
14 Mt 19:26;
Lk 10:27;
Lk 1:37;
Ro 9:9
18 Acts 3:25;
Gl 3:8, 16

ing before the LORD. ²³Abraham came closer and asked, "Will You really wipe out the good with the bad? ²⁴What if there are fifty good people in the town? Will You wipe them out? Won't You forgive the place for the fifty good people who are there? ²⁵Far be it from You to do such a thing, to kill the good people with the bad and treat the good like the bad! Far be it from You! Will not the Judge of the whole world do right?"

²⁶"If I find fifty good people in the town of Sodom," the LORD said, "I'll forgive the whole place for their sake."

²⁷"Here I dare to talk to my LORD, and I'm dust and ashes," Abraham answered. ²⁸"What if there are five less than fifty good people? Will You destroy the whole city on account of the five?"

"I'll not destroy it if I find forty-five there," He said.

²⁹Abraham talked to Him again. "What if forty are found there?" he said.

"For the sake of forty I'll not do it," He answered.

³⁰"Don't be angry, my LORD, if I talk again," he said. "Suppose thirty are found there."

"If I find thirty there," He answered, "I'll not do it."

³¹"Here I dare to talk to my LORD," he said. "Suppose twenty are found there."

"For the twenty I'll not destroy it," He answered.

³²"Don't be angry, my LORD," he said, "if I talk just once more. Suppose ten are found there."

"I'll not destroy it," He answered, "for the sake of the ten."

³³When the LORD finished talking to Abraham, He left, and Abraham went home.

Angels Rescue Lot

19 The two angels came to Sodom in the evening as Lot was sitting by the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he got up to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. ²"Please, sirs," he said, "come to your servant's home, and stay overnight and wash your feet. You may then get up early and go on your way."

"No," they said, "we're going to spend the night in this open place."

³But he urged them so much they came with him and went into his home. He made a dinner for them, baked bread without yeast, and they ate it.

⁴Before they lay down, the men of the town of Sodom, young and old, everybody from all parts of the town, surrounded the house ⁵and called to Lot. "Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so we can rape them."

⁶Then Lot came out to them to the doorway, shutting the door behind him. ⁷"Please, my friends, don't do wrong," he said. ⁸"Here are my two daughters, who have never had relations with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and do what you like with them, but don't do anything to these men, seeing they have come under the shelter of my roof."

⁹"Get out of the way!" they said and added: "This one came as a foreigner among us, and now he wants to be our judge! We'll treat you worse than those men." They pushed hard against Lot and came to the door to break it down.

¹⁰But the men inside reached out, pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door. ¹¹Then they struck the men in front of the door of

the house with blindness, both young and old, so they couldn't find the door.

"Then the men asked Lot, "Do you have anyone else here? In-laws, sons, daughters, or anyone else you have in the town—get them out of here. "because we're going to destroy this place. The outcry to the LORD against it is so loud the LORD has sent us to destroy it."

"So Lot went out to talk to his sons-in-law, who were marrying his daughters. "Come," he said, "leave this place, because the LORD is going to destroy the town." But his sons-in-law thought he was joking.

"When the morning dawned, the angels hurried Lot along. "Get up," they said, "take your wife and your two daughters who are with you, or you'll be wiped out when the town is punished."

"He still hesitated. So the men took him, his wife, and his two daughters by their hands—the LORD was sparing him—and took them away and put them outside the town. "After they brought them out, one said, "Save yourself. Don't look behind you or stop anywhere in the valley; flee to the hills, or you'll be destroyed."

"Oh, no, Lord," Lot answered. "You're so good to Your servant. You've been very kind to me in saving my life. But I can't escape to the hills: disaster will overtake me, and I'll die. "Here's this town near enough to flee to; and it's small. Let me flee there. Isn't it small? Then I'll stay alive."

"I'll let you have your way also in this matter," he answered, "and not destroy the town you're talking about. "Hurry, flee there, because

I can't do anything till you get there." This is why the town is called Zoar.^o

"The sun rose over the country as Lot came to Zoar; "then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire, coming from the LORD in heaven. "And He destroyed those towns, the whole plain, all who lived in the towns and anything that grew on the ground.

"But Lot's wife looked back and became a pillar of salt.

"Early in the morning Abraham came to the place where he had stood before the LORD. "When he looked down at Sodom and Gomorrah and the whole plain in the valley, he saw thick smoke rise from the ground like the smoke of a smelting furnace.

"And so when God destroyed the towns in the valley, He thought of Abraham and took Lot out of the destruction when He destroyed the towns where Lot was living.

Lot and His daughters

"But Lot left Zoar because he was afraid to live there, and with his two daughters he went to live in the hills. He and his two daughters lived in a cave.

"The older one said to the younger, "Our father is old, and there's no man in the country to marry us as everybody else is doing in the world. "Come, let's give our father a drink of wine, and we'll lie with him, so that our father will give us children."

"That night they made their father drink wine, and the older one went and lay down with her father, and he didn't know about her lying down or getting up.

10
24-25 Lk 17:
29:
Rv 14:10;
Rv 20:10
26 Lk 17:33
28 Rv 9:2

^o "Little"

³The next day the older one said to the younger, "Last night I lay with my father. Let's make him drink wine tonight too. Then you go and lie with him, so that our father will give us children."

³⁵So that night too they made their father drink wine, and the younger one went and lay with him, and he didn't know about her lying down or getting up.

³⁶So Lot's two daughters became pregnant from their father. ³⁷The older one had a son and called him Moab. He is the father of the Moabites of today. ³⁸The younger one also had a son and called him Ben-ammi. He is the father of the Ammonites of today.

The King of the Philistines

20 Abraham left that place and moved to the Negeb and lived between Kadesh and Shur.

While he was living as a foreigner in Gerar, ²Abraham said of his wife Sarah, "She's my sister." And so Abimelech, king of Gerar, sent men who took Sarah away. ³But in a dream one night God came to Abimelech. "You will die," He told him, "because you took that woman. She is a man's wife."

⁴Abimelech had not yet come near her. "LORD," he asked, "will you kill a people even if they're innocent? ⁵Didn't he tell me, 'She's my sister,' and didn't she say, 'He's my brother'? My conscience was clear and my hands were clean when I did this."

⁶"Yes, I know your conscience was clear when you did this," God told him in the dream. "And to keep you from sinning against Me, I didn't let you touch her. ⁷Now, give the man's wife back to him, because

he's a prophet and will pray for you; save your life. But if you don't give her back, you should know that you and all who belong to you will die."

⁸Early in the morning Abimelech called all his servants and told them all about this, and they were very much frightened.

⁹Then Abimelech called Abraham. "What did you do to us?" he asked him. "And how did I sin against you that you should bring such a great sin on me and my kingdom? You've done things to me that shouldn't be done." ¹⁰Abimelech also asked him, "What did you have in mind when you did this?"

"Abraham said, "I thought, certainly nobody fears God here, and they'll kill me for my wife. ¹²Then too she really is my sister, my father's daughter but not my mother's, and she married me. ¹³When God made me wander from my father's home, I told her, 'Do me a favor: When we come to any place, say of me, 'He's my brother.''"

¹⁴Then Abimelech took sheep, cattle, and men and women servants and gave them to Abraham and also gave his wife Sarah back to him. ¹⁵"My country is open to you," Abimelech said. "Live anywhere you like."

¹⁶He told Sarah, "I've given your brother a thousand shekels of silver. That will cover what I did, so that nobody who is with you will think any more of it and you will be justified in every way."

¹⁷Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his maids, so they could have children. ¹⁸On account of Abraham's wife Sarah the LORD had

made it impossible for any woman in Abimelech's household to have children.

Isaac Is Born

21 The LORD was kind to Sarah as He had said, and the LORD did for Sarah what He promised. ²Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son when he was old, at the time God mentioned.

³The son who was born to him, whom Sarah gave him, Abraham called Isaac. ⁴Abraham circumcised his son Isaac on the eighth day as God had ordered him to do. ⁵Abraham was 100 when his son Isaac was born.

⁶"God has made me laugh," Sarah said, "and everybody who hears about this will laugh about me. ⁷Who would ever have said about Abraham," she added, "Sarah nurses children? Yet I have borne a son for him in his old age."

⁸The child grew and was weaned. On the day Isaac was weaned, Abraham gave a great dinner.

Hagar and Ishmael Expelled

⁹Sarah saw that the son of Abraham and Hagar the Egyptian was mocking. ¹⁰"Get rid of that slave and her son," she told Abraham, "because that slave's son must not get a part of what my son Isaac inherits."

¹¹Abraham didn't like this at all because of his son Ishmael. ¹²But God told Abraham, "Don't feel bad about the boy and your slave woman. Do everything Sarah tells you, because Isaac's children will be called your children. ¹³Also the slave woman's son I will make a nation because he's your child."

¹⁴Abraham got up early in the morning, took some bread and a skin

of water, and gave them to Hagar, putting them on her shoulder. He gave the boy to her and sent her away.

She left and wandered in the desert near Beer-sheba. ¹⁵When the water in the skin was used up, she quickly laid the boy under one of the bushes. ¹⁶Then she went and sat down as far away as you stand when you shoot arrows, thinking, "I don't want to see the boy die." So she sat at a distance and wept bitterly.

¹⁷God heard the boy crying, and God's ANGEL called to Hagar from heaven. "What's the matter, Hagar?" he asked her. "Don't be afraid: God has heard the boy crying where he lies. ¹⁸Get up, lift the boy to his feet, and hold him by your hand, because I'm going to make him a great people."

¹⁹Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. She went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink.

²⁰God was with the boy. He grew up and lived in the wilderness and learned to shoot with a bow. ²¹He lived in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother got a wife for him from Egypt.

Treaty with King of Philistines

²²At that time Abimelech and Phicol, general of his army, said to Abraham, "God is with you in everything you do. ²³Here and now, swear to me by God that you will not deceive me, my offspring, or my descendants but will treat me and the country you've been a foreigner in as kindly as I treated you."

²⁴"I swear," Abraham said. ²⁵Then Abraham complained to Abimelech because Abimelech's servants had taken a well of water

21
4 Acts 7:8
10 Gl 4:30
12 Ro 9:7;
Heb 11:18

away from him.

²⁶“I don’t know who did this,” Abimelech answered. “You didn’t tell me, and I didn’t hear about it till today.”

²⁷Abraham took some sheep and cattle and gave them to Abimelech, and the two made a treaty. ²⁸Then Abraham put seven she-lambs by themselves.

²⁹“What are these seven she-lambs you put by themselves?” Abimelech asked Abraham.

³⁰“By accepting these seven she-lambs from me,” he answered, “you declare I dug this well.” ³¹The place is called Beer-sheba^P because both of them swore there.

³²After they made the treaty at Beer-sheba, Abimelech and Phicol, general of his army, left to go back to the country of the Philistines.

³³Abraham planted a tamarisk at Beer-sheba, and there he called on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God.

³⁴Abraham lived a long time as a foreigner in the country of the Philistines.

God Tests Abraham’s Faith

22 After this God tested Abraham. “Abraham!” God said to him.

“Yes,” he answered.

²“Take your only son Isaac, whom you love,” He said. “Go to the country of Moriah, and sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the hills I will point out to you.”

³Early the next morning Abraham harnessed his donkey. He took two of his servants and his son Isaac with him. He cut the wood for the burnt offering. Then he started out for the place God told him about.

“On the third day Abraham looked and saw the place in the distance. ⁵Then Abraham said to his servants, “Stay here with the donkey. I and the boy will go over there and worship. Then we’ll come back to you.”

⁶Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and laid it on his son Isaac while he took the fire and the knife in his hands. And both were walking together.

⁷Then Isaac said to his father, “My father.”

“Yes, my son,” he answered.

“We have the fire and the wood,” said Isaac, “but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?”

⁸“God will provide Himself with a sheep for the burnt offering, my son,” Abraham answered. And so both walked on together.

⁹When they came to the place God had mentioned, Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood. Then he bound his son Isaac and laid him on the wood on the altar.

¹⁰As Abraham reached for the knife and took it in his hand to sacrifice his son, “the LORD’s Angel called to him from heaven. “Abraham! Abraham!”

“Yes,” he answered.

¹²“Don’t lay your hands on the boy,” He said, “and don’t do anything to him. Now I know you fear God: you didn’t refuse to give Me your only son.”

¹³When Abraham looked around, he saw behind him a ram caught by his horns in a bush. So Abraham went and got the ram and sacrificed him as a burnt offering instead of his son.

¹⁴Abraham called that place The-LORD-Will-Provide. Today we still

22
2 Heb 11:17;
MI 3:17
9-10 Jn 2:21
12 Heb
11:17;
MI 3:17

^P “Well-of-Oath”

say, "On the mount of the LORD it will be provided."

¹⁰Again the LORD's Angel called to Abraham from heaven: ¹¹"I swear by Myself, says the LORD, because you did this and didn't refuse to give up your only son. ¹²I will bless you richly and give you many descendants, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore, and your descendants will capture the city of their enemies. ¹³In your Descendant all the people on earth will be blessed, because you did what I told you."

¹⁴Then Abraham went back to his servants, and together they started out and came to Beer-sheba. And Abraham lived in Beer-sheba.

¹⁵After this Abraham was told: "Your brother Nahor and his wife Milcah also have had children. ¹⁶The first was Uz, then his brother Buz, then Kemuel, Aram's father, Chesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel." ¹⁷And Bethuel was the father of Rebekah. These were the eight sons of Abraham's brother Nahor, by Milcah. ¹⁸Nahor's concubine, whose name was Reumah, had the following children: Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

Sarah Dies

23 Sarah lived to be 127 ¹and died in Kiriath-arba, which is Hebron, in Canaan. Abraham went in to mourn and weep for Sarah.

²After bowing over the face of his dead wife, Abraham got up and said to the Hittites, "I'm living as a foreigner with you. Let me have a burial place with you where I can bury my dead."

³The Hittites answered Abraham, "Now listen to us, my lord. You are a prince of God among us.

Bury your dead one in the best of our burial places. None of us will refuse to let you bury your dead one in his burial place."

⁴Abraham got up and bowed before the Hittites, the people of the country. ⁵"If you want to let me bury my dead one," he told them, "do as I say, and urge Ephron, Zohar's son, for me ⁶to let me have the cave of Machpelah that he has at the edge of his land. He should sell it to me for its full price as a burial place among you."

⁷Ephron was sitting among the Hittites. Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham while all the Hittites who used to go into the gate of the town listened: ⁸"No, my lord, listen to me. I'm giving you the field and the cave in it; I'm giving it to you, and my people are witnesses. I'm giving it to you. Bury your dead."

⁹Bowing before the people of the country, Abraham ¹⁰said to Ephron while the people of the country were listening, "If you're willing, please listen to me. I'm paying you the price of the field; take it from me, and I'll bury my dead one there."

¹¹"Sir, listen to me," ¹²Ephron answered Abraham. ¹³"The land is worth four hundred shekels of silver—what is that between us? Bury your dead!"

¹⁴Abraham did as Ephron suggested: he weighed out to Ephron the sum he stated while the Hittites were listening, 400 shekels of silver according to the standard weight of the merchant. ¹⁵And so Ephron's field at Machpelah, east of Mamre, with the cave in it and all the trees on the whole area of the field were sold ¹⁶to Abraham and became his property in the sight of all the Hittites who used to come into the gate of the town.

16-17 Lk
1:72;
Heb 6:13-
14; 11:12
18 Acts 3:25;
G1 2:8, 16
23
4 Heb. 11:9
16-17 Acts
7:16

¹⁹After this, Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave in the field of Machpelah, east of Mamre, which is Hebron, in Canaan. ²⁰And the field with the cave in it, which once belonged to the Hittites, now continued to be Abraham's property for a burial place.

A Wife for Isaac

24 Abraham was old and far along in years, and the LORD had blessed Abraham in every way.

¹Then Abraham told the oldest servant of his household, who managed everything he had, "Please put your hand under my thigh, and I'll have you swear by the LORD, the God of the heavens and the God of the earth, you will not get my son a wife from the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I'm living 'but will go to my country and my relatives and there get a wife for my son Isaac."

²"Suppose the woman doesn't want to come away with me to this country," the servant asked him. "Should I then take your son back to the country you came from?"

³"Oh, no, don't take my son back there," Abraham told him. ⁴"The LORD, the God of the heavens, who took me from my father's home and the country of my relatives, who talked to me and swore to me, 'I will give this country to your descendants,' will send His angel ahead of you, and you will get a wife there for my son. ⁵And if the woman doesn't want to come back with you, you're not bound anymore by what you swear to me; only don't take my son back there."

⁶The servant put his hand under

the thigh of his master Abraham and swore to him in the matter.

⁷The servant took 10 of his master's camels and all kinds of valuable articles of his master with him. Then he left and came to Nahor's town⁹ in Mesopotamia. "Outside the town he had the camels kneel down by the well in the evening, at the time when women go out to draw water.

⁸Then he prayed, "LORD, God of my master Abraham, please give me success today, and so be kind to my master Abraham. ⁹Here I'm standing by a spring of water, and the daughters of the men of the town are coming out to draw water. ¹⁰And now, when I say to a girl, 'Please hold your jar for me, and let me drink,' and she says, 'Drink and I'll water your camels too,' let her be the woman You have chosen as the right one for Your servant Isaac; and this will assure me You're being kind to my master."

¹¹He hadn't finished praying when Rebekah came out. She was a daughter of Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Abraham's brother Nahor. And her jar was on her shoulder. ¹²The girl looked very beautiful. She wasn't married—no man had lived with her. She went down to the spring, filled her jar, and came up again.

¹³The servant ran to her. "Please give me a little drink from your jar," he asked her.

¹⁴"Drink, sir," she said, and quickly lowering her jar to her hand, she gave him a drink. ¹⁵When she finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will also draw water for your camels till they finish drinking." ¹⁶She hurried to empty her

⁹ Haran

jar into the trough, ran back to the well to draw more water, and drew for all his camels ²¹while the man was watching her without saying a word to see whether or not the LORD had made his errand successful.

²²When the camels finished drinking, the man took out a gold nose ring weighing half a shekel and two gold bracelets weighing 10 shekels for her wrists.

²³"Whose daughter are you?" he asked. "Please tell me, is there room in your father's house for us to stay there tonight?"

²⁴"I'm the daughter of Bethuel," she answered him. "the son of Milcah and Nahor. ²⁵We have plenty of straw and feed," she told him. "and also a place to stay for the night."

²⁶The man bowed down to the ground and worshiped the LORD: ²⁷"Praise the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who hasn't failed to be kind and faithful to my master. As for me, the LORD has led me on the way to the home of my master's relatives."

²⁸The girl ran and told about these things at her mother's home. ²⁹Rebekah had a brother by the name of Laban. He ran out to the man by the spring. ³⁰He had seen the nose ring and the bracelets on his sister's wrists and heard his sister say,

"This is what the man said to me." And so he came to the man, who was still standing with the camels by the spring. ³¹"Come, you whom the LORD has blessed," he said. "Why do you stand outside? I've made room in the house and a place for the camels." ³²He took the man into the house, unloaded the camels, gave them straw and feed, and gave

him and his men water to wash their feet.

³³But when food was set before him, he said, "I can't eat till I've told you what I have to say."

"Tell us," Laban said.

³⁴"I am Abraham's servant," he said. ³⁵"The LORD has richly blessed my master, so that he is a great man. He has given him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, men and women servants, camels and donkeys. ³⁶My master and his wife Sarah had a son when she was already old, and he has given him everything he has. ³⁷My master made me swear: 'Don't get a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites in whose country I'm living. ³⁸Swear that you will go to my father's home and my relatives and get a wife for my son.' ³⁹I said to my master, 'Suppose the woman will not go with me.' ⁴⁰He answered me, 'The LORD, before whom I have lived, will send His angel with you. He will make your trip successful, and you will get my son a wife from my relatives, from my father's family. ⁴¹After that you will not be bound anymore by what you swear to me. If you go to my relatives and they will not give her to you, you will not be bound anymore by what you swear to me.' ⁴²When I came to the spring today, I prayed, 'LORD, God of my master Abraham, if You will really give me success in this errand I'm on— ⁴³I'm standing by the spring; when a virgin comes out to draw water and I say to her, 'Please give me a little drink from your jar,' ⁴⁴and she tells me, 'Drink and I will also draw water for your camels,' let her be the woman the LORD has chosen as the right one for my master's son.' ⁴⁵I hadn't finished saying this in my

heart when Rebekah with her jar on her shoulder came out and went down to the spring and drew water. 'Please give me a drink,' I asked her. 'She quickly let down her jar and said, 'Drink, and I will also water your camels.' I drank, and she also watered the camels. 'Then I asked her, 'Whose daughter are you?' 'The daughter of Bethuel,' she answered, 'the son of Nahor and Milcah.' Then I put the ring on her nose and the bracelets on her wrists. 'I bowed down to the ground, worshiped the LORD, and praised the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who led me on the right way to get the daughter of my master's relative for his son. 'And now tell me whether or not you intend to treat my master with true kindness, so that I will know what to do.'

³⁰'This is the LORD's doing,' Laban and Bethuel answered. 'We can't say anything for or against it. 'There is Rebekah. Take her and go, and let her be the wife of your master's son as the LORD has said.'

³²When Abraham's servant heard their answer, he bowed down to the ground before the LORD.

³³Then the servant took out articles of silver and gold and garments and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave expensive presents to her brother and mother. 'He and his men ate and drank and then stayed overnight.

When they got up in the morning, he said, 'Let me go to my master.'

³⁵'Let the girl stay with us a few days, let's say ten,' her brother and mother said. 'After that she may go.'

³⁶'Don't delay me,' he told them. 'Now that the LORD has made my

errand successful, let me leave and go to my master.'

³⁷'Let's call the girl,' they said, 'and see what she says.'

³⁸They called Rebekah. 'Will you go with this man?' they asked her.

'I will go,' she said.

³⁹So they let their sister Rebekah and her nurse go with Abraham's servant and his men. 'They blessed Rebekah: 'Our sister,' they said, 'become the mother of millions. And may your descendants conquer the cities of their enemies.'

⁴¹Rebekah and her maids started out, and riding on camels, they followed the man. So the servant took Rebekah with him and left.

⁴²Isaac had come back from Beer-lahai-roi and was living in the Negeb.

⁴³Toward evening Isaac went out into the field to meditate. Looking up, he saw camels coming.

⁴⁴Rebekah looked up too, and seeing Isaac, she dropped down from her camel. 'Who is that man over there coming through the field to meet us?' she asked the servant.

'That is my master,' the servant answered. Then she took her veil and covered herself. 'The servant told Isaac everything he had done.

⁴⁷Isaac took her into the tent of his mother Sarah. And he married Rebekah; and loving her, Isaac found comfort after his mother's death.

Abraham Remarries

25 Abraham married again, and his wife's name was Keturah. 'Abraham and Keturah had the following sons: Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Ishbak, and Shuah. 'Jokshan was the father of Sheba and Dedan. From Dedan

came the Asshurites, the Letushites, and the Leummites. ⁴The descendants of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were Keturah's descendants.

⁵Abraham gave Isaac everything he had. ⁶And to his concubines' sons Abraham gave presents and while he was still living sent them away from Isaac to the countries of the east.

Abraham Dies

⁷Abraham was 175 ⁸when he died. He died at a ripe old age after a long and full life and was laid away with his people. ⁹His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah in the field east of Mamre that had belonged to Ephron, son of Zohar the Hittite. ¹⁰the field Abraham bought from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah.

¹¹After Abraham died, God blessed his son Isaac. Isaac lived near Beer-lahai-roi.

Ishmael's Descendants

¹²These are the descendants of Ishmael, the son of Abraham and Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian maid. ¹³These are the names of Ishmael's sons in the order of their birth: Nebaioth, Ishmael's firstborn, Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, ¹⁴Mishma, Dumah, Massa, ¹⁵Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. ¹⁶These were Ishmael's sons, and these were their names according to their villages and camps—12 leaders of their tribes.

¹⁷Ishmael was 137 when he died and was laid away with his people.

¹⁸His descendants lived in the area from Havilah to Shur, which is

near Egypt, to the border of Asshur. They fought with all their relatives.

Twins

¹⁹This is the history of Isaac, Abraham's son. Abraham was the father of Isaac. ²⁰Isaac was 40 when he married Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, the Aramean of the plain of Aram, and the sister of Laban the Aramean.

²¹Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife because she was barren. And the LORD let him have what he asked: his wife Rebekah conceived.

²²When the children inside her were bumping each other, she said, "If it's like this, what am I here for?" She went to ask the LORD.

²³The LORD told her: "Two nations are in your womb. From you will come two separate people. One people will be stronger than the other; and the older will serve the younger."

²⁴When the time came for the children to be born, there were twins in her womb. ²⁵The first came out red; his whole body was like a hairy coat, and so he was called Esau.^f ²⁶Later, when his brother came out, his hand was holding Esau's heel, and so he was called Jacob.^g Isaac was 60 when they were born.

Esau Sells His Birthright

²⁷When the boys grew up, Esau became an expert hunter, a man of the open country. But Jacob was an orderly man, living in tents. ²⁸Isaac loved Esau because he liked to eat the meat of wild animals, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

²⁹Once Jacob was cooking some food when Esau came in from the

^f "Hairy" ^g "Heel Holder"

field, feeling exhausted. ¹⁰“Please let me swallow some of that red food there—I’m exhausted.” Esau told Jacob. This is why his name was Edom.⁴

¹¹“First sell me your rights as the oldest son.”⁴ Jacob answered.

¹²“I’m going to die.” Esau said. “Then what good are my rights to me?”

¹³“Swear to me first.” Jacob said. Esau swore to him, and he sold his birthright to Jacob.

¹⁴Jacob gave Esau bread and lentils he had cooked. He ate and drank, got up, and went away. And so Esau thought little of his right as the firstborn.

Isaac and the Philistines

26 There was a famine in the country besides the earlier famine that came in Abraham’s time. And Isaac went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines in Gerar.

¹The LORD appeared to Isaac. “Don’t go down to Egypt.” He said. “Live in the country that I tell you.”² Live as a foreigner in this country, and I will be with you and bless you. I will give you and your descendants all these lands. I will do what I swore to do for your father Abraham. “I will give you many descendants, like the stars in the sky, and I will give your descendants all these lands, and in your Descendant all the nations of the earth will be blessed.”³ because Abraham listened to Me and kept My rules, commandments, regulations, and

¹ “Red”

⁴ When the father died, the oldest son became head of the family and generally got twice as much of the inheritance as each of the other children (Deut. 21:15-17). Here this also meant God’s promise to Abraham would be fulfilled through Jacob as the ancestor of Jesus and inheritor of Canaan.

laws.”

⁶So Isaac continued to live in Gerar. ⁷When the men of the place asked about his wife, he answered, “She’s my sister.” He was afraid to say “my wife,” for he thought, “The men of this place will kill me for Rebekah, because she’s beautiful.”

⁸When he had been there a long time, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, looking out of the window, saw Isaac fondling his wife Rebekah. “Abimelech called for Isaac. “So she’s your wife!” he said. “How could you say, ‘She’s my sister?’”

“I thought,” Isaac answered. “I’d have to die on account of her.”

¹⁰“How you’ve treated us!” Abimelech said. “One of the people might easily have lain with your wife, and then you would have made us guilty of a wrong.” “Abimelech gave orders to all his people, saying, “Anyone who touches this man or his wife must be killed.”

¹¹Isaac sowed a crop in that country, and that year he reaped a hundredfold—the LORD was blessing him. ¹²He was more and more successful till he became a very rich man, “owning flocks and herds and many servants.

The Philistines envied him. ¹³and they stopped up all the wells dug by the servants of his father Abraham while he was alive, and they filled them with dirt.

¹⁴“Leave us.” Abimelech told Isaac. “because you’re much too strong for us.” ¹⁵Isaac left and camped in the valley of Gerar and lived there.

33-34 Heb 12:16
26
4 Ro 4:18;
Heb 11:12;
Acts 3:25;
Gl 3:8, 16

“Isaac again dug the wells dug in the time of his father Abraham (the Philistines had stopped them up after Abraham’s death) and gave them the same names his father gave them.

“Isaac’s servants dug in the valley and found a well of running water there. “Then the herdsmen from Gerar quarreled with Isaac’s herdsmen, saying, “This water is ours!” Because they quarreled with him, Isaac called the well Esek.^v

“When they dug another well, there was a quarrel over that too, and Isaac called the well Sitnah.^w “Moving away again, he dug another well, and they didn’t quarrel over it. He called the well Rehoboth,^x saying, “Surely now the LORD has made much room for us to grow in this country.”

“From there he went up to Beer-sheba. “That night the LORD appeared to him, saying, “I am the God of your father Abraham. Don’t be afraid; I am with you and will bless you and give you many descendants on account of My servant Abraham.”

“He built an altar there and called on the LORD’s name. Isaac put up his tents there, and his servants started to dig a well there.

“Abimelech, with his adviser Ahuzzath and Phicol, general of his army, came to him from Gerar.

““Why do you come to me,” Isaac asked them, “when you hate me and drove me away from you?”

““We see clearly,” they said, “that the LORD is with you. So we thought, let us swear to one another, and we will make a treaty with you “that you will not harm us, as we too haven’t touched you and

have been only kind to you and let you go in peace—you who are now one whom the LORD blesses.”

“Isaac made a dinner for them, and they ate and drank. “Early in the morning they swore to one another. Then Isaac let them go, and they parted as friends.

“That same day Isaac’s servants came and told him about a well they dug. “We’ve found water,” they told him. “He called it Sheba; this is why the town is called Beer-sheba to this day.

Esau Marries

“When Esau was 40, he married Judith, the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath, the daughter of Elon the Hittite. “These women were a grief to Isaac and Rebekah.

Jacob Gets Esau’s Blessing

27 When Isaac was old, his eyesight got so poor he couldn’t see. He called Esau, his older son, saying, “My son.”

“Yes,” he answered him.

““You see I’m old,” said Isaac, “and I don’t know when I’m going to die. “Now take your weapons, your quiver and your bow, go out and hunt some game for me. “Then prepare a delicious meal for me, the kind I like, and bring it to me to eat, so that I may bless you before I die.”

“Rebekah was listening while Isaac was talking to his son Esau. Esau went into the fields to hunt and get some game. “Then Rebekah said to her son Jacob, “I just heard your father tell your brother Esau, “Get me some game, and prepare a delicious meal for me to eat; then I will bless you in the presence of the

^v“Quarrel” ^w“Hostility” ^x“Open Places” ^y“Well-of-Oath”

LORD before I die.' 8Now, my son, listen to what I tell you to do. 9Go to the flock and get me two good young goats, and I'll make them a delicious meal for your father, the kind he likes. 10Then you'll take it to your father to eat and have him bless you before he dies."

11"But my brother Esau is a hairy man," Jacob answered Rebekah, "and I'm smooth. 12Suppose my father feels me; he'll think I'm mocking him, and so I'll bring a curse on myself instead of a blessing."

13"Let any curse that falls on you be on me, my son," she told him. "Just do as I say; go and get them for me."

14He went and got the young goats and brought them to his mother, who prepared a delicious meal, the kind his father liked. 15Rebekah took her older son Esau's best clothes, which she had with her at home, and put them on her younger son Jacob. 16She put pieces of skin from the young goats on his hands and on the hairless part of his neck. 17Then she put the delicious meat and the bread she prepared in the hands of her son Jacob.

18And he went to his father and said, "My father."

"Yes," he said, "who are you, my son?"

19Jacob answered his father, "I am Esau, your firstborn son. I did what you told me. Sit up and eat some of my game so that you may bless me."

20"How could you find anything so quickly, my son?" Isaac asked his son.

"The LORD your God brought it to me," he answered.

21"Please come here," Isaac told Jacob, "and let me feel you, my son,

to see if you really are my son Esau or not." 22Jacob went to his father Isaac, who felt him. "The voice is Jacob's," he said, "but the hands are Esau's." 23He didn't recognize him, because his hands were hairy like the hands of his brother Esau. And so he was going to bless him. 24"Are you really my son Esau?" he asked him.

"Yes," he answered.

25"Bring me your meat," he said, "and let me eat some of it, my son, so that I may bless you." He brought it to Isaac, and Isaac ate. He also brought him some wine, and he drank it.

26"Come here," his father Isaac told him, "and kiss me, my son." 27He went up and kissed him, and when Isaac smelled his clothes, he blessed him: "See, my son has the fragrance of a field the LORD has blessed. 28God give you dew of heaven and fertile fields of the earth with plenty of fresh grain and wine. 29May people serve you and nations bow down before you. Be a lord over your brothers; may your mother's sons bow down before you. Cursed be everyone who curses you! And blessed be everyone who blesses you!"

Esau Hates Jacob

30When Isaac had finished blessing Jacob and Jacob had hardly left his father Isaac, his brother Esau came from his hunting. "He too prepared some delicious food and took it to his father.

"Let my father please sit up," he said to his father, "and eat some of his son's game, so that you may bless me."

31"Who are you?" his father Isaac asked him:

"I'm your firstborn son Esau," he answered.

"Extremely excited, Isaac trembled and asked, "Who was it then that hunted game and brought it to me? And I ate some of everything before you came in, and I blessed him. Yes, and he will stay blessed."

"When Esau heard his father say this, he cried out very loud and bitterly, "Bless me too, my father," he asked his father.

"Your brother came in," he said. "He deceived me and took away your blessing."

"Isn't that why his name is Jacob?" he said. "He has cheated me twice now: he got my rights as the firstborn son, and now he has taken away my blessing. Didn't you save a blessing for me?" he asked.

"I made him your master," Isaac told Esau, "and I made all his relatives his slaves. I've given him grain and wine to support him. What, then, can I do for you, my son?"

"Do you have only one blessing, my father?" Esau asked his father. "Bless me too, my father!" And Esau started to cry bitterly.

"His father Isaac answered him: "You will live away from the places where the ground is fertile and the dew falls from the sky. "You will live by your sword and serve your brother. But in time you will shake yourself and throw off his yoke from your neck."

"Esau bore a grudge against Jacob on account of the blessing his father gave him, and Esau said to himself, "It will soon be time to mourn for my father; then I'll kill my brother Jacob."

"When Rebekah was told what her older son Esau was saying, she sent for her younger son Jacob. "Your brother Esau," she told him, "is going to avenge himself and kill you. "Now, my son, listen to me. Run away to my brother Laban at Haran. "and stay with him awhile till your brother's fury cools down "and he isn't angry with you anymore but has forgotten what you did to him. Then I'll send for you and get you from there. Why should I lose both of you in one day?"

"Rebekah said to Isaac, "The Hittite women make my life miserable. If Jacob marries a Hittite woman like these, one of this country, why should I go on living?"

28 Isaac called for Jacob, blessed him, and instructed him. "Don't marry any of the women of Canaan," he told him. "Leave and go to the plain of Aram, to the home of Bethuel, your mother's father, and there marry a daughter of Laban, your mother's brother. "May God almighty bless you and give you many children, so that you will become many people. "May He give you and your descendants Abraham's blessing, so that you possess the land he gave Abraham but where you are a stranger."

"So Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to the plain of Aram, to Laban, Bethuel's son, the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau.

"Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him to the plain of Aram to get a wife there, and as he blessed him, ordered him, "Don't marry any of the women of

⁴Esau would kill Jacob; then Esau would have to be killed for his murder.

Canaan.” and that Jacob obeyed his father and mother and went to the plain of Aram. “Then Esau realized his father Isaac didn’t like the women of Canaan. “So Esau went to Ishmael and married Mahalath, the daughter of Abraham’s son Ishmael and sister of Nebaioth—in addition to the wives he had.

Jacob Dreams

“Jacob left Beer-sheba and started out for Haran. “When he came to a certain place, he stopped there for the night because the sun had gone down. He took one of the stones of the place and laid it under his head and lay down there. “He had a dream in which he saw a ladder set up on the earth. Its top reached up to heaven, and God’s angels were going up and down on it. “And the LORD stood above it. “I am the LORD.” He said. “the God of your grandfather Abraham and the God of Isaac. The land you’re lying on I will give you and your descendants. “Your descendants will be like the dust on the earth, and you will spread out east and west, north and south, and in you, that is, in your *Descendant*, *all the people on earth will be blessed*. “You see I am with you and watch over you everywhere you go and will bring you back to this country because I will not leave you till I do what I promised you.”

“Jacob woke up. And he said, “Certainly the LORD is here, and I didn’t know it.” “A feeling of awe came over him, and he said, “How awesome this place is! This is nothing less than God’s temple. This is the gateway to heaven!”

^a “God’s House”

“Jacob got up early in the morning, took the stone he had placed under his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it. “He called that place Bethel.^a Originally it was called Luz.

“Then Jacob made a vow. “If God will be with me,” he said, “and watch over me where I’m going and give me food to eat and clothes to wear, “so that I come back safely to my father’s home, then the LORD will be my God, “and this stone I set up as a pillar will be God’s house; and I will give You a tenth of everything You give me.”

Rachel

29 Jacob continued on his way and came to the country of the people in the east. “There he saw a well in a field and three flocks of sheep lying near it because the flocks were watered at that well.

The stone over the opening of the well was large. “After all the flocks were gathered there, the shepherds would roll the stone from the opening of the well, water the sheep, and put the stone back in its place on the opening of the well.

“Jacob asked them, “My friends, where do you come from?”

“We are from Haran,” they said.

“Do you know Laban, Nahor’s grandson?” he asked them.

“We know him,” they answered.

“Is he well?” he asked them.

“He is well,” they answered.

“Here comes his daughter Rachel with his sheep.”

“But the day isn’t over at all,” he said. “It isn’t time yet to gather the flocks. Water the sheep, and then go and let them graze.”

²⁹
¹⁴ Acts 3:25;
Gal 3:8, 16

"We can't," they said, "till all the flocks are together and the shepherds roll the stone from the opening of the well. Then we water the sheep."

"While he was still talking to them, Rachel, who was a shepherdess, came with her father's flock. ¹⁰When Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban, his mother's brother, and the flock of Laban, his mother's brother, he went and rolled the stone from the opening of the well and watered the flock of his uncle Laban.

"Then Jacob kissed Rachel and wept. ¹¹Jacob told Rachel he was her father's nephew, Rebekah's son, and she ran and told her father.

"When Laban heard the news about his sister's son Jacob, he ran to meet him. He hugged and kissed him and took him into his home, where Jacob told Laban his whole story.

"You really are my own flesh and blood," Laban told him.

Leah and Rachel

After Jacob stayed with him a month, ¹³Laban asked him, "Should you work for me for nothing just because you're my nephew? Tell me what I should pay you."

"Laban had two daughters. The name of the older one was Leah, and the name of the younger one was Rachel. ¹⁴Leah had no sparkle in her eyes, but Rachel was beautiful in form and looks. ¹⁵Jacob was in love with Rachel. So he said, "I'll work for you seven years for Rachel, your younger daughter."

"It's better I give her to you," Laban said, "than to anyone else. Stay with me."

^b"See, a Son"

²⁰Jacob worked for Rachel 7 years, and they seemed like a few days to him because he loved her.

²¹Then Jacob told Laban, "Give me my wife; my time is up. I want to marry her."

²²So Laban got all the men of the place together and gave a dinner. ²³But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, who married her. ²⁴Laban gave his daughter Leah his servant Zilpah as her maid.

²⁵In the morning he saw it was Leah. "What did you do to me?" Jacob asked Laban. "Didn't I work for you for Rachel? Why did you cheat me?"

²⁶"We don't do such things here," Laban answered. "We don't give the younger daughter in marriage before the older one. ²⁷Finish the bridal week with this daughter; then you will get the other one too by working seven more years for me."

²⁸Jacob did so; he finished the week with Leah. Then Laban's daughter Rachel also was given to him as his wife. ²⁹Laban gave his daughter Rachel his servant Bilhah as her maid. ³⁰And so Jacob married Rachel too, and he loved Rachel more than Leah. And he worked 7 more years for Laban.

Jacob's 11 Children

"When the LORD saw Leah wasn't loved, he let her have children while Rachel had none. ²Leah had a baby boy, and she called him Reuben.^b ³The LORD has seen my misery," she said. ⁴"Now my husband will love me."

"When she had another baby boy, she said, ⁵"The LORD has heard I'm not loved. This is why He gave me

this boy also." And she called him Simeon.^c

¹⁴When she had another baby boy, she said, "This time my husband will feel bound to me because he and I have three sons." So she called him Levi.^d

¹⁵When she had another baby boy, she said, "Now I will praise the LORD." So she called him Judah.^e Then she stopped having children.

30 When Rachel saw she had given Jacob no children, she got jealous of her sister. "Give me children," she told Jacob, "or I'll die."

¹Jacob got angry with Rachel. "Am I in God's place?" he asked. "He kept you from having children."

²"There is my maid Bilhah," she said. "Lie with her. Her children will be mine, and she'll build my family for me." ³So she gave him her maid Bilhah as a wife, and Jacob lay with her. ⁴Jacob and Bilhah had a baby boy. ⁵Rachel said, "Now God has done for me what is right. Yes, He heard me and gave me a son." So she called him Dan.^f

⁶Then Bilhah, Rachel's maid, and Jacob had a second boy. ⁷"I have struggled with God and with my sister," Rachel said, "and I have won." So she called him Naphtali.^g

⁸When Leah saw she wasn't having any more children, she took her maid Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as his wife. ⁹So Zilpah, Leah's maid, and Jacob had a baby boy. ¹⁰Leah said, "How lucky I am!" And she called him Gad.^h ¹¹Zilpah, Leah's maid, and Jacob had another baby boy. ¹²Leah said, "How happy I am! *Women will call*

me happy." So she called him Asher.ⁱ

¹³During the wheat harvest Reuben went out into the field and found some love apples and brought them to his mother Leah.

"Give me some of your boy's love apples," Rachel told Leah.

¹⁴"Isn't it enough you took my husband?" she asked her. "And are you also going to take my boy's love apples?"

"He'll sleep with you tonight for your boy's love apples," Rachel said.

¹⁵That evening, when Jacob came from the field, Leah went out to meet him. "Lie with me," she said; "I've paid for you with my boy's love apples." So he lay with her that night. ¹⁶God heard Leah; she and Jacob had their fifth baby boy.

³⁰
¹⁷ Lk 1:46

¹⁷Leah said, "God has given me my reward for giving my maid to my husband." And she called him Issachar.^j

¹⁸She and Jacob had a sixth son. ¹⁹God has given me a fine gift," Leah said. "Now my husband will live with me because I have given him six sons." She called him Zebulon.^k ²⁰Later she also had a daughter, whom she called Dinah.

²¹God also remembered Rachel. God heard her and let her have children. ²²She had a boy, and she said, "God has taken away my disgrace." ²³She called him Joseph,^l saying, "May the LORD add to me another son."

Jacob Gets Rich

²⁴After Rachel had given birth to Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, "Let me leave and go home to my country.

^c"Hearing" ^d"Joined" ^e"Praised" ^f"He Has Done Right" ^g"Struggle"
^h"Luck" ⁱ"Happy" ^j"Reward" ^k"Dwelling" ^l"May He Add"

²⁶“Give me my wives and my children, for whom I’ve served you, and let me go, because you know the work I did for you.”

²⁷“If you’re kind to me—” Laban answered him. “I’ve watched the signs, and the LORD has blessed me on account of you.” ²⁸He added, “Set the wages I should pay you, and I’ll pay them.”

²⁹“You know how I’ve worked for you,” he answered him, “and what’s happened to your stock in my care. ³⁰Before I came, you had only a little. But now it has grown to be much, and the LORD has blessed you in what I did for you. And now, when can I do something for my own family too?”

“What should I give you?” he asked.

“Don’t give me anything,” Jacob answered. “I’ll feed and watch your flock again if you’ll do one thing for me. ³¹I’ll go through your whole flock today and take out of it every speckled or spotted sheep and every black lamb and any of the goats that are spotted and speckled. That will be my pay. ³²My honesty will speak for me any day you come and look at the animals you pay me with. If I have any goat that isn’t speckled or spotted, any lamb that isn’t black, it’s stolen.”

“Laban answered, “Yes, let it be just as you say.”

“But that day Laban took away the striped and spotted he-goats and all the speckled and spotted she-goats, every animal with white on it, and every black lamb, and had his sons take care of them. ³³He put a distance of a three-days’ walk between himself and Jacob, while Jacob continued to be the shepherd of the rest of Laban’s flock.

³⁴Jacob took fresh rods of poplar,

almond, and plane trees and peeled white stripes in them, laying bare the white in the rods. ³⁵He laid the rods he peeled in front of the flocks in the troughs at the watering places where they came to drink, since they mated when they came to drink. ³⁶The flocks mated facing the rods and had young that were striped, spotted, and speckled.

³⁷Jacob separated the animals and let the flock mate only with the striped and the black in Laban’s flock. So he bred for himself separate flocks, not putting them with Laban’s animals. ³⁸Whenever the strong animals were mating, Jacob would lay the rods in the troughs so the flock would see them and would mate by the rods. ³⁹For the weaker ones he didn’t lay down the rods. And so Laban got the weak animals, and Jacob got the strong ones.

⁴⁰And so the man got to be very, very rich and had large flocks, many female and male servants, camels and donkeys.

Jacob Leaves Laban

31 Jacob heard Laban’s sons say, “Jacob has taken everything our father had and by using our father’s property has gotten all this wealth.” ²Jacob saw also that Laban didn’t look at him as he used to.

³Then the LORD told Jacob, “Go back to the country of your fathers and your relatives, and I will be with you.”

⁴So Jacob sent someone to call Rachel and Leah to come to his flock in the field. ⁵“I’ve been watching your father,” he told them; “he doesn’t look at me as he used to, but my father’s God has been with me. ⁶You know I worked as hard as

I could for your father: and your father cheated me and changed my wages ten times, but God didn't let him harm me. ⁸If he said, 'The speckled animals will be your wages,' the whole flock would have speckled young. And if he said, 'The striped animals will be your wages,' the whole flock would have striped young. ⁹In this way God took away your father's stock and gave them to me.

¹⁰"Once, when the flocks were mating, I had a dream: I looked up and saw that the he-goats mating with the flock were striped, speckled, and spotted. ¹¹In the dream God's Angel called to me, 'Jacob.'

" 'Yes,' I answered.

¹²" 'Look,' he said, 'and see how all the he-goats mating with the flock are striped, speckled, and spotted, because I have seen everything Laban is doing to you. ¹³I am the God you saw at Bethel, where you poured oil on a stone and made a vow to me. Come, then, leave this country, and go back to your homeland.' "

¹⁴Rachel and Leah answered him, "Is there still anything in our father's household for us to get or inherit? ¹⁵Hasn't he treated us like strangers? He sold us and has completely consumed what was paid for us. ¹⁶All the riches God took away from our father belong to us and our children. And now, do everything God told you."

¹⁷Jacob got ready to go. He put his children and his wives on camels. ¹⁸He drove away all his stock and all his property he had earned, the stock that was his property that he acquired in the plain of Aram, to go to his father Isaac in Canaan. ¹⁹And while Laban was away

shearing his sheep, Rachel stole her father's family idols.

²⁰Jacob tricked Laban the Aramean by not telling him he was fleeing. ²¹So he fled with all he had. He went on and crossed the Euphrates, heading for the hill country of Gilead.

Laban Pursues Jacob

²²On the third day Laban was told, "Jacob has fled." ²³Taking along his relatives, he pursued Jacob for 7 days and caught up with him in the hill country of Gilead. ²⁴But God came to Laban the Aramean in a dream at night and told him, "Be careful not to say anything good or bad to Jacob." ²⁵Laban caught up with Jacob when Jacob was putting up his tents in the hills. Laban and his relatives also put up their tents in the hills of Gilead.

²⁶"Why did you do this and trick me?" Laban asked Jacob. "You took away my daughters like prisoners of war. ²⁷Why did you flee secretly and trick me and not tell me? I would have sent you away with a celebration with songs, tambourines, and lyres. ²⁸But you didn't even let me kiss my grandchildren and my daughters; it was a foolish thing for you to do. ²⁹I have the power to harm you, but last night your father's God told me, 'Be careful not to say anything good or bad to Jacob.' ³⁰And now you have left because you long so much for your father's home. But why did you steal my gods?"

³¹"I was afraid," Jacob answered Laban. "I thought you would take your daughters away from me by force. ³²If you find anyone who has your gods, he must not live. In the presence of our relatives search and see if I have anything that's yours.

and take it." Jacob didn't know Rachel had stolen them.

"Laban went into Jacob's tent, into Leah's tent, and into the tents of the two maids. But he found nothing. Coming out of Leah's tent, he went into Rachel's tent. "Rachel had taken the idols and put them in her camel's saddle-basket and was sitting on them. Laban searched carefully through the whole tent without finding them.

"Don't be angry, my lord," she told her father, "because I can't get up in front of you. I'm having my period." And so he searched but didn't find the idols.

"Then Jacob was angry and scolded Laban. "What wrong have I done?" Jacob demanded of Laban. "Or what sin, that you come in hot pursuit of me? "You've searched through everything I have, but what did you find of all your household things? Set it here in front of my relatives and yours, and let them decide which of us two is right.

"For twenty years now I've been with you. Your ewes and your she-goats didn't miscarry, and I didn't eat the rams of your flock. "If anything was torn by wild animals, I didn't bring it to you; I paid for its loss. You demanded from me anything that was stolen by day or by night. "There I was—the scorching heat wore me down by day and the cold by night, and I lost my sleep. "I've been in your home twenty years: I worked fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flock, and you changed my wages ten times. "If the God of my father, the God of

Abraham, the Awesome One of Isaac, had not been on my side, you would now have sent me away empty. God has seen my misery and hard work, and last night He decided who was right."

"These are my daughters," Laban answered Jacob. "these are my children, and these are my flocks—everything you see is mine. What should I do for my daughters or the children they've had? "Come then, let us make a treaty, you and I, and let it stand as a witness between you and me."

"Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. "And he told his men, "Gather some stones." They gathered stones and made a heap of them. Then they ate on the heap. "Laban called it Heap-of-Witness, and Jacob called it Heap-of-Witness."^m

"This heap," Laban said, "is a witness between me and you today." This is why it was called Heap-of-Witness ⁿand also Watch-Station,ⁿ because he said, "The LORD watch between me and you when we can't see each other. "If you harm my daughters or marry other women in addition to my daughters when there's no one around to see it, then know that God will be a witness between you and me." "Laban also said to Jacob, "Here is this heap, and here is the pillar I set up between you and me. "This heap is a witness and the pillar is a witness that I will not pass this heap to go against you and you will not pass this heap and this pillar to harm me. "The God of Abraham and the

^mIn the original text there are two different names, Laban's in Aramaic and Jacob's in Hebrew, both meaning the same.

ⁿHeb Mizpah

God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us."

Jacob swore by the Awesome One of his father Isaac. "Jacob made a sacrifice on the mountain and invited his people to eat. They ate and stayed on the mountain for the night.

"Early in the morning Laban kissed his grandchildren and his daughters and blessed them. Then Laban left and went back home.

Jacob Sends Greetings to Esau

32 As Jacob was traveling along, he met God's angels. When he saw them, Jacob said, "This is God's army," and he called the place Mahanaim.^o

Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to his brother Esau in the country of Seir, the land of Edom. "He gave them these orders: "Tell my lord Esau, 'Your servant Jacob says, 'I've been staying with Laban and was delayed till now. 'But now I have cattle, donkeys, flocks, male and female servants, and I'm sending men to tell my lord about it, so that he will be kind.'"

"The messengers came back to Jacob. "We came to your brother Esau," they said; "he's coming to meet you. There are four hundred men with him."

Jacob was very much frightened and troubled. He divided his people, as well as the flocks, cattle, and camels, into two groups. "If Esau comes to the first group and destroys it," he said, "then the other group will be left to escape."

"Then Jacob prayed. "O God of my grandfather Abraham and of my father Isaac! O LORD, You told me, 'Go back to your country and your

home, and I will be good to you.' "I don't deserve all the kind and faithful things You have done for Your servant. I crossed this Jordan with my staff, and now I've become two groups. "Save me now from my brother Esau; I'm afraid he'll come and destroy me, as well as the mothers with their children. "But You did say, 'I will certainly be good to you and give you descendants like the sand of the sea, that is too much to count.'"

"He stayed there that night, then prepared a present for his brother Esau from what he had: "200 she-goats and 20 he-goats, 200 ewes and 20 rams, "30 milk camels with their colts, 40 cows and 10 bulls, 20 female donkeys and 10 male donkeys.

"He had the servants take charge of them, putting each drove by itself. "Go on ahead of me," he told his servants, "and keep a distance between each drove and the next." "He ordered the first man: "When my brother Esau meets you and asks you, 'Whose man are you? Where are you going? And whose animals are these ahead of you?' "then say, 'Your servant Jacob's. They are a present sent to my lord Esau, and he himself is behind us.'" "He gave the same orders to the second man, the third, and all the others who followed their droves. "Tell Esau that," he said, "when you meet him. "And say also, 'Your servant Jacob is behind us.'" He thought, "I'll make him friendly by giving him a present that goes ahead of me, and then I'll see his face—maybe he'll welcome me." "The presents went on ahead of him while he stayed in the caravan that night.

^o "Two Armies" or "Two Groups"

³²
¹² Heb 11:12

¹⁴That night he got up, and taking his two wives, his two maids, and his 11 sons, he sent them across the ford of the Jabbok. ¹⁵He took them and sent them and all he had across the stream.

¹⁶When Jacob was left behind alone, Someone wrestled with him till the dawn came; ¹⁷and when He saw He couldn't master Jacob, He struck the joint of Jacob's hip, so that it was dislocated as He wrestled with him.

¹⁸"Let Me go," He said; "the dawn has come."

"I will not let You go," Jacob answered, "unless You bless me."

¹⁹"What is your name?" He asked him.

He answered, "Jacob."

²⁰"Your name will no longer be Jacob but Israel," He said, "because you have struggled with God and with men and have won."

²¹"Please tell me Your name," Jacob said.

"Why do you ask for My name?" He asked. And He blessed Jacob there.

²²Jacob called the place Peniel, ²³saying, "I have seen God face to face, yet my life was saved."

²⁴The sun rose on him as he passed Penuel, and he limped on account of his hip.

²⁵To this day the Israelites don't eat the muscle in the thigh at the hip joint, because He struck Jacob's hip joint at the muscle of the thigh.

Jacob Meets Esau

33 Jacob looked and saw Esau coming, and with him were 400 men. He divided his children among Leah, Rachel, and the two maids. ²The maids with their

³ *"Face-of-God" (elsewhere Penuel)*

children he put in front, Leah and her children after them, and Rachel with Joseph last. ⁴Then he went on ahead of them and bowed down to the ground seven times till he came near his brother.

⁵Esau ran to meet him, hugged him, clung to him, and kissed him. And they cried.

⁶Looking up, Esau saw the women and the children. "Whom do you have here?" he asked.

"The children God gave your servant," he answered.

⁷Then the maids with their children came close and bowed down. ⁸Then Leah and her children also came close and bowed down. Finally Joseph and Rachel came and bowed down.

⁹"What do you mean by this whole caravan I met?" he asked.

"I want my lord to think kindly of me," he answered.

¹⁰"I have plenty, my brother," Esau said. "Keep what you have."

¹¹"No, please," Jacob said. "If you are kind to me, take the present I'm giving you. Seeing your face is like seeing God's face: you have welcomed me. ¹²Please take the gift I brought you; God has been kind to me, and I have everything." And so he urged him till he took it.

¹³"Let us be on our way," he said, "and I will keep pace with you."

¹⁴"My lord knows," he told him, "how frail the children are and how I have to take care of sheep, goats, and cows that are giving suck. If they're driven too hard for just one day, all the flocks will die. ¹⁵My lord, please go on ahead of your servant, and I will guide them as gently and as slowly as the cattle

and children need to move till I come to my lord in Seir.”

¹⁵“Let me leave some of my men with you,” Esau said.

“Why do that?” he asked. “I only want my lord to be kind to me.”

¹⁶That day Esau left to go back to Seir. ¹⁷Jacob moved to Succoth, where he built a home for himself and shelters for his stock. This is why the place is called Succoth.⁹

¹⁸When he returned from the Plain of Aram, Jacob came safely to the city of Shechem, which is in Canaan, and camped east of the town. ¹⁹For 100 shekels of silver he bought from the sons of Hamor, Shechem’s father, a piece of land, on which he put up his tents.

²⁰He built an altar there and called it A-Mighty-God-is-the-God-of-Israel.

Dinah

34 Dinah, Leah and Jacob’s daughter, went out to visit some of the local girls. ²And Shechem, the son of Hamor the Hivite, the chief of the area, saw her, took her, lay with her, and raped her. ³But he was very fond of Dinah, Jacob’s daughter, loved her, and talked to the girl’s heart.

⁴Shechem told his father Hamor, “Get this girl to be my wife.”

⁵When Jacob heard that Shechem had defiled his daughter Dinah, his sons were with his stock in the field. So Jacob did nothing till they came home.

⁶About the time Hamor, Shechem’s father, came to Jacob to arrange things, Jacob’s sons came in from the field. ⁷When the men heard the news, they were stunned and very angry because Shechem

had done such a shameful thing to Israel as to lie with Jacob’s daughter; it should not have been done.

⁸But Hamor talked to them. “My son Shechem is in love with your daughter,” he said. “Please let her be his wife. ⁹Intermarry with us, give us your daughters, and take ours in marriage. ¹⁰Live with us, and the country will be open to you. Live and trade in it, and own property in it.”

¹¹Shechem told her father and her brothers. “Be kind to me, and I’ll pay you anything you ask me. ¹²Set the bride price ever so high for me, and I’ll pay exactly what you tell me, but give me the girl as my wife.”

¹³Jacob’s sons answered Shechem and his father Hamor treacherously because he had defiled their sister Dinah. ¹⁴“We can’t do this,” they said. “We can’t give our sister to an uncircumcised man; to us that’s a disgrace. ¹⁵We’re ready to do this for you on only one condition: if every one of your males is circumcised as we are. ¹⁶Then we’ll give you our daughters and take yours in marriage, and we’ll live with you and be one people. ¹⁷But if you won’t listen to us and be circumcised, we’ll take our daughter and go.”

¹⁸Hamor and his son Shechem liked their suggestion. ¹⁹And the young man went ahead with it without delay because he liked Jacob’s daughter, and he was the most honored person in all his father’s family.

²⁰Hamor and his son Shechem went to the town gate to talk to the men of their town. ²¹“These men are our friends,” they said. “They

⁹“Shelters”

will live and trade in the country. You see there is plenty of room for them in the land. We'll marry their daughters and let them marry ours. ²"The men are ready to live with us and be one people on only one condition: that every one of our males be circumcised as they are. ³Won't their stock, their property, and all their animals be ours? Only this we have to be ready to do for them, and then they'll live with us." ⁴All who went out of the gate of his town listened to Hamor and his son Shechem, and every male who went out of the gate of his town was circumcised.

⁵Two days later, when they were in pain, Simeon and Levi, two of Jacob's sons, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword, and while the town suspected nothing, they attacked it and with their swords killed every male, ⁶including Hamor and his son Shechem; and taking Dinah from Shechem's home, they left. ⁷Then Jacob's sons went over the slain and plundered the town that had defiled their sister. ⁸They took their flocks, cattle, donkeys, and whatever was in the town or in the field. ⁹All their wealth and all their children and their women they also carried off, and they took as loot everything in the houses.

¹⁰"You've ruined me," Jacob told Simeon and Levi. "You've made me a stench to the people in the country, the Canaanites and the Perizzites. We're only a few; if they get together to attack me, I and my family will be wiped out."

¹¹"Should our sister be treated like a prostitute?" they asked.

At Bethel

35 God told Jacob, "Go up to Bethel, stay there, and

build an altar there to God, whom you saw when you fled from your brother Esau."

²Then Jacob told his family and all who were with him, "Get rid of the strange gods you have, cleanse yourselves, and change your clothes. ³Then come, we will go up to Bethel, where I will build an altar to God, who answered me when I was in trouble and was with me wherever I went."

⁴They handed over to Jacob all the strange gods they had and the rings in their ears, and Jacob buried them under the oak near Shechem.

⁵As they set out, God terrified the towns around them and kept them from pursuing Jacob's sons. ⁶Jacob and all the people with him came to Luz, that is, Bethel, in the land of Canaan. ⁷And there he built an altar, and he called the place God-of-Bethel because God had showed Himself to him there when he fled from his brother.

⁸Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died and was buried under the oak below Bethel. It was called Oak-of-Weeping.

⁹Once more, when he came back from the plain of Aram, God appeared to Jacob and blessed him. ¹⁰"Your name is Jacob," God told him. "Your name will no longer be Jacob but Israel." And so He gave him the name Israel. ¹¹"I am God Almighty," God told him. "Have children and become many. A nation, yes, a group of nations will come from you, and you will be the father of kings. ¹²The country I gave Abraham and Isaac I will give you and your descendants." ¹³God went up from him at the very place where He talked to him. ¹⁴Jacob set up a pillar at the place where He talked to him, a stone pillar, and

poured on it a drink offering and olive oil. ¹⁵Jacob called the place where God talked to him Bethel.

Benjamin Is Born

¹⁶They moved away from Bethel and were still some distance from Ephrath when Rachel started giving birth to a child and was having a difficult labor. ¹⁷When she was in hard labor, the midwife told her, "Don't be afraid! Here's another boy for you!"

¹⁸As her life was going—she was dying—she called him Benoni,^f but his father called him Benjamin.^g

¹⁹So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. ²⁰and Jacob set up a stone on her grave. This is the stone that is still at Rachel's grave today.

²¹Israel moved on and put up his tent beyond the Tower of the Flocks. ²²While Israel was living in that country, Reuben went and lay with Bilhah, his father's concubine, and Israel heard about it.

Jacob's 12 Sons

Jacob had 12 sons. ²³Leah's sons were Reuben, Jacob's firstborn, then Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. ²⁴Rachel's sons were Joseph and Benjamin. ²⁵The sons of Bilhah, Rachel's maid, were Dan and Naphtali. ²⁶The sons of Zilpah, Leah's maid, were Gad and Asher. These are Jacob's sons, who were born in the plain of Aram.

Isaac Dies

²⁷Jacob went to his father Isaac at Mamre, at Kiriath-arba, which is

Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac had lived as strangers.

²⁸When Isaac was 180, ²⁹being old and having had a full life, he died and was laid away with his people. His sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

Esau's Descendants

36 These were the descendants of Esau, who is Edom. ²Esau married some women of Canaan: Adah, the daughter of Elon the Hittite; Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon the Hivite; ³also Basemath, the daughter of Ishmael and sister of Nebaioth.

⁴Esau and Adah were the parents of Eliphaz, and Basemath was the mother of Reuel. ⁵Oholibamah was the mother of Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. These were Esau's sons who were born to him in Canaan.

⁶Esau took his wives, sons, daughters, and all the members of his household, his herds, all his other animals, and all the property he had gotten in Canaan and went to a land away from his brother Jacob ⁷because they had too much property to live together and the land where they were staying couldn't support them on account of their flocks. ⁸So Esau, who is Edom, lived in the mountains of Seir.

⁹These were the descendants of Esau, the father of the people of Edom in the mountains of Seir. ¹⁰These were the names of Esau's sons: Eliphaz, the son of Esau's wife Adah; Reuel, the son of Esau's wife Basemath. ¹¹The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz. ¹²Timna was a concubine of Esau's son Eliphaz. She

^f "Son of Wailing"

^g "Son of My Right Hand" or "Son of Good Luck"

and Eliphaz were the parents of Amalek. These were the descendants of Esau's wife Adah.

¹¹These were Reuel's sons: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These were the descendants of Esau's wife Basemath.

¹²These were the sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah, the daughter of Anah and the granddaughter of Zibeon. She and Esau were the parents of Jeush, Jalam, and Korah.

¹³These were the chiefs among Esau's descendants: the sons of Eliphaz, Esau's first son: the chiefs, Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz, ¹⁴Korah, Gatam, and Amalek. These were the chiefs of Eliphaz in the country of Edom; they were Adah's descendants.

¹⁵These were the descendants of Esau's son Reuel: the chiefs Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These were the chiefs of Reuel in the country of Edom. They were the descendants of Esau's wife Basemath.

¹⁶These were the descendants of Esau's wife Oholibamah: the chiefs Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. These were the chiefs that came from Esau's wife Oholibamah, Anah's daughter.

¹⁷These were Esau's descendants and their chiefs. Esau is Edom.

¹⁸These were the descendants of Seir the Horite, who lived in that country: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah. ¹⁹Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. These were the Horite chiefs, Seir's descendants in the country of Edom.

²⁰Lotan's sons were Hori and Hemam, and Timna was Lotan's sister. ²¹Shobal's sons were Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam. ²²Zibeon's sons were Aiah and Anah. This was the Anah who found the hot springs in the desert

while he was herding his father Zibeon's donkeys. ²³Anah's children were Dishon and Oholibamah, Anah's daughter. ²⁴Dishon's sons were Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran. ²⁵Ezer's sons were Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan. ²⁶Dishan's sons were Uz and Aran.

²⁷These were the Horite chiefs: the chiefs Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, ²⁸Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. These were the Horite chiefs in the country of Seir, chief by chief.

²⁹These were the kings who ruled in Edom before any king ruled in Israel: ³⁰Bela, Beor's son, ruled Edom with Dinhabah as his capital. ³¹Bela died, and Jobab, Zerah's son, from Bozrah succeeded him as king. ³²Jobab died, and Husham from the country of the Temanites succeeded him as king. ³³Husham died, and Hadad, Bedad's son, who defeated the Midianites in the country of Moab, succeeded him as king; Avith was his capital. ³⁴Hadad died, and Samlah from Masrekeh succeeded him as king. ³⁵Samlah died, and Shaul from Rehoboth on the river succeeded him as king. ³⁶Shaul died, and Baal-hanan, Achbor's son, succeeded him as king. ³⁷Baal-hanan, Achbor's son, died, and Hadar succeeded him as king with Pau as his capital. His wife's name was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred and the granddaughter of Mezahab.

³⁸These were the names of the chiefs who descended from Esau, by family, place, and name: the chiefs Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, ³⁹Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, ⁴⁰Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, ⁴¹Magdiel, and Iram. These were the chiefs of Edom (which is Esau, the father of the people of Edom) according to the

places where they lived in the region they held.

Joseph's Dreams

37 Jacob lived in Canaan, the country where his father had been living as a foreigner.

¹This is a record of Jacob's family. Joseph was 17 and watching the flocks with his brothers, just a boy with the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives, and Joseph brought bad reports about them to their father.

²Israel loved Joseph best of all his sons because he was born when Israel was old. He made Joseph a tunic reaching to the wrists and ankles. ³When his brothers saw their father loved him more than any of his brothers, they hated him and couldn't talk friendly to him.

⁴Joseph had a dream he told his brothers, and so they hated him all the more. ⁵"Please listen to this dream I had," he told them. ⁶"We were tying bundles in the field, and there my bundle stood up, yes, and kept standing while your bundles gathered around and bowed down to my bundle."

⁷"Do you really mean to be king over us?" his brothers asked him. ⁸"Or are you going to rule over us?" So they hated him all the more for his dreams and what he said.

⁹He had another dream he told his brothers. "I had a dream," he said. ¹⁰"The sun, the moon, and eleven stars bowed down to me."

¹¹When he told his father and his brothers about it, his father criticized him. "What is this dream you had?" he asked him. "Should I, your mother, and your brothers come and bow down to the ground before you?" ¹²So his brothers

were jealous of him, but his father remembered what he said.

Joseph Is Sold

¹³His brothers went to Shechem to watch their father's flocks there.

¹⁴"Aren't your brothers watching the flocks in Shechem?" Israel asked Joseph. "Come, I'll send you to them."

"I'm ready," he answered him.

¹⁵"Go and see how your brothers and the flocks are," he told him, "and bring me a report."

So he sent him from the valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. ¹⁶A man found him wandering around in the open country. "What are you looking for?" the man asked him.

"I'm looking for my brothers," he said; "could you tell me where they're watching their flocks?"

¹⁷"They moved away from here," the man said. "I heard them say, 'Let's go to Dothan.'"

So Joseph followed his brothers and found them at Dothan.

¹⁸They saw him coming in the distance, but before he reached them, they plotted against him to kill him. ¹⁹"Look, here comes the dreamer!" they said to one another. ²⁰"And now come, let's kill him, throw him into one of the cisterns, and say, 'A wild animal has devoured him.' Then we'll see what becomes of his dreams."

²¹When Reuben heard this, he tried to save him from them. "Let's not kill him," he said. ²²Reuben also told them, "Don't shed blood. Throw him into that cistern in the wilderness, but don't hurt him." He wanted to rescue him from them and bring him back to his father.

²³When Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped off Joseph's

³⁷
11 Acts 7:9

long tunic with sleeves that he was wearing. "Then they took him and threw him into an empty cistern: there was no water in it.

"Then they sat down to eat. Looking up, they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, their camels carrying resinous gum, balm, and myrrh; they were on their way to take them down to Egypt.

"What can we gain by killing our brother," Judah asked his brothers, "and covering up his blood?" "Come, let's sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him, because he is our brother, our flesh and blood." His brothers agreed. "And so, as the Midianite traders were passing by, the brothers pulled Joseph out of the cistern, and they sold Joseph for 20 shekels of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took Joseph to Egypt.

28 Act 7-9

"Reuben went back to the cistern and saw Joseph wasn't in the cistern. Then he tore his clothes. "He went back to his brothers. "The boy isn't there," he said, "and where do I go from here?"

"They butchered a goat, took Joseph's tunic, and dipped it in the blood. "Then they sent the long tunic with sleeves to their father. "We found this," they said. "Examine it. Is it your son's tunic or not?"

"He recognized it and said, "My son's tunic! A wild animal has eaten him. Joseph was torn in pieces!" "Jacob tore his clothes, put sackcloth around his hips, and mourned for his son a long time. "All his other sons and daughters came to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. "No," he said, "I want to be still mourning when I go down to my son in the grave." So his father wept for him.

"Meanwhile the Midianites sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, Pharaoh's officer and captain of the guard.

Judah and Tamar

38 Judah left his brothers and went down to a man at Adullam whose name was Hirah. "There Judah saw the daughter of a Canaanite whose name was Shua, and he married her.

"She had a son, and he called him Er. "She had another son, whom she called Onan. "She had another son, whom she called Shelah. They were at Chezib when he was born.

"Judah chose a wife for his firstborn son Er, and her name was Tamar. "But the LORD found Er, Judah's firstborn son, so wicked He killed him. "Then Judah told Onan, "Do your duty as a brother-in-law to your brother's widow: marry her and have a child for your brother." "But Onan knew the child wouldn't belong to him, and so whenever he had intercourse with his brother's widow, he wasted his semen on the ground to avoid giving his brother a child. "To the LORD this was wicked, and He killed him too.

"Then Judah told Tamar, his daughter-in-law, "Stay as a widow in your father's home till my son Shelah grows up." He feared he would die too, like his brothers. So Tamar went to live in her father's home.

"After some time had passed, Judah's wife, Shua's daughter, died. When Judah was comforted, Judah and his friend Hirah from Adullam went up to Timnah to look after the shearing of Judah's sheep.

"Tamar was told: "Your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear

his sheep." "Seeing that Shelah was grown up but she wasn't allowed to marry him, she took off her widow's clothes, covered herself with a veil, wrapping herself up, and sat at the entrance to Enaim on the road to Timnah.

¹³When Judah saw her, he took her for a prostitute because she had covered her face. ¹⁴He stepped over to her by the road. "Please let me come in to you," he said, not knowing she was his daughter-in-law.

"What will you give me," she asked, "to come in to me?"

¹⁷"I'll send you a young goat from the flock," he answered.

"If you give me a pledge till you send it," she said.

¹⁸"What pledge should I give you?" he asked.

"Your seal and cord," she answered, "and the staff you have in your hand."

He gave her these, and he went in to her and made her pregnant. ¹⁹She got up and left. Then she took off her veil and put on her widow's clothes.

²⁰Judah sent his friend the Adullamite to bring the young goat and get the pledge from the woman, but he couldn't find her. ²¹He asked the men at the place, "Where's the sacred prostitute, the one by the road at Enaim?"

"There never was a sacred prostitute here," they answered.

²²He went back to Judah. "I couldn't find her," he told him. "and the men at the place also said, 'There never was a sacred prostitute here.'"

²³"Let her keep them," Judah said, "or we'll bring shame on ourselves.

¹ "Breaking Out"

Anyway, I sent this young goat, but you couldn't find her."

²⁴About 3 months later Judah was told, "Your daughter-in-law Tamar has been a prostitute, and what is more, by being a prostitute she has become pregnant."

"Bring her out," Judah said. "She must be burned."

²⁵As they were taking her out, she sent a message to her father-in-law: "The man these things belong to made me pregnant." She added: "Look and see, to whom do these belong: this seal, cord, and staff?"

²⁶Judah recognized them and said, "She's more right than I am, because I didn't have her marry my son Shelah." But he didn't have intercourse with her again.

²⁷When the time came for her to give birth, there were twins in her womb. ²⁸When she was giving birth, one put out his hand, and the midwife took it and tied a scarlet string on his wrist. "This one came out first," she said.

²⁹Just as he was pulling back his hand, his brother came out. "What a breaking out you made for yourself!" she said. And he was called Perez.¹ ³⁰After that his brother came out with the scarlet string on his hand. He was called Zerah.

Joseph in Egypt

39 Joseph was taken down to Egypt, where Potiphar, an Egyptian, Pharaoh's officer and captain of the guard, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there.

¹The LORD was with Joseph, so that he became a successful man. He was in the home of his Egyptian master. ¹His master saw that the

³⁹
2-3 Acts 7:
9-10

LORD was with him and gave him success in everything he was doing. "His master liked him and had him wait on him; he made him manager of his house and put him in charge of everything he had. "And so it was that after he made him manager of his house and of everything he had, the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house on account of Joseph, and the LORD's blessing was on everything he had in his house and in his fields. "He left everything he had in Joseph's hands, and having him, paid no attention to anything but the food he ate.

Joseph was well built and good-looking. "After these things his master's wife looked at Joseph and said, "Lie with me."

"But he refused. "You know," he told his master's wife, "with me here, my master pays no attention to anything in the house. He put me in charge of everything he has. "In this house even he isn't greater than I. He has kept nothing from me but you, because you are his wife. And how could I do this great wrong and sin against God?"

"Day after day she kept talking to Joseph, but he refused to lie beside her or be with her. "Then one day he went into the house to do his work, and none of the household servants was there in the house. "She took hold of his garment. "Lie with me," she said. But he left his garment in her hand, ran away, and went outside.

"When she saw he left his garment in her hand and ran outside, "she called her household servants. "Look," she told them, "he brought us a Hebrew man to insult us. He came to me to lie with me, but I screamed. "As soon as he heard me scream for help, he left his

garment with me, ran away, and went outside."

"She let his garment lie beside her till his master came home. "Then she told him the same story. "The Hebrew slave you brought us," she said, "came to me to make love to me. "But when I screamed for help, he left his garment with me and ran outside."

"When his master heard his wife say, "This is what your slave did to me," he got very angry. "And Joseph's master arrested him and put him in the same prison where the king's prisoners were kept. And there he was in prison.

"But the LORD was with Joseph and made others kind to him. He made the prison warden kind to him. "The prison warden put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners in that prison, and he was responsible for everything they were doing there. "The prison warden paid no attention to anything entrusted to Joseph, because the LORD was with him, and the LORD made him successful in everything he did.

The Butler and the Baker

40 After this the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt offended their lord, the king of Egypt. "Pharaoh became angry with his two officers, the chief butler and the chief baker, "and put them under guard at the house of the captain of the guard, in the same prison where Joseph was a prisoner. "The captain of the guard appointed Joseph to be with them, and he waited on them.

"After they had been under guard for some time, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison, had dreams

²¹ Acts 7: 9-10

one night, each his own dream with its special meaning. "When Joseph came to them in the morning, he saw they were in a bad humor. "He asked Pharaoh's officers who were with him under guard in his master's house. "Why do you look so troubled today?"

"We had dreams," they answered him. "and there's nobody to tell us what they mean."

"Isn't God the only one who can tell what they mean?" he asked them. "Please tell them to me."

"So the chief butler told Joseph his dream. "In my dream," he said, "there was a grapevine in front of me. "and on the vine were three branches. Just as it was budding, its blossoms shot out, and its clusters ripened into grapes. "Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes and squeezed them into Pharaoh's cup and put the cup in Pharaoh's hand."

"This is what it means," Joseph told him. "Three branches mean three days. "In three days Pharaoh will honor you again and put you back in your office, and you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand as you used to do when you were his butler. "But when all is well with you, think of me, and please be kind to me, and mention me to Pharaoh, and get me out of this prison. "I was kidnapped from the country of the Hebrews; and here too I've done nothing to be put in this dungeon."

"When the chief baker saw the meaning had been a good one, he told Joseph. "I too had a dream. There were three baskets of white baked goods on my head. "In the top basket there were all kinds of baked food for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating out of the basket on my head."

"This is what it means," Joseph answered. "The three baskets mean three days. "In three days Pharaoh will take off your head and hang you on a tree, and the birds will eat your flesh."

"On the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, he gave a dinner for all his servants, and he brought out the chief butler and the chief baker among his servants. "He put the chief butler back in his place as his butler, and so he put the cup in Pharaoh's hand. "He had the chief baker hanged as Joseph had said in his interpretation.

"Yet the chief butler didn't think of Joseph but forgot about him.

Pharaoh's Dreams

41 After two whole years Pharaoh dreamed he was standing by the river. "and there he saw seven beautiful fat cows come out of the river and graze on the grass. "Then he saw seven other cows come out of the river after them; these were ugly and thin. They stood by the other cows on the bank of the river; "and the ugly and lean cows ate up the seven beautiful fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.

"He fell asleep again and had another dream. He saw seven heads of grain, full and good, growing on a single stalk. "And close behind them sprouted seven thin heads of grain, scorched by the east wind. "The thin heads of grain swallowed the seven thick and full heads. Then Pharaoh woke up—it was a dream.

"In the morning he was troubled, and he sent men to call all the magicians and wise men of Egypt. Pharaoh told them his dreams, but nobody could tell Pharaoh what they meant.

"Then the chief butler spoke to Pharaoh. "I will talk today about the wrong I once did," he said. "When Pharaoh was angry with his servants, he put me and the chief baker under guard at the house of the captain of the guards. "One night he and I had dreams; each of us had a dream with a special meaning. "And there was with us a young Hebrew, a slave of the captain of the guard. We told him our dreams, and he told each of us what his dream meant. "As he explained our dreams, so they came true: Pharaoh put me back in my position, and he hanged the baker."

"Then Pharaoh sent men to call Joseph, and they hurried him out of the dungeon. He shaved, changed his clothes, and came to Pharaoh.

"I had a dream," Pharaoh told Joseph, "but nobody can tell me what it means. Now I've heard that when you hear a dream, you tell what it means."

"Not I," Joseph answered Pharaoh. "But God will give Pharaoh an answer that will mean his welfare."

"In my dream," Pharaoh told Joseph, "I was standing on the bank of the river, "and I saw seven beautiful fat cows come out of the river and graze on the grass. "Then I saw seven other cows come up after them—thin, very ugly, and skinny. I've never seen such ugly cows in all Egypt. "The skinny, ugly cows ate up the other seven cows, the fat ones. "and though these went into them, you couldn't tell they had gone into them—they looked as bad as before. Then I woke up.

"Then I saw in my dream seven heads of grain, full and good, growing on a single stalk. "Right

behind them were sprouting seven withered thin heads, scorched by the east wind. "Then the thin heads swallowed the seven good heads. I talked to the magicians, but nobody can explain this to me."

"Pharaoh's dreams mean one thing," Joseph told Pharaoh. "God has told Pharaoh what He is going to do. "Seven good cows are seven years, and seven good heads are seven years; the dreams mean one thing. "The seven lean and ugly cows coming up after them are seven years, and the seven empty heads scorched by the east wind are seven years of famine. "It is just as I told Pharaoh: God has shown Pharaoh what He's going to do. "There are seven years coming with very much food in all Egypt. "After them there will be seven years during which a famine will exhaust the country, and people will forget there was plenty of food in Egypt, "because the famine coming later will be so very severe people will not remember the plenty there once was in the country. "That two dreams came to Pharaoh shows that God has fully decided and will quickly do it.

"Now then, let Pharaoh choose an intelligent and wise man and put him in charge of Egypt. "Let Pharaoh go ahead and appoint overseers for the country and take a fifth of Egypt's harvest during the seven years of plenty, "and let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming and under Pharaoh's control store away grain for food in the cities and keep it there. "This food should be stored to be used during the seven years when the famine will be in Egypt, so that the famine will not ruin the country."

Joseph Is Honored

“Pharaoh and all his servants liked the idea. ¹⁸“Can we find anyone.” Pharaoh asked his servants. “with God’s Spirit in him like this man?”

¹⁹“Since God has told you all this.” Pharaoh said to Joseph. “there is no one so intelligent and wise as you are. ²⁰You will be in charge of my palace, and all my people will do just as you say. Only in regard to the throne will I be superior to you. ²¹“See.” Pharaoh told Joseph. “I am putting you in charge of all Egypt.”

²²Pharaoh took his seal ring from his finger and put it on Joseph’s finger, dressed him in fine linen, put a gold chain around his neck. ²³and had him ride in his second chariot. And people called ahead of him. ²⁴“Bow down.” He put him in charge of all Egypt.

²⁵“Though I am Pharaoh.” Pharaoh told Joseph. “without your permission nobody in all Egypt will raise his hand or his foot.”

²⁶Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-paneah^u and gave him Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara, priest of On, as his wife. So Joseph traveled over the country of Egypt.

²⁷Joseph was 30 when he started to serve Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Joseph left Pharaoh and traveled through the whole country of Egypt. ²⁸In the 7 years of plenty the land produced richly. ²⁹During these 7 years of plenty that came in Egypt he gathered all the food and put this food in the cities, storing in each city the food from the fields around it. ³⁰The grain that Joseph heaped up was like the sand by the

sea, so very much that finally no record was kept, because it couldn’t be measured.

³¹Joseph and Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara, priest of On, had two sons before the years of the famine. ³²He called the first Manasseh,^v thinking, “God has helped me forget all my misery and all my father’s house.” ³³He called the second son Ephraim,^w thinking, “God has made me fruitful in the country where I suffered.”

³⁴The 7 years during which there was plenty in Egypt came to an end. ³⁵and the 7 years of famine began as Joseph had said, and there was a famine in every country; but there was food in all Egypt. ³⁶When the whole land of Egypt was suffering from hunger, the people cried to Pharaoh for food, but Pharaoh told all the Egyptians, “Go to Joseph; do what he tells you.”

³⁷When the famine was all over the country, Joseph opened all the granaries and sold grain to the Egyptians. The famine was getting very bad in Egypt. ³⁸Since the famine was severe all over the world, the whole world came to Joseph in Egypt to buy grain.

Jacob Sends Sons to Egypt

42 When Jacob found out there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons, “Why do you just look at one another?” ²He added, “I’ve heard there’s grain in Egypt. Go down there, and buy some grain for us there so we may live and not die.”

³Ten of Joseph’s brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt. ⁴But Jacob didn’t let Benjamin, Joseph’s

41
40-41 Acts
7:10
43 Acts 7:10
56 Acts 7:11
Jn 25
58 Acts 7:11
42
1-2 Acts
7:12

^u Possibly “Nourisher-of-the-Land-of-the-Living-One”

^v “Help-Forget” ^w “Double-Fruit”

brother, go with the other brothers; he was afraid some harm would come to him. ⁵So Israel's sons went to buy grain with the others who were going, because there was a famine in Canaan.

⁶Joseph, the ruler of the country, was selling grain to all the people of the country when Joseph's brothers came and bowed down with their faces on the ground before him. ⁷When Joseph saw his brothers, he recognized them. But he acted like a stranger toward them and spoke harshly to them. "Where did you come from?" he asked them.

"From Canaan," they answered. "to buy food."

⁸Joseph knew his brothers, but they didn't know him. ⁹And Joseph remembered what he once dreamed about them. "You're spies," he told them. "and you came to find out where the country is unprotected."

¹⁰"No, my lord!" they answered him. "Your servants have come to buy grain for food. ¹¹"We're all one man's sons. We're honest men. Your servants are no spies."

¹²But he told them, "No! You came to find out where the country is unprotected."

¹³"Your servants are twelve brothers," they answered him. "the sons of one man in Canaan. The youngest is now with our father, and the other is no more."

¹⁴"It's just as I told you," Joseph said to them. "You're spies. ¹⁵This is how you'll be tested: as Pharaoh lives, you won't get away from here unless your youngest brother comes here. ¹⁶"Send one of you to get your brother while the rest of you stay in prison; and so you'll be tested to see if you're telling the truth. If not, as Pharaoh lives, you're spies." ¹⁷He put them all in prison for 3 days.

¹⁸On the third day Joseph told them, "Do this and live—I too fear God— ¹⁹if you're honest men, let one brother stay bound in prison, and the rest of you go and take grain to feed your hungry families. ²⁰And bring me your youngest brother. Then you'll show you told the truth, and you won't die." And so they did.

²¹Then they said to one another, "Surely we're suffering punishment for the wrong we did our brother. We saw his grief when he pleaded with us for mercy, but we wouldn't listen. This is why this grief has come on us."

²²"Didn't I tell you," Reuben said to them, "Don't sin against the boy? But you wouldn't listen. Yes, now we're being punished for the wrong we did to him."

²³They didn't know Joseph understood them—he used an interpreter when he talked to them.

²⁴He turned away from them and wept. Coming back, he talked to them. Then he took Simeon from them and had him bound while they were watching.

²⁵Then Joseph gave the order to fill their sacks with grain, to put each one's money back into his sack, and to give them the food they would need on the way. This was done for them.

²⁶They loaded their grain on their donkeys and left. ²⁷At the place where they stopped for the night one of them opened his sack to feed his donkey, and he saw his money—there it was on top of the grain in the sack! ²⁸"My money has been put back!" he told his brothers. "Look! It's in my sack." Their hearts sank, and with trembling they turned to one another and asked, "What has God done to us?"

The Brothers Report to Jacob

³⁵They came to their father Jacob in Canaan and told him everything that had happened to them and said. ³⁶"The lord of the land spoke harshly to us and accused us of spying in the country. "We're honest," we told him; "we're no spies. ³⁷We're twelve brothers, one man's sons. One is no more, and the youngest is now with our father in Canaan." ³⁸The lord of the land told us, "This is how I'll know you're honest: leave one brother with me, take food for your hungry families, and go. ³⁹And bring me your youngest brother; then I'll know you're no spies but honest men. I'll give you your brother, and you can be free to trade in this country."

⁴⁰When they emptied their sacks, there was each one's bag of money in his sack. Seeing their bags of money, they and their father were frightened.

⁴¹"You take away my children," their father Jacob told them. "Joseph is no more, Simeon is no more, and now you're taking Benjamin. All these things are happening to me!"

⁴²"If I don't bring him to you," Reuben told his father, "you may kill my two sons. Put him in my hands, and I'll bring him back to you."

⁴³"My son will not go down with you," he said; "his brother is dead, and he's the only one left. If harm comes to him on your way, you will bring my gray hair down in grief to the grave."

To Egypt Again for Food

43 There was a bitter need for food in the country. ²When all the grain they brought from Egypt had been eaten, the

father said to his sons, "Go back and buy us a little to eat."

"The man warned us," Judah told him. "You won't see me if your brother isn't with you." "If you let our brother go with us, we'll go down and buy food for you. "But if you won't let him go, we won't go down, because the man told us. "You won't see me if your brother isn't with you."

"Israel asked, "Why did you bring this trouble on me by telling the man you had another brother?"

"They said, "The man kept asking about us and our family: 'Is your father still living? Do you have another brother?' So we told him what he asked for. Could we know he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'"

"Then Judah told his father Israel, "Let the young man go with me, and let's be on our way so we and you and our families will live and not die. "I will guarantee he'll come back. You can demand him from me. If I don't bring him back to you and put him before you, blame me for it forever. "If we hadn't waited so long, we could have been back twice by now."

"If it must be so," their father Israel told them, "then do this: In your sacks take some of the best products of the land, and bring the man a gift—a little balm, a little honey, gum, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds. "Take along a double amount of money—yes, take back with you the money returned to you in your sacks—maybe there was a mistake. "And take your brother, start out, and go back to the man. "May God Almighty make the man merciful to you so he will let you have your other brother as well

as Benjamin. And I—if I lose my children, I lose my children.”

Dinner with Joseph

“The men took these gifts and double the money with them and also Benjamin. They started out, went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph.

“When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he told the manager of his home, “Take these men to the palace, butcher some animals, and prepare a meal—these men are going to eat with me this noon.”

“The man did as Joseph told him and took the men to Joseph’s home. “Being brought to Joseph’s home frightened the men. “They’re bringing us here,” they said, “because of the money that was put back into our sacks on the first trip. Accusing us, they’ll attack us and take us and our donkeys and make us slaves.”

“So they came to the manager of Joseph’s home and talked to him at the door of the house. “If you please, sir,” they said, “when we came down to buy food the first time and then stopped at a place for the night, we opened our sacks, and there in the opening of each one’s sack was his money, the full sum of it. So we’ve brought it back with us. “We also brought with us a second sum of money to buy food. We have no idea who put our money into our sacks.”

““It’s all right!” he said. “Don’t be afraid! Your God and the God of your father has given you a treasure in your sacks. I got your money.” Then he brought Simeon out to them.

“The man took the brothers into Joseph’s home. He gave them water to wash their feet and feed for their donkeys. “They got their present

ready for Joseph, who was coming at noon, for they had heard they were going to eat there. “When Joseph came home, they brought him the present they had carried into the house, and they bowed to the ground before him.

““Are you well?” he asked them. “Is your father well, the old man you mentioned? Is he still living?”

““Your servant, our father, is well,” they answered. “He’s still living.” Then they bowed down to show their respect for him.

“Looking around, he saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother’s son. “Is this your youngest brother you mentioned to me?” he asked. “God be kind to you, my son,” he said. “With his heart yearning for his brother, he hurried away, looking for a place to cry. He went into an inner room and wept there. “Then he washed his face, came out, and controlled himself. “Serve the food,” he said.

“He was served by himself, and they by themselves, and the Egyptians who were eating with him by themselves. The Egyptians couldn’t eat with the Hebrews: it was something abominable to them. “When they were seated facing him according to their ages, from the oldest to the youngest, the men looked at one another in surprise.

“From Joseph’s table a special gift of food was brought to them, but Benjamin was served five times as many gifts of food as any of the others. So they feasted and drank wine with him.

The Final Test

44 Joseph gave orders to the manager of his home. “Fill the men’s sacks with as much food as they can carry,” he said,

"put each man's money on top of the grain in his sack, ²and put my cup, the silver cup, with the money for his grain in the sack of the youngest brother." He did what Joseph told him.

³At dawn the men and their donkeys were sent on their way. They had left the city but not gone far when Joseph told the manager of his home, "Go and follow the men, and when you catch up with them, say to them, 'Why have you paid back evil for good? ⁴Isn't this the cup my lord drinks from and uses to tell what is unknown? You did wrong!'" ⁵When he caught up with them, he said that to them.

⁷"Why should my lord say such things?" they answered him. "Your servants would never think of doing anything like that! ⁸Look, we brought back to you from Canaan the money we found on top of the grain in our sacks. How then could we steal silver or gold from your master's home? ⁹If it is found with any one of your servants, he dies, and the rest of us will be my lord's slaves."

¹⁰"Though it may be as you say," he said, "only he who has it will be my slave, but the rest of you will be free."

¹¹Each one quickly took down his sack, put it on the ground, and opened it. ¹²They searched, beginning with the oldest and ending with the youngest, and found the cup in Benjamin's sack. ¹³Then they tore their clothes.

After each one loaded his donkey, they went back into the city. ¹⁴Judah and his brothers went to Joseph's home. He was still there. They fell down to the ground before him.

¹⁵"What have you done?" Joseph

asked them. "Don't you know a man like me knows the unknown?"

¹⁶"What can we answer my lord?" Judah said. "What can we say? How can we prove we're innocent? God has found out the guilt of your servants. Here we are, we others as well as he who was found to have the cup; we are my lord's slaves."

¹⁷"I wouldn't think of doing that!" he said. "The man who was found to have the cup will be my slave, but the rest of you, go unharmed to your father."

"I Am Joseph"

¹⁸Then Judah went up to Joseph. "Please, my lord," he said, "let your servant say something to my lord, and don't get angry with your servant, because you are like Pharaoh. ¹⁹My lord asked his servants, 'Do you have a father or a brother?'"

²⁰"We have an old father," we told my lord, "and a young man who was born when our father was old. His brother is dead, and so he's the only one left of his mother's sons, and his father loves him."

²¹"Bring him down to me," you told your servants, "so I can lay my eyes on him."

²²"The young man can't leave his father," we told my lord. "If the young man leaves him, his father will die."

²³"If your young brother doesn't come down with you," you told your servants, "you won't see me again."

²⁴"When we went up to your servant, my father, we told him what my lord said."

²⁵"Then our father said, 'Go back and buy a little for us to eat.'"

²⁶"We can't go down," we answered. "If our youngest brother

goes with us, we can go down. But we can't see the man if our youngest brother isn't with us.'

27 "You know my wife and I had two sons,' your servant, my father, said to us. 28 "One left me, and I had to say he is certainly torn in pieces. I haven't seen him to this day. 29 "If you take this one away from me too and he dies by accident, you'll bring my gray head down in grief to the grave.'

30 "So you see, when I come to your servant, my father, and the young man isn't with us—his father's life is so bound up with his life— "when he sees the young man isn't with us, he'll die, and your servants will bring the gray hair of your servant, our father, in grief to the grave.

31 "Your servant became responsible for the young man to my father and said, 'If I don't bring him back to you, then you, my father, may blame me for it forever.' 32 "And now, please let your servant stay and be my lord's slave in the young man's place, but let the young man go back with his brothers. 33 "How can I go back to my father if the young man isn't with me? I don't want to see the misery that will come to my father."

45 Then Joseph could no longer hold back his feelings before all who were standing near him, and he called, "Have everyone leave me."

There was no one with Joseph when he told his brothers who he was. 34 He cried so loud that the Egyptians heard it, and the people in Pharaoh's palace heard about it. 35 "I am Joseph!" he told his brothers. 36 "Is my father still living?" But he frightened his brothers so much they couldn't answer him. 37 "Please

come closer," Joseph told his brothers. When they came closer, he said, "I am Joseph, your brother; you sold me into Egypt. 38 "And now, don't feel sad or angry about your selling me here; God sent me ahead of you to save lives. 39 "For two years now the famine has been in the land, and there will be five more years in which plowing will yield no harvest. 40 "God sent me ahead of you to arrange for you to have descendants left over on the earth and to keep you alive by a great deliverance. 41 "And so it wasn't you but God who sent me here. Yes, he made me a father to Pharaoh, lord of his whole palace, and ruler of all Egypt. 42 "Hurry back to my father, and tell him, 'Your son Joseph says, "God has made me lord of all Egypt. 43 "Come down to me, and don't delay! Live in the land of Goshen, and be near me, you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks, your herds, and everything you have. 44 "I will provide for you there. There are five more years of famine. Otherwise you, your family, and all who belong to you will lose everything.' 45 "You and my brother Benjamin can see with your own eyes that I am talking to you. 46 "Tell my father about all my glory in Egypt, about everything you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here."

47 He hugged his brother Benjamin and wept while Benjamin wept on his neck. 48 He kissed all his brothers and wept on their shoulders, and after that his brothers talked with him.

Jacob Sees Joseph Again

49 "When the people in Pharaoh's palace heard the news, 50 "Joseph's brothers have come," Pharaoh and

45
1 Act 7:13
4 Act 7:9

his servants were pleased. ¹⁷Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Tell your brothers, 'Do this: Load your animals and go to Canaan. ¹⁸Take your father and your families, and come to me, and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt: then live off the fat of the land.' ¹⁹You are also ordered to tell them, 'Do this: Take wagons with you from Egypt for your children and your wives. Bring your father and come. ²⁰Don't try to save your things, because the good things in all Egypt are yours.' "

²¹Israel's sons did this. As Pharaoh had ordered, Joseph gave them wagons and food for the trip. He gave each of them fresh garments, but to Benjamin he gave 300 shekels of silver and five changes of clothes. ²²He also sent his father 10 male donkeys, carrying Egypt's good products, and 10 female donkeys, carrying grain, food, and provisions for his father on the trip. ²³As he dismissed his brothers and they were leaving, Joseph told them, "Don't quarrel on the way."

²⁴They left Egypt and went up to their father Jacob in Canaan. ²⁵"Joseph is still living," they told him, "and he is ruler of all Egypt." But he showed no enthusiasm, because he didn't believe them. ²⁷But when they told him everything Joseph said to them and when he saw the wagons Joseph sent to bring him, their father Jacob took on new life. ²⁸"Enough!" Israel said. "My son Joseph is still living. I will go and see him before I die."

46 Israel moved with all he had. When he came to Beer-sheba, he offered sacrifices to the

^x Compare vv. 8-25 with Num. 26:5-50

God of his father Isaac.

²God spoke to Israel in a vision at night. "Jacob, Jacob!" He said.

"Yes," he answered.

"I am God, the God of your father," He said. "Don't be afraid to go down to Egypt, because I will make you a great people there. I will go down to Egypt with you and bring you back again. And Joseph's hand will close your eyes."

³Jacob moved from Beer-sheba. Israel's sons took their father Jacob, their children, and their wives in the wagons Pharaoh sent to get them. ⁴They also took their cattle and the other livestock they had acquired in Canaan. And so Jacob and all his family came to Egypt. ⁷He took with him to Egypt his sons, his grandsons, his daughters, his granddaughters—all his offspring.

⁸These are the names of Israel's descendants who came to Egypt:^x Jacob and his sons. Jacob's first son was Reuben. ⁹Reuben's sons were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. ¹⁰Simeon's sons: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul, the son of a woman of Canaan. ¹¹Levi's sons: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. ¹²Judah's descendants: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah, but Er and Onan died in Canaan. Perez' sons: Hezron and Hamul. ¹³Issachar's sons: Tola, Puvah, Job, and Shimron. ¹⁴Zebulun's sons: Sered, Elon, and Jahleel. ¹⁵These were the sons of Leah and Jacob in the plain of Aram; also his daughter Dinah. The total number of these descendants was 33.

¹⁶Gad's sons: Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli. ¹⁷Asher's sons: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah, and their sister Serah. Beriah's sons: Heber and Malchiel. ¹⁸These are the sons

⁴⁶
6 Actb 7:15

of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Leah; she bore these for Jacob—16 descendants.

¹⁹The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel are Joseph and Benjamin. ²⁰In Egypt Joseph and Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, had the sons Manasseh and Ephraim. ²¹Benjamin's sons: Bela, Becher, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard. ²²These are the sons of Rachel and Jacob. The total was 14.

²³Dan's son: Hushim. ²⁴Naphtali's sons: Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem. ²⁵These are the sons of Bilhah, whom Laban gave to his daughter Rachel; she bore these for Jacob. The total was 7.

²⁶The total of Jacob's descendants who went down to Egypt, not counting the wives of Jacob's sons, was 66. ²⁷Joseph had two sons born in Egypt. *The total of Jacob's family coming to Egypt was 70.*

²⁷ Acts 7:14
47
⁹ Heb 11:13

²⁸He sent Judah ahead of him to Joseph to show the way ahead to Goshen. And so they came to Goshen.

²⁹Joseph hitched up his chariot and rode to Goshen to meet his father Israel. When he met him, he put his arms around his neck and wept there a long while.

³⁰"Now that I've seen you, I'm ready to die," Israel told Joseph. "because you're still living."

Jacob Before Pharaoh

¹"I'm going to Pharaoh and report to him," Joseph told his brothers and his father's family. "I will tell him. 'My brothers and my father's family, who were in Canaan, have come to me. ²The men are shepherds, for they have been cattlemen, and they've brought their flocks and herds and every-

thing they have.' ³Now when Pharaoh calls for you and asks, 'What is your work?' ⁴you answer, 'Your servants, like their fathers, have been cattlemen from their youth till now,' so that you may live in Goshen, because Egyptians detest all shepherds."

47 Joseph went and told Pharaoh. "My father and my brothers have come from Canaan with their flocks, herds, and everything they have and are now in Goshen."

"Selecting five of his brothers, he introduced them to Pharaoh. "What is your work?" Pharaoh asked his brothers.

"Your servants," they answered Pharaoh, "like our fathers, are shepherds. 'We have come to stay in this country for awhile,'" they told Pharaoh, "because there is a bitter famine in Canaan and your servants have no pasture for their flocks. And now please let your servants live in Goshen."

"Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Your father and your brothers have come to you. 'The land of Egypt lies before you. Have your father and your brothers live in the best part of the country; let them live in Goshen. If you know of any among them who have special ability, make them overseers of my cattle.'"

"Then Joseph brought his father Jacob and introduced him to Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

"How old are you?" Pharaoh asked Jacob.

"I have been living as a pilgrim on earth a hundred and thirty years," Jacob told Pharaoh. "The years of my life have been few and

unhappy, not as many as the years my fathers were granted.”¹⁰ Then Jacob blessed Pharaoh and left him.

¹¹As Pharaoh had ordered, Joseph had his father and his brothers live in the best part of Egypt, in the land of Rameses, and gave them property there; ¹²and Joseph provided his father, his brothers, and all his father’s household with food according to the size of their families.

Food for the Hungry

¹³The famine was very severe, and there was no food anywhere in the country, because Egypt and Canaan were exhausted by the famine. ¹⁴Joseph collected all the money that could be found in Egypt and in Canaan as payment for the grain people bought, and Joseph took the money to Pharaoh’s palace. ¹⁵When there was no more money in Egypt and in Canaan, all the Egyptians kept coming to Joseph. “Give us food,” they said. “Why should we die right in front of you? There is no more money!”

¹⁶“If there’s no more money,” Joseph said, “give me your cattle, and in exchange for them I’ll give you food.”

¹⁷They brought their animals to Joseph, and Joseph gave them food in exchange for horses, sheep, goats, cattle, and donkeys, and so he got them through that year with food in exchange for all their animals. ¹⁸That year went by. Then they came to him the next year. “We’ll not hide from my lord,” they told him. “that since all our money and animals have gone to my lord, there’s nothing left to bring to my lord except ourselves and our land.

¹⁹Why should we and our land perish before your eyes? Take us and our land in exchange for food then we and our land will serve Pharaoh. But give us seed, so that we will live and not die and the ground will not lie waste.”

²⁰Every Egyptian was so badly in need of food that he sold his land and Joseph bought all the land for Pharaoh. And so the land became Pharaoh’s. ²¹He moved the people to the cities,^y from one end of Egypt to the other. ²²But he didn’t buy the land of the priests, because Pharaoh had given the priests an income, and they lived on the income Pharaoh had given them. So they didn’t sell their land.

²³Joseph told the people. “Now I have bought you and your land for Pharaoh. Here is seed for you. Sow the land. ²⁴In the harvest you will give a fifth to Pharaoh, and four fifths will be yours to sow the fields and feed yourselves, your households, and your children.”

²⁵“You have kept us alive,” they answered. “May our lord be kind to us, and we will be Pharaoh’s slaves.”

²⁶Joseph made a law still in force today in the land of Egypt: Pharaoh gets a fifth. Only the land of the priests wouldn’t be Pharaoh’s.

Jacob’s Last Days

²⁷Israel lived in Goshen in Egypt, and they owned property there, had children, and became very numerous.

²⁸Jacob lived in Egypt 17 years, and so he lived to be 147.

²⁹The time came near for Israel to die. He called his son Joseph. “If you are kind to me,” he told him, “put

^y Gk and other versions made the people serve as slaves

your hand under my thigh as a pledge that you love me and are faithful to me. Please don't bury me in Egypt. ¹⁰I will rest with my fathers. Take me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burial place."

"I will do as you say," he answered.

"Swear to me," he said. And he swore to him. Then Israel bowed down on the head of his bed.

Ephraim and Manasseh

48 Later Joseph was told: "Your father is sick." So he took his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim with him.

²When Jacob was told, "Your son Joseph is coming to you," Israel rallied his strength and sat up in bed.

"God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in Canaan," Jacob told Joseph, "and blessed me 'and told me, 'I will give you many descendants and make you a group of nations, and I will give your descendants after you this land for an everlasting possession.' 'And now your two sons who were born in Egypt before I came to you in Egypt are my sons. Ephraim and Manasseh belong to me like Reuben and Simeon. 'Any other children you may have after them will be yours: in their inheritance they will bear their brothers' names. 'When I came from the plain of Aram, I had the grief of Rachel dying in Canaan when we were traveling and I was still some distance from Ephrath, and I buried her on the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem."

"Seeing Joseph's sons, Israel asked, "Who are these?"

"They are my sons," Joseph told his father, "whom God gave me here."

"Please bring them to me," he answered, "and I will bless them."

¹⁰Israel's eyesight was poor because he was old; he couldn't see well. When Joseph brought his sons to him, he kissed them and hugged them. "'I didn't expect to see you," Israel said to Joseph, "and here God even lets me see your sons."

¹²Joseph took them away from Jacob's knees and bowed with his face on the ground.

¹³Then Joseph took both of them, Ephraim with his right hand, at Israel's left, and Manasseh with his left, at Israel's right, and so he brought them to him. ¹⁴But Israel stretched out his right hand and put it on Ephraim's head although he was the younger; and crossing his hands, he put his left hand on Manasseh's head although Manasseh was the older.

¹⁵Then Jacob blessed Joseph: "God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, God, who has been my Shepherd all my life till now, ¹⁶the Angel who delivered me from all evil, bless the young men. Let them be called by my name and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac. May they have very many descendants in the middle of the land."

¹⁷When Joseph saw his father put his right hand on Ephraim's head, he didn't like it. He took hold of his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's. ¹⁸"Not that way, my father," Joseph told his father; "this is the firstborn. Put your right hand on his head."

¹⁹But his father refused. "I know, my son, I know!" he said. "He too will become a people, and he too will be great, but his younger brother will be greater than he, and his

³¹ Heb 11:21
48
⁴ Acts 7:5

descendants will be as large as a nation."

²⁰That day he blessed them, saying, "Israel will say blessings by referring to you and saying, 'God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh!'" So he put Ephraim before Manasseh.

²¹"Now I'm dying," Israel told Joseph, "but God will be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers. ²²And I'm giving you one mountain ridge more than your brothers, a ridge I took from the Amorites with my sword and my bow."

Jacob Prophecies

49 Jacob called for his sons. "Come together," he said, "and I will tell you what will happen to you in the future.

¹Gather and hear, sons of Jacob, and listen to your father Israel.

¹R e u b e n, you are my first son, my strength and the first child of my manly vigor,

excellent in dignity and excellent in strength

⁴but as uncontrolled as water; you will not excel,

because you went up on your father's bed;

then you defiled the couch you went up on.

⁵S i m e o n and L e v i are brothers.

Their tools are weapons of violence.

⁶I refuse to get into their secret planning,

and my heart does not join their council.

When they were angry, they murdered men;

in self-will they cut the leg tendons of cattle.

⁷A curse on their anger—it was fierce;

a curse on their fury—it was cruel.

I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.

⁸J u d a h, your brothers will praise you—

Your hand will be on the necks of your enemies.

Your father's sons will bow down before you.

⁹J u d a h is a young lion;

You have come up from eating the prey, my son.

He crouches and stretches out like a lion;

As a mature lion, who will rouse him?

¹⁰The scepter will not pass away from Judah

Or a ruler from between his feet
Till SHILOH [Man of Rest]

comes,

Whom the nations will obey.

¹¹He will tie his donkey to a vine,

His donkey's colt to the choice vine.

He will wash his clothes in wine

And his garment in the blood of grapes.

¹²His eyes are dark from wine

And his teeth white from milk.

¹³Z e b u l u n will live toward the seashore

and will be a harbor for ships, and his border will touch Sidon.

¹⁴I s s a c h a r is a bony donkey, lying down between the sheep-pens.

¹⁵When he sees that rest is good and the land is pleasant,

he offers his shoulder to carry loads

and becomes a slave laborer.

¹⁶D a n will judge his people

as one of Israel's tribes.

49
9 Rv 5:5
11 Rv 7:14;
Rv 22:14

¹⁷Dan will be a snake on a road,
a horned snake on a path,
that bites a horse's heels
and makes its rider fall off
backwards.

¹⁸I am waiting for Your salvation,
LORD.

¹⁹A band shall raid G a d,
but he will raid their rear.

²⁰From A s h e r will come rich
foods;
he will provide dainties for a
king.

²¹N a p h t a l i is a doe set free
that produces beautiful fawns.^z

²²J o s e p h is a young wild
donkey,
a young wild donkey by a spring;
a wild colt by a wall.^a

²³When the archers bitterly
opposed him,
shot at him, and kept attacking
him.

²⁴his bow stayed steady,
and his arms moved nimbly
with the help of the Mighty One
of Jacob—
because of the Shepherd, the
Rock of Israel—

²⁵even of the God of your father,
who helps you.
May the Almighty bless you
with blessings from the heavens
above,
blessings of the deep lying
below,
and blessings of breasts and
womb.

²⁶The blessings of your father
are greater than the blessings of
the eternal mountains
and the bounties of the everlast-
ing hills.

May these blessings be on
Joseph's head,
on the brow of the one who is
prince among his brothers.

²⁷B e n j a m i n is a wolf tearing
his prey,
in the morning devouring it
and in the evening dividing the
spoil.^{''}

²⁸All these are the 12 tribes of
Israel, and this is what their father
told them when he gave each of them
his special blessing.

Bury Me with My Fathers

²⁹Then he gave them instructions.
"I will soon be gathered to my
people," he told them. "Bury me
with my fathers in the cave in the
field of Ephron the Hittite, ³⁰the
cave that is in the field of
Machpelah, east of Mamre in
Canaan. Abraham bought that field
from Ephron the Hittite for a burial
place. ³¹There Abraham and his
wife Sarah were buried, there Isaac
and his wife Rebekah were buried,
and there I buried Leah. ³²The
field and the cave in it were bought
from the Hittites."

³³When Jacob finished his in-
structions to his sons, he drew his
feet up into the bed, *breathed his
last*, and was gathered to his people.

50 Joseph bent down over his
father's face, wept over
him, and kissed him. ²Joseph
ordered the doctors among his men
to embalm his father, and so they
embalmed Israel, ³spending 40
days at it; that was how long it took
to embalm. And the Egyptians
mourned for him 70 days.

^z *Heb difficult: perhaps he speaks beautiful words*

^a *Heb difficult: perhaps Joseph is a branch of a fruitful vine, a branch of a fruitful vine by a spring; his branches climb over a wall*

"When the time of mourning for him was over, Joseph talked to the men at Pharaoh's palace. "If you will be kind to me," he said. "talk to Pharaoh and tell him. "My father made me swear, saying, "You see, I'm dying. Bury me in the grave I dug for myself in Canaan." And now, please let me go up and bury my father, and then I'll come back."

"Go up," Pharaoh said, "and bury your father as he had you swear."

"So Joseph went up to bury his father, and all Pharaoh's men, the elders of his palace, and all the elders of Egypt went with him; also all of Joseph's household, his brothers, and his father's household; only their children, their flocks, and their cattle did they leave in Goshen. Also chariots and horsemen went with him, so that it was a very large caravan.

"When they came to the threshing floor of Atad, alongside the Jordan, they held a very loud and sorrowful mourning. For 7 days Joseph held a mourning for his father. "When the people living in Canaan saw the mourning on the threshing floor of Atad, they said, "The Egyptians are having a great mourning." And so it was called Abel-mizraim;^b it's along the Jordan.

"And so Jacob's sons did just as he had ordered them: "When they had taken him into Canaan, they buried him in the cave in the field at Machpelah, east of Mamre, which Abraham had bought from Ephron the Hittite for a burial place.

"After Joseph had buried his father, he and his brothers and all who had gone up with him to bury his father went back to Egypt.

^b "Mourning-of-the-Egyptians"

"What if Joseph Bears a Grudge?"

"When Joseph's brothers realized their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph bears a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrong we did him?" "So they sent a messenger to Joseph to say, "Before your father died, he ordered: "Tell Joseph, "Please forgive the crime and sin of your brothers; they did wrong to you." And so please forgive the wrong done by the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they talked to him. "Then the brothers also came and bowed down before him. "Look," they said, "we are ready to be your slaves."

"Don't be afraid!" Joseph told them. "Am I in God's place? "You meant to do me harm, but God meant to do good. He wanted to do as He now has done—to keep alive many people. "And so don't be afraid! I will provide for you and your children." So he comforted them and talked to their hearts.

Joseph Dies

"Joseph and his father's family lived in Egypt. Joseph lived to be 110. "Joseph saw his grandchildren, Ephraim's children, and the children of Machir, Manasse's son; they were born on Joseph's knees.

"Joseph told his brothers, "I am dying, but God will surely visit you and take you out of this land to the land He swore to give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." "Joseph made Israel's sons swear, saying, "When God visits you, take my body away from here."

"Joseph died when he was 110 and was embalmed and put in a coffin in Egypt.

THE SECOND BOOK OF MOSES

COMMONLY CALLED

EXODUS

Birth of a Nation

1 Here are the names of Israel's sons, who came with Jacob to Egypt. Each came with his family. ²Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah; ³Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin; ⁴Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher. ⁵The total number of Jacob's descendants was 75.^a Joseph being already in Egypt.

⁶Joseph died and so did all his brothers and all others who lived at that time. ⁷The people of Israel had many children; and as they grew in numbers, they became stronger and stronger and filled the country.

A New King

⁸Then a new king, who didn't remember Joseph, started to rule over Egypt. ⁹He told his people: "You see that the people of Israel are too many and too strong for us. ¹⁰Come, let us be wise in dealing with them, or they will keep on growing; and when a war breaks out, they will join our enemies, fight against us, and leave the country."

¹¹Slave drivers were appointed to make their lives miserable with hard work. They built Pithom and Rameses as storage cities for Pharaoh. ¹²But the more the Israelites were oppressed, the more they grew and spread, and the Egyptians were afraid of them. ¹³The Egyptians forced the Israelites to work extremely hard as slaves ¹⁴and made their lives bitter with

hard work in clay and bricks and every kind of labor in the fields—all the work they made them do was extremely hard.

¹⁵Then the king of Egypt talked to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah. ¹⁶"When you help the Hebrew women give birth to a child, examine the child," he said. "If it is a boy, kill him; if it is a girl, let her live."

¹⁷But the midwives feared God and didn't do what the king of Egypt told them; they let the boys live. ¹⁸So the king of Egypt called the midwives. "Why did you do this?" he asked them. "Why did you let the boys live?"

¹⁹"Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women," the midwives answered Pharaoh. "When they're in labor, they have their babies before a midwife comes to them." ²⁰God was good to the midwives. So the people grew and became very strong. ²¹And because the midwives feared God, He gave them families of their own.

²²Then Pharaoh gave an order to all his people. "Throw every Hebrew boy that is born into the river," he said, "but let every girl live."

Moses Is Born

2 A man from Levi's family went and married a Levite woman. ²The woman conceived and had a son. She saw he was a fine boy and hid him for three

1
5 Acts 7:
14-15
7-8 Acts 7:
17-19
10-11 Acts 7:
17-19
22 Acts 7:
17-19
2
2 Acts 7:20:
Heb 11:23

^aDead Sea Scrolls; cf. Acts 7:14

months. ³When she couldn't hide him any longer, she got for him a basket made of papyrus reeds; she smeared it with asphalt and pitch, put the boy in it, and set it among the reeds near the bank of the river. ⁴His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.

⁵Pharaoh's daughter went to bathe by the river, and her maids were walking along the bank of the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to get it. ⁶She opened the basket and saw the child: It was a boy, and he was crying. She felt sorry for him. "This is one of the babies of the Hebrews," she said.

⁷Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Should I go and call a nursing woman of the Hebrews to nurse the baby for you?"

⁸"Go!" Pharaoh's daughter told her. So the girl went and called the baby's mother.

⁹"Take this child," Pharaoh's daughter told her, "nurse him for me, and I will pay you."

The woman took the child and nursed him. ¹⁰When the child had grown, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She called him Moses, saying, "It is because I took him out of the water."

Moses Flees

¹¹One day, when Moses had become a man, he went out to his own people and saw how hard they were working. There he saw an Egyptian striking a Hebrew, one of his own people. ¹²He looked around and, seeing nobody, killed the Egyptian and buried him in the sand.

¹³When he went out the next day, he saw two Hebrews fighting. "Why do you strike your fellow Hebrew?"

he asked the man who was doing wrong.

"Who made you a ruler and judge over us?" he asked. "Are you going to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Moses was frightened. "This thing certainly is known," he thought.

¹⁵When Pharaoh heard of it, he tried to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh and went to stay in the land of Midian.

As he was sitting by a well, ¹⁶the seven daughters of the priest of Midian came, drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. ¹⁷But some shepherds came and drove them away. So Moses got up and rescued them and watered their flock.

¹⁸They came to their father Reuel. "How did you get back so early today?" he asked them.

¹⁹"An Egyptian rescued us from the shepherds," they answered. "He also drew water for us and watered the flock."

²⁰"Where is he?" he asked his daughters. "Why did you leave the man there? Invite him to eat a meal."

²¹So Moses agreed to live with the man. He gave Moses his daughter Zipporah to be his wife. ²²She had a son, whom he called Gersham, saying, "I have become a stranger in a foreign land."

The Burning Bush

²³A long time passed, during which the king of Egypt died. But the Israelites continued to groan in their slavery, and their cries for help in their drudgery came up to God. ²⁴God heard their groaning and remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ²⁵God watched the people of Israel, and God cared.

5 Acts 7:21
10 Acts 7:21
11-12 Acts 7:
23-24, Heb
11:24
13-15 Acts 7:
26-29, 35
22 Acts 7:6, 29
23 Jn 5:4
24 Acts 7:34

3 Moses was watching the sheep of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. As he led the flock beyond the wilderness, he came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

"The LORD's Angel appeared to him in flames of fire coming out of a bush. He saw the bush burning without being burned up. "I'm going over there," Moses said, "to see this wonderful sight. Why doesn't the bush burn up?"

"When the LORD saw he had come over to see it, God called to him out of the bush: "Moses, Moses!"

"Yes," Moses answered.

"Don't come near," He said. "Take your sandals off your feet, because you are standing on holy ground." "Then He said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

"I have seen the misery of My people in Egypt," the LORD said, "and have heard them cry under their slave drivers. I know how they're suffering. ⁸And I have come down to rescue them from the Egyptians and take them out of that country up to a good and large country, a land flowing with milk and honey, where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites are. ⁹And now the cry of the Israelites has come to Me, and I also have seen how the Egyptians are oppressing them. ¹⁰Come now, I am sending you to Pharaoh, and you will bring My people Israel out of Egypt."

"Who am I," Moses asked God, "that I should go to Pharaoh and bring Israel out of Egypt?"

"I am with you," He said, "and this will be your proof that I sent

you: When you bring the people out of Egypt, you will serve God on this mountain."

"When I go to Israel," Moses answered God, "and I tell them, 'The God of your fathers sends me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is His name?' what should I answer them?"

"I AM WHO I AM," God answered Moses, and He added: "Tell Israel: 'I AM sends me to you.'"

"Again God talked to Moses: "Tell Israel: 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, sends me to you.' This is My name forever, and this is My title for the people of all coming ages. ¹⁶Go and

get the elders of Israel together. Tell them: 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, appeared to me. He said: I am very much concerned about you and how you're treated in Egypt, ¹⁷and I promise to take you out of the misery of Egypt to the country of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey.' ¹⁸They will listen to you. Then you and the elders of Israel will go to the king of Egypt and tell him: 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. And now we want to make a three-day journey into the wilderness to sacrifice to the LORD our God.' ¹⁹I know the king of Egypt will not let you go, not even if he feels a strong hand. ²⁰I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My wonders that I will do there, and after that he will let you go. ²¹I will move the Egyptians to be kind to these people, so that you will not go empty-handed when you leave.

3
2 Acts 7:30
5 Acts 7:33
6 Mt 22:32
Mt 12:26
Lk 20:27
Acts 3:13,
7:32
9 Ja 5:4
10 Acts 7:24
12 Acts 7:7,
15:10
14 Rv 1:4, 8:
4:8, 11:17,
16:5
Jn 8:58

"Each woman should ask her neighbor and any woman who stays at her home for jewelry of silver and gold and for clothes. Put them on your sons and daughters, and in this way you will take the Egyptians' goods."

Moses' Rod

4 "But they won't believe me or listen to me," Moses answered; "they will say, 'The LORD didn't appear to you.'"

"What is that in your hand?" the LORD asked him.

"A rod," he answered.

"Throw it on the ground," He said.

He threw it on the ground, and it became a snake. Moses ran away from it.

"Then the LORD told Moses, 'Reach and grab it by the tail.'" He reached and caught it, and it turned back into a rod in his hand. ¹⁹"This is to convince the people that the LORD, the God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, did appear to you."

"The LORD spoke to him again: 'Put your hand in your bosom.'" He put his hand in his bosom. When he took it out, his hand was diseased, as white as snow. ²¹"Put your hand back in your bosom," He said. He put his hand back in his bosom, and when he took it out of his bosom, it was again like the rest of his body.

⁸"If they won't believe you or be persuaded by the first miracle, they should believe this last one. ⁹If they won't even believe these two miracles or listen to you, take some water from the river, pour it on the dry ground, and the water you took from the river will turn to blood on the dry ground."

"O Lord," Moses said to the LORD, "I'm no speaker. I never have been a speaker, not even now that You have spoken to Your servant: my speech is slow, and my tongue is awkward."

"Who made man's mouth?" the LORD asked him. "Who makes him speechless, deaf, seeing, or blind? Don't I, the LORD?" ¹²And now go, and I will be with you as you speak and teach you what to say."

"O Lord," he said, "please send somebody else."

"Then the LORD got angry with Moses. "Haven't you a brother, Aaron the Levite?" He asked. "I know he speaks well. And now he's also coming out to meet you and will be very glad to see you. ¹⁵You will talk to him and tell him what to say, and I'll be with you as you talk and with him as he talks and will instruct both of you what to do. ¹⁶He will speak for you to the people and be a mouth for you while you will be like God to him. ¹⁷Take that rod in your hand, and do the miracles with it."

Moses Goes Back to Egypt

¹⁸Moses went back to his father-in-law Jethro. "Let me go back to my family in Egypt," he told him, "and see if they're still living."

"Go in peace," Jethro told Moses.

¹⁹The LORD told Moses in Midian, "Go back to Egypt, because all the men who tried to kill you are dead."

²⁰So Moses took his wife and his sons and put them on a donkey to go back to Egypt, and he took the rod of God in his hand.

²¹"When you go back to Egypt," the LORD told Moses, "see that you do before Pharaoh all the miracles I gave you the power to do, although I will make him stubborn, so that he

will not let the people go. ²²Tell Pharaoh: 'The LORD says: Israel is My firstborn son. ²³I tell you: Let My son go and serve Me. If you refuse to let him go, I'll kill your firstborn son.' "

²⁴While they were at a lodging place on the way, the LORD met him and tried to kill him. ²⁵Then Zipporah took a flint-stone knife, cut off her son's foreskin, and laid it at his feet. "You are a bridegroom by blood to me!" she said. ²⁶So God let him alone. Then, because of circumcision, she said, "A bridegroom of blood!"

²⁷The LORD told Aaron: "Go and meet Moses in the desert."

He went and met him at the mountain of God and kissed him. ²⁸Moses told Aaron everything the LORD sent him to say and all the miracles He ordered him to do.

²⁹Then Moses and Aaron went and called all the elders of Israel together. ³⁰Aaron told them everything the LORD said to Moses and did the miracles before the people. ³¹And the people believed. And when they heard that the LORD had visited Israel and seen their misery, they bowed down to the ground and worshiped.

Moses and Aaron Fail

5 After this Moses and Aaron went and spoke to Pharaoh: "The LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Let My people go and celebrate a festival for Me in the desert.' "

"Who is the LORD," Pharaoh asked, "that I should obey Him and let Israel go? I don't know the LORD, and I won't let Israel go."

"The God of the Hebrews has come to us!" they said. "Please let us go a three-day journey into the

desert and sacrifice to the LORD our God, or He may strike us with a plague or a sword."

"Moses and Aaron," the king of Egypt asked, "why do you keep the people from doing their work? Get back to your work! ³You see how many the people are in the land now," Pharaoh added, "yet you want to let them rest from their labors!"

⁴That day Pharaoh gave orders to the slave drivers and their foremen: "Don't give the people straw anymore to make bricks, as you did before; let them go and gather straw for themselves. ⁵Force them to make the same number of bricks they were making before; don't let them make less. They're lazy; that's why they're crying. 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' ⁶Make the work of the men harder so it will keep them too busy to listen to lies."

⁷The slave drivers and the foremen went out and told the people. "Pharaoh says: 'I'm not going to give you straw. ⁸Go and get straw for yourselves wherever you can find it, but you will not do less of your regular work.' "

⁹So the people scattered all over Egypt to gather stubble for straw. ¹⁰The slave drivers were driving them. "Each day finish the same amount of work," they said, "just as when straw was given to you."

¹¹Then the Israelite foremen whom Pharaoh's slave drivers had placed over Israel were beaten. "Why didn't you finish the number of bricks you were ordered to make, yesterday and today, as you used to do?" the slave drivers asked.

¹²The Israelite foremen went and complained to Pharaoh. "Why do

you treat your servants like this?" they asked. "Your servants are given no straw, and yet we're told, 'Make bricks,' and your servants are beaten, but the fault is with your men."

"You're lazy!" he told them. "Just lazy! That's why you say, 'We want to go and sacrifice to the LORD.' "Now, get to work. You will be given no straw, but you'll deliver the same number of bricks."

"The Israelite foremen saw they were in trouble when they were told, "Don't make fewer bricks each day than the regular number."

"They met Moses and Aaron, who were waiting for them as they left Pharaoh. "May the LORD see you and judge," the foremen told them, "because you have made us stink in the nostrils of Pharaoh and his servants and have put a sword in their hands to kill us."

"Moses turned back to the LORD. "O Lord," he asked, "why did You treat these people so badly? Why did You send me? "Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak in Your name, he has mistreated these people, and You have done nothing to deliver Your people!"

6 "Now you will see," the LORD told Moses, "what I will do to Pharaoh; because of My strong hand he will send them away, and because of My strong hand he will drive them out of his country." Again God spoke to Moses. "I am the LORD." He told him. "I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as God Almighty, but I didn't reveal Myself to them by My name 'the LORD.' "I also made My covenant with them, promising to

give them Canaan, the land where they were strangers. "And I have also heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians keep enslaved, and I have remembered My covenant. "And so tell the Israelites: 'I am the LORD; I will free you from the labor the Egyptians lay on you, deliver you from being their slaves; I will stretch out My arm and rescue you by great acts of judgment. "And I will take you to be My people, and I will be your God, and you will know that I the LORD am your God, the One freeing you from the toil the Egyptians lay on you. "I will bring you to the land I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you to be your own. I am the LORD.' "

"Moses said this to the Israelites, but they were too discouraged and had to work too hard to listen to him.

"Again the LORD spoke to Moses. "Go," He said, "and tell Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to let the Israelites leave his country."

"Not even the Israelites listened to me," Moses said before the LORD. "How will Pharaoh listen to me when I'm such a poor speaker?"^b

"But the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron and gave them orders to the Israelites and to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to get the Israelites out of Egypt.

Ancestry of Moses and Aaron

"These were the heads of their clans: The sons of Reuben, Israel's firstborn, were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. These were Reuben's families.

"Simeon's sons were Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and

⁶
6 Acts 13:17
7 2 Co 6:16;
Rv 21:3, 7

^bHeb have uncircumcised lips; see also v. 30

Shaul, the son of a woman from Canaan. These were Simeon's families.

"These are the names of Levi's sons as they were born: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. Levi lived 137 years. "Gershon's sons according to their families were Libni and Shimei. "Kohath's sons were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. Kohath lived 133 years. "Merari's sons were Mahli and Mushi. These were Levi's families as they were descended from him.

"Amram married his father's sister Jochebed, and their sons were Aaron and Moses. Amram lived 137 years.

"Izhar's sons were Korah, Nepheg, and Zichri. "Uzziel's sons were Mishael, Elzaphan, and Sithri.

"Aaron married Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab and sister of Nahshon, and they had the following children: Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. "Korah's sons were Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph. These were the families descended from Korah. "Aaron's son Eleazar married one of Putiel's daughters, and their son was Phinehas. These were the heads of Levi's clans according to their families.

"It was this Aaron and this Moses to whom the LORD said: "Bring the Israelites out of Egypt according to their camps." "Moses and Aaron were the men who talked to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to get the Israelites out of Egypt.

"On the day the LORD talked to Moses in Egypt "the LORD said to Moses: "I am the LORD. Tell Pharaoh, king of Egypt, everything I tell you."

"You see, I'm a poor speaker."

Moses said before the LORD. "How will Pharaoh listen to me?"

7 "See, I have made you like a god to Pharaoh," the LORD told Moses, "and your brother Aaron will be your prophet. "Tell him everything I order you to say, and your brother Aaron will tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave his country. "But I will make Pharaoh stubborn. And I will do many miracles and wonders in Egypt. "When Pharaoh refuses to listen to you, I will lay My hand on Egypt and take My army, My people Israel, out of Egypt by great acts of judgment. "The Egyptians will know I am the LORD when I stretch out My hand over Egypt and take Israel out from them."

"Moses and Aaron did just as the LORD instructed them to do. "Moses was 80 years old and Aaron 83 when they talked to Pharaoh.

The Snake

"The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron: "When Pharaoh says to you, 'Show me that you can do a miracle,' tell Aaron, 'Take your rod and throw it down in front of Pharaoh,' and it will become a big snake."

"Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did as the LORD ordered: Aaron threw his rod down in front of Pharaoh and his servants, and it changed into a big snake. "Pharaoh also called his wise men and magicians, and these sorcerers of Egypt by their secret powers did the same thing. "Each of them threw his rod down, and it changed into a snake. Then Aaron's rod swallowed their rods. "But Pharaoh continued to be stubborn

and refused to listen to them, as the LORD had said.

Blood

"Pharaoh is stubborn," the LORD said to Moses: "he refused to let the people go. ¹³Go to Pharaoh in the morning. He will be going out to the water. Wait for him on the bank of the river. Take the rod that was changed into a snake in your hand, ¹⁴and tell him: 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, sent me to you to say: 'Let My people go so they can serve Me in the desert, but until now you have refused to listen.' ¹⁵Now the LORD says: 'This will show you I am the LORD.' I'm going to strike the water in the river with the rod in my hand, and it will be turned to blood. ¹⁶The fish in the river will die, the river will stink, and the Egyptians will loathe to drink any water from the river.'"

¹⁷⁻¹⁹ The LORD said to Moses: "Tell Aaron: 'Take your rod and stretch out your arm over the waters of Egypt, the branches of the Nile, the canals, pools, and every reservoir of water, and they will turn to blood, and there will be blood all over Egypt, even in the wooden pails and stone troughs.'"

²⁰Moses and Aaron did as the LORD ordered. Aaron raised the rod and struck the water in the river while Pharaoh and his servants watched him, and all the water in the river turned to blood. ²¹The fish in the river died, the river stank, and the Egyptians couldn't drink any water from the river. There was blood everywhere in Egypt.

²²The magicians of Egypt by their secret powers did the same, and so Pharaoh continued to be stubborn and refused to listen to Moses and Aaron, as, the LORD had said.

²³Pharaoh turned and went home without taking this to heart.

²⁴All the Egyptians dug along the banks of the river for water to drink because they couldn't drink any water from the river.

Frogs

²⁵Seven days passed after the LORD struck the river.

8 "Go to Pharaoh," the LORD said to Moses. "and tell him: 'The LORD says: Let My people go to serve Me. ²If you refuse to let them go, I will bring a plague of frogs on your whole country. ³The river will swarm with frogs that will come up into your palace, into your bedroom, on your bed, into the homes of your servants, among your people, into your ovens and kneading bowls. ⁴The frogs will come up on you, on your people, and on all your servants.'"

¹⁷⁻¹⁹ Rv 8,8.
^{11.6.16.3-4}
²⁰⁻²¹ Rv 8,8.
^{11.6.16.3-4}

⁵"Tell Aaron," the LORD said to Moses: "Stretch out your hand with the rod over the Nile and its branches, the canals and pools, and bring up the frogs all over Egypt."

⁶Aaron stretched out his arm over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. ⁷But the magicians with their secret powers did the same and brought up frogs on the land of Egypt.

⁸Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron. "Pray to the LORD," he said. "to take the frogs away from me and my people. Then I will let your people go and sacrifice to the LORD."

⁹"Honor yourself by choosing the time when I should pray for you, your servants, and your people." Moses answered Pharaoh. "to rid

you and your homes of frogs, so that they will be only in the river."

¹⁰"Tomorrow," he answered.

"It will be as you say," Moses said, "to show you there is no one like the LORD our God. ¹¹The frogs will leave you, your homes, your servants, and your people, and they will be only in the river."

¹²When Moses and Aaron had left Pharaoh, Moses called to the LORD about the frogs he brought on Pharaoh. ¹³The LORD did what Moses asked: The frogs died in the houses, courtyards, and fields. ¹⁴The people piled them up in many heaps, and the country stank.

¹⁵When Pharaoh saw there was relief, he got even more stubborn and refused to listen to Moses and Aaron, as the LORD had said.

Mosquitoes

¹⁶"Tell Aaron," the LORD said to Moses: "Hold out your rod and strike the dust on the ground, and it will change to mosquitoes all over Egypt."

¹⁷They did that. Aaron held out the rod in his hand and struck the dust on the ground, and it changed to mosquitoes on men and animals. All the dust on the ground everywhere in Egypt became mosquitoes.

¹⁸The magicians with their secret powers tried likewise to produce mosquitoes, and they couldn't do it. But there were mosquitoes on men and animals. ¹⁹"This is God's finger!" the magicians told Pharaoh.

But Pharaoh continued to be stubborn and refused to listen to Moses and Aaron, as the LORD had said.

Swarms of Flies

²⁰"Get up early in the morning," the LORD told Moses. "go before Pharaoh—he's going out to the water. Tell him: 'The LORD says: Let My people go and serve Me. ²¹If you will not let My people go, I will send swarms of flies on you, on your servants, your people, and your homes. The homes of the Egyptians and the land they stand on will be full of flies. ²²On that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, where My people live, and let no flies come there, to show you that I the LORD am in the land. ²³I will distinguish between My people and yours. This miracle will happen tomorrow.'"

²⁴The LORD did as He said, and swarms of flies came into Pharaoh's palace and the homes of his servants and all over Egypt, and they were ruining the land. ²⁵Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron. "Go," he said, "and sacrifice to your God here in this country."

²⁶"It would be bad to do that," Moses answered. "The Egyptians think our sacrifices to the LORD our God are something abominable. If they see us make sacrifices that they consider abominable, won't they stone us? ²⁷We should go a three-day trip into the desert to sacrifice to the LORD our God as He told us to do."

²⁸"I will let you go," Pharaoh said, "and sacrifice to the LORD your God, but don't go very far. Now pray for me."

²⁹"I'm leaving you," Moses said. "I will pray to the LORD, and tomorrow the flies will leave Pharaoh, his servants, and his people. But Pharaoh must not again

deceive us by not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD."

¹⁰Moses left Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD. "The LORD did what Moses asked, and the flies went away from Pharaoh, his servants, and his people—not one was left. ¹¹But Pharaoh continued to be stubborn this time too and did not let the people go.

Animals Die

9 "Go to Pharaoh," the LORD told Moses, "and tell him: 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: Let My people go and serve Me. ²If you refuse to let them go and you continue to hold them back, ³the LORD's hand will bring a dreadful plague on your stock in the fields, on the horses, donkeys, camels, cattle, and sheep. ⁴But the LORD will distinguish between Israel's animals and those of the Egyptians and not let any animal of the Israelites die. ⁵The LORD has set a definite time, saying: Tomorrow the LORD will do this in this country.' "

⁶The next day the LORD did just that, and all the stock of the Egyptians died, but no animals of the Israelites died. ⁷Pharaoh sent men who found out that not a single animal of the Israelites had died. But Pharaoh continued to be stubborn and did not let the people go.

Boils

⁸"Take both hands full of soot from a kiln," the LORD told Moses and Aaron, "and Moses should toss it up toward the sky while Pharaoh is watching you. ⁹Then it will spread as fine dust all over Egypt and cause boils to break out in sores on men and animals all over Egypt."

¹⁰They took the soot from a kiln, and standing before Pharaoh, Moses tossed it up toward the sky, and it caused boils to break out in sores on men and animals. ¹¹The magicians couldn't stand before Moses on account of the boils that attacked them like all the other Egyptians.

¹²But the LORD made Pharaoh stubborn, and he refused to listen to them as the LORD had told Moses.

Hail

¹³"Early in the morning go before Pharaoh," the LORD said to Moses, "and tell him: 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews says: Let My people go and serve Me. ¹⁴This time I'm sending all My plagues on you yourself, on your servants, and on your people, to show you there is no one like Me anywhere on earth. ¹⁵Now, I could have stretched out My arm and struck you and your people with a plague that would have wiped you off the earth. ¹⁶But I have spared you so that you will see My power and all the world may be told about My name. ¹⁷You still oppose My people and won't let them go. ¹⁸Tomorrow at this time I will send a terrible hailstorm, such as has never been in Egypt from the beginning of its history till now. ¹⁹And now, send men to bring your cattle and everything else you have outdoors under shelter. All people and animals found outside and not brought under shelter will die when the hail falls on them.' "

²⁰Any of Pharaoh's men who respected the LORD's warning hurried their servants and cattle indoors. ²¹But those who didn't take the LORD's warning to heart let their slaves and animals stay in the fields.

⁹
10-11 Rv 16:2
12 Ro 9:18
16 Ro 9:17
18 Rv 8:7
11:18
16:21

“Stretch out your arm toward heaven,” the LORD told Moses. “and hail will fall all over Egypt on men and animals, on every plant in the field in Egypt.”

“Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven, and from the LORD came thunder and hail as fire streamed to the ground. The LORD rained hail on Egypt. “The hail and the fire flashing continuously in the middle of it were terrible. It was so fierce, Egypt had never experienced such a storm since it had become a nation. “All over Egypt the hail struck everything that was out of doors. It struck men and animals and every plant in the field and shattered every tree in the field. “Only in the land of Goshen, where the Israelites were, there was no hail.

“Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron. “This time I have sinned,” he told them. “The LORD is right, and I and my people are wrong. “Pray to the LORD. There has been enough of God’s thunder and hail. I will let you go; you need not stay any longer.”

“As soon as I’m out of the city,” Moses told him. “I will spread out my hands to the LORD. The thunder will stop, and there will be no more hail, to show you that the earth belongs to the LORD. “But I know that you and your men do not yet fear the LORD God.”

“The flax and the barley were ruined, because the barley had formed heads and the flax was in bloom. “The wheat and the spelt were not damaged, because they ripened later.

“Leaving Pharaoh, Moses went out of the city and spread out his hands to the LORD, and the thunder and the hail stopped, and no more

rain came pouring down on the ground.

“When Pharaoh saw that the rain, the hail, and the thunder had stopped, he continued in his sin, and he and his men became still more stubborn. “Pharaoh was determined not to let Israel go, as the LORD had foretold through Moses.

Grasshoppers

10 “Go to Pharaoh,” the LORD told Moses. “because I have made him and his men stubborn, so that I may do these miracles among them “and you can tell your children and grandchildren how I handled Egypt and the miracles I did among them; and you all will know I am the LORD.”

“Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him: “The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, asks: ‘How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go and serve Me. ‘If you refuse to let My people go, I will tomorrow bring grasshoppers into your country. “They will cover the surface of the land so that you can’t see the ground. They will eat up everything left to you after the hail and every tree you have growing in the fields. “They will fill your palaces and the homes of all your servants and of all the other Egyptians. Your fathers and forefathers haven’t seen anything like this from the time they were in the land till now.’” Then they turned and left Pharaoh.

“How long will this man be a trap to us?” Pharaoh’s men asked him. “Let the men go and serve the LORD their God. Don’t you know yet that Egypt is ruined?”

“And so Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh. “Go and

22-25 Rv 6,7,
11,19,
16,21

serve the LORD your God," he told them. "Who among you will be going?"

"We'll take with us," Moses answered "our young people and old people, our sons and daughters, our flocks and cattle, because we have the LORD's festival to celebrate."

"The LORD be with you as I let you and your children go," he told them. "But look here, you're bound for trouble. "No, have only the strong men go and serve the LORD, since that is what you want." Then Moses and Aaron were driven away from Pharaoh.

"Stretch out your arm over Egypt," the LORD told Moses. "so the grasshoppers will come over the land of Egypt and eat up every plant in the land, everything left by the hail."

"Moses held out his rod over Egypt, and the LORD had a wind blow from the east over the land all that day and night. In the morning the east wind brought grasshoppers.

"They came up over all Egypt, and a great mass of them covered the whole country of Egypt. There was nothing like it before or after.

"They covered the surface everywhere in the country till the land was black, and they ate up all its plants and all the fruit on the trees the hail had left. Nothing green was left on trees or plants in the fields anywhere in Egypt.

"Then Pharaoh quickly called for Moses and Aaron. "I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you," he said. "Now please forgive my sin just once more. Pray to the LORD your God only to take away from me this deadly thing."

"Moses left Pharaoh and prayed to the LORD. "And the LORD

turned the wind and had it blow very strong from the west. It caught up the grasshoppers and threw them into the Red Sea. Not a single grasshopper was left anywhere in Egypt.

"But the LORD made Pharaoh stubborn, so that he did not let the Israelites go.

Darkness

"Stretch out your hand toward the sky," the LORD told Moses. "and such a darkness will come over the land of Egypt that it can be felt."

"Moses stretched out his hand toward the sky, and the whole land of Egypt became very dark for three days. "People couldn't see one another, and nobody left his place for three days. But all the Israelites had light in their homes.

"Then Pharaoh called Moses. "Go and serve the LORD," he said, "but leave your flocks and herds behind. Your families may go with you."

"You must give us animals," Moses said, "for the sacrifices and burnt offerings we'll make to the LORD our God. "Our livestock must also go with us and not a hoof be left behind, because we'll have to take some of them for the worship of the LORD our God, and we don't know what we'll need in serving the LORD till we get there."

"But the LORD made Pharaoh stubborn, so that he refused to let them go. "Get away from me," he told Moses. "and beware—don't see me again. The day you come to see me you die!"

"You're right!" Moses answered. "I'll never see you again."

One More Plague

11 "I will strike one more blow against Pharaoh and

10
12 Rv 9:3
20 Rv 9:18
21 Rv 16:10

Egypt," the LORD told Moses. "After that he will let you leave this place, and when he lets you go, he will drive you away from here like a rejected wife. "Now tell the people each man should ask his neighbor and each woman her friend for articles of silver and gold."

"The LORD made the Egyptians kind to the people. Besides, Moses was very highly respected in Egypt by Pharaoh's men and the people.

"Moses said: "The LORD says: "At midnight I will go out among the Egyptians. "and every firstborn in Egypt will die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the slave girl behind the handmill, and also every firstborn among the cattle. "There will be a loud cry all over Egypt, such as never has been or ever will be again. "But not even a dog will snap at anyone, man or animal, in Israel, to show you that the LORD is distinguishing between Egyptians and Israelites." "Then all these men of yours will come to me and bow to me and say, "Get out, you and all the people who follow you." After that I will leave." He was very angry when he left Pharaoh.

"Pharaoh will not listen to you," the LORD had told Moses. "so that I may do more miracles in Egypt." "Moses and Aaron did all these miracles before Pharaoh, but the LORD made Pharaoh stubborn so that he didn't let Israel leave his country.

The Passover

12 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in Egypt. "This month," He said, "will be for you the beginning of the months, your first month of the year. "Tell the whole community of Israel: "On the tenth of

this month each family in its clan should select an animal from the flock. "If one family is too small for the animal, this family and the family living next to it should take an animal together, depending on how many persons there are. Estimate how many persons there are to be for each animal according to what each one eats. "The animal should be a perfect male and a year old. The animal you choose may be a sheep or a goat. "Keep it till the fourteenth of this month, when at twilight the whole assembly of Israel will butcher them. "Take some of the blood, and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which you will eat them. "That night eat the meat roasted on a fire and bread without yeast, on bitter herbs. "Don't eat any of it raw or boiled in water but roasted on the fire—its head with its legs and the inward parts. "Don't leave any of it till morning, but burn in the fire anything that might be left over till morning. "Eat it in a hurry, with belts around your waists, your shoes on your feet, and your rods in your hands. It is the LORD's Passover. "That night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn of men and animals in Egypt, and I, the LORD, will bring a just punishment on all the gods of Egypt. "Then the blood will be a sign on the houses where you are. When I see the blood, I will pass by you, and no disaster will come on you and destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

"Remember that day and keep it as the LORD's festival. You and your descendants in the coming ages are to celebrate it forever. "Eat bread without yeast for seven days. On the first day get rid of any yeast

11
10 Ro 9:19
12
13 1 Co 5:7
Heb 11:28

in your houses. Anyone who eats anything with yeast from the first day to the seventh must be put out of Israel. ¹⁶You should have a holy meeting on the first day and on the seventh. Don't do any work on these days except to prepare food for everyone. ¹⁷You shall celebrate the feast of bread without yeast because it is on this very day that I bring all of you marching out of Egypt. You and your descendants in the coming ages are ordered to keep this day forever. ¹⁸Eat bread without yeast from the evening of the fourteenth day till the evening of the twenty-first day of the first month. ¹⁹For seven days no yeast must be found in your houses; anyone who eats anything with yeast must be put out of the community of Israel, whether he was born an Israelite or not. ²⁰Don't eat anything with yeast. Eat only bread without yeast in all your homes. . . .

²¹Moses called all the elders of Israel together. "Go," he told them, "and select a sheep or a goat for your families and kill it for the Passover. ²²Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood in the basin, and smear the lintel and the two doorposts with it. None of you shall go out of the door of his house till morning. ²³The LORD will pass through to strike down the Egyptians, and when He sees the blood on the lintel and the two doorposts, the LORD will pass by the door and not let the destroyer come into your homes to strike you down. ²⁴You and your children are ordered to observe this as a rule forever. ²⁵And when you come to the country the LORD will give you as He said, keep this service. ²⁶When your children ask you, 'What do you mean by this service?' ²⁷answer,

'This is a sacrificing of the Passover to the LORD, who in Egypt passed over the homes of the Israelites and saved them when He struck down the Egyptians.' . . .

The people bowed down and worshiped. ²⁸The Israelites went and did just as the LORD had ordered Moses and Aaron.

²⁹At midnight the LORD struck down every firstborn in Egypt from the son of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the son of the prisoner in the dungeon and also every first-born of the cattle. ³⁰Pharaoh and all his men and all the other Egyptians got up at night, and there was a loud cry in Egypt because there wasn't a home without its dead.

"Get Out"

³¹Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron at night. "Get away from my people," he said, "you and the Israelites. Go and serve the LORD as you said. ³²Take your flocks and herds too, as you said, and go. And bless me too!" ³³The Egyptians urged the people to leave the country quickly, saying, "We'll all be dead!"

³⁴The people carried their dough before yeast was added and had their kneading bowls wrapped up in their garments on their shoulders.

³⁵The Israelites had done what Moses told them and asked the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold and for clothing. ³⁶The LORD moved the Egyptians to be kind to the people and give them what they asked, and so the Israelites took away the goods of the Egyptians.

³⁷The Israelites moved from Rameses to Succoth. There were about 600,000 on foot, counting only the men and not the women and children. ³⁸A large crowd of non-

²¹ Rv 13 B
²¹⁻²⁷ 1 Co
^{5:7, Heb}
11:28

Israelites also went up with them, and flocks and herds, a very large stock of them.

"With the dough they brought from Egypt they baked cakes without yeast because there was no yeast. Being driven out of Egypt, they didn't have time to prepare any food for the way.

"The Israelites had been living in Egypt for 430 years. "At the end of 430 years, on this very day, all the LORD's people marched out of Egypt. "It was a night when the LORD kept watch to take them out of Egypt: it is the LORD's night, in which all Israelites in the coming ages should keep watch.

"These are the rules for the Passover," the LORD told Moses and Aaron: "No foreigner should eat of it. "Any slave, bought for money, may eat of it after you have circumcised him. "No stranger living with you or hired by you should eat of it. "Eat it in one house; don't take any meat out of the house. *Don't break any of its bones.* "The whole community of Israel should celebrate it. "If a stranger is staying with you and wants to celebrate the Passover for the LORD, all his males should be circumcised; then he may come to celebrate it and be like anyone born in Israel. But no uncircumcised person should eat of it. "A stranger who lives among you is bound by the same law as anyone born in Israel."

"All the Israelites did just as the LORD ordered Moses and Aaron. "That same day the LORD had all the people of Israel march out of Egypt like an army.

Give the LORD Every Firstborn

13 The LORD spoke to Moses: "Set aside as holy every firstborn of any mother in Israel, among both people and animals: they are Mine."

"Remember this day," Moses told the people, "on which you are leaving Egypt, where you were slaves, how the LORD took you out of it with a mighty arm. And so no yeast should be eaten. "Today, in the month of Abib, you are going out. "When the LORD brings you to the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, and Jebusites, that He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, hold this service in this month. "Eat bread without yeast for seven days: the LORD's festival shall be on the seventh day. "Eat bread without yeast for the seven days. No yeast should be seen with you or any fermented dough anywhere in your territory. "On that day tell your son, 'It is because of what the LORD did for me when I left Egypt.' "Make this a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead to keep you talking of the LORD's law, because the LORD with a mighty arm took you out of Egypt. "Keep this rule at the right time every year.

"When the LORD brings you to the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to you and your fathers, and gives it to you, "give the LORD every firstborn, also every firstborn of your animals; if they are males, they belong to the LORD. "Redeem every firstborn donkey with an animal from the flock, and if you don't redeem it, break its neck. And redeem every firstborn of your children. "In the future when your

40 Act 7:5
46 Jn 19:36

13
7 Lk 1:35
2:23
12:15 Lk 1:35
2:23

son asks you. 'What does this mean?' tell him. 'With a mighty arm the LORD took us out of Egypt, where we were slaves. "When Pharaoh was too stubborn to let us go, the LORD killed every firstborn among men and animals in Egypt. This is why I'm sacrificing to the LORD every firstborn male and redeeming every firstborn of my children." "Make this a sign on your arm and a mark on your forehead, because the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty arm."

God Leads the Way

"When Pharaoh let the people go, God didn't lead them on the road that goes to the country of the Philistines, although that was the shortest way, because God said, "When they see they have to fight, they may change their minds and go back to Egypt." "So God led the people around the other way, into the desert and to the Red Sea. The Israelites were ready for battle when they left Egypt.

"Moses took Joseph's body along because Joseph had told the Israelites. "God will surely come to help you. Then take my body away from here with you." and he had them swear they would do it.

"They moved from Succoth and camped at Etham, on the edge of the desert. "The LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud during the day to lead them on their way but in a pillar of fire at night to give them light so they could travel day and night. "During the day the pillar of cloud didn't leave its place as it went ahead of the people, nor did the pillar of fire at night.

^cOr with God's help or boldly

Between Migdol and the Sea

14 The LORD said to Moses: "Tell Israel to turn and camp in front of Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, in front of Baal-zephon. Camp opposite it, by the sea. 'Pharaoh will think, 'The Israelites are wandering aimlessly in the territory and are caught in the desert.' 'I will make Pharaoh stubborn so he will pursue them. Then I will be glorified in Pharaoh and his whole army, and the Egyptians will know I am the LORD.'" The Israelites did as they were told.

"When the king of Egypt got the news that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his men changed their minds. "What have we done?" they asked. "We let Israel go and lost our slaves."

"Then Pharaoh had horses hitched to his chariot, and he took his troops with him. "He took his 600 best chariots as well as the rest of the chariots of Egypt, with a chariot officer in each of them. "The LORD made Pharaoh, king of Egypt, stubborn, so that he pursued the Israelites, who were going out with a high hand.^c "The Egyptians pursued them, and Pharaoh's fighting forces, including all his horse-drawn chariots and cavalry, caught up with them as they were going to camp by the sea at Pi-hahiroth in front of Baal-zephon.

"When Pharaoh came near them, the Israelites looked up and saw the Egyptians coming after them, and the Israelites were terrified and cried to the LORD. "'Was it because there were no graves in Egypt," they asked Moses, "that you took us out to die in the desert? Why

14
4 Ro 9:18
8 Ro 9:18
Act 12:17

did you take us away from Egypt? "Didn't we tell you in Egypt, 'Let us alone, and we'll serve the Egyptians'? It would be better for us to work for the Egyptians than to die in the desert."

Crossing the Red Sea

"Don't be afraid," Moses told the people. "Stand still and see how the LORD is going to save you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. "The LORD is fighting for you, so be still."

"Why are you crying to Me?" the LORD asked Moses. "Tell the Israelites to go forward. "And you, raise your rod and stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it, and Israel will walk through the sea on dry ground. "The Egyptians, whom I am *making stubborn*, will go in after them, and I will be glorified at the expense of Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots and cavalry. "Then the Egyptians will know I am the LORD, when I win glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his cavalry."

"Then God's Angel, who had been going ahead of the caravan of Israel, moved and went behind them as the pillar of cloud also moved away from in front of them and took its place behind them. "It came between the army of the Egyptians, for whom it was a dark cloud, and the army of Israel, for whom it lit up the night, and all night they couldn't come near each other.

"Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD had a strong wind blow from the east all night to make the sea go back, and so He changed the sea to dry land. The waters parted, "and the

Israelites went through the middle of the sea on dry ground, the water standing like a wall on their right side and on their left.

"The Egyptians, all Pharaoh's horses, chariots, and cavalry, pursued them and went after them into the middle of the sea. "In the watch before dawn the LORD looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into a panic: "He clogged the wheels^d of their chariots so that they could hardly go ahead in them, and the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from the Israelites, because the LORD is fighting on their side against Egypt."

"Stretch out your hand over the sea," the LORD told Moses, "and the water will flow back over the Egyptians, their chariots, and their cavalry."

¹⁷ Ro 9:18

"Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at daybreak the water flowed back to its place. The Egyptians fled to avoid it, but the LORD swept them right into the sea. "The water flowed back, covered Pharaoh's whole army, the chariots and the cavalry, that had followed Israel into the sea; not one of them escaped.

"The Israelites had gone through the middle of the sea on dry ground while the waters stood like a wall on their right side and on their left. "So the LORD saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians that day, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the shore of the sea. "When Israel saw what a mighty thing the LORD had done to the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD, and they believed the LORD and his servant Moses.

^dWith versions: Heb took the wheels off

"I Will Sing to the Lord"

15 Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD:

"I will sing to the LORD, who has triumphed; horses and their riders He has thrown into the sea.

²My Strength and my Defense is the LORD, who has saved me; He is my God, and I will praise Him: my father's God, and I will glorify Him.

³The LORD is a warrior; His name is the LORD.

⁴Pharaoh's chariots and army He threw into the sea. In the Red Sea the best of his charioteers were drowned;

⁵Covered by floods, they sank into the depths like stones.

⁶Your right hand, LORD, is wonderfully strong; Your right hand, LORD, has crushed the enemy.

⁷By your great majesty You put down those who rise against You; You send Your blazing anger to burn them up like stubble.

⁸The breath of Your nostrils heaps up the water; running water stands like a dam; floods turn solid in the heart of the sea.

⁹The enemy said, 'I'll pursue and catch up with them, I'll divide the spoil and take my full revenge; I'll draw my sword, my hand will destroy them.'

¹⁰You blew Your wind, the sea covered them; they sank like lead in the mighty waters.

¹¹Who, LORD, is like You among the gods? who is like You, wonderful in holiness, whose glory is to be feared, who does marvelous things?

¹²You stretched out Your right hand, and the earth swallowed them.

¹³You lovingly lead the people You freed and mightily guide them to Your holy dwelling place.

¹⁴Nations hear of it and tremble; anguish grips the people in Philistia.

¹⁵Edom's chiefs are terrified, Moab's leaders tremble, all those who live in Canaan melt away;

¹⁶terror and dread fall on them, still as a stone till Your people, LORD, pass through, till the people You purchased come through.

¹⁷You will bring them in and plant them on Your own mountain, the place where You live, which You, LORD, have made, the holy place Your hands, Lord, have established.

¹⁸"The LORD will rule forever."

¹⁹Pharaoh's horses, with his chariots and cavalry, went into the sea, and the LORD made the water of the sea flow back on them while Israel walked on dry ground through the middle of the sea.

²⁰The prophetess Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women, dancing with tambourines, followed her.

²¹Miriam sang to them:

"Sing to the LORD, who has triumphed; horses and their riders He threw into the sea."

No Water

²²Then Moses took the Israelites away from the Red Sea; they went into the wilderness of Shur and traveled in the wilderness 3 days without finding any water. ²³They came to Marah, but couldn't drink

¹ ¹⁵ ³ ¹⁵ ³

the water there, because it was bitter. ²And so the place was called Marah.^e The people complained against Moses. "What are we going to drink?" they asked.

³He cried to the LORD, and the LORD showed him some wood. He threw it into the water, and it made the water sweet.

There God laid down a rule and a law for them and tested them. ⁴"If you will obey the LORD your God," He said, "and do what He says is right, listen to His orders, and keep all His laws, I will not have you suffer from any of the diseases I inflicted on Egypt, because I the LORD am He who heals you."

⁵Then they went to Elim, where there were 12 springs of water and 70 palm trees, and they camped there by the water.

Bread from Heaven

16 The whole community of Israel moved from Elim, and on the 15th day of the second month after leaving Egypt they came into the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai. ¹In the wilderness the whole congregation complained against Moses and Aaron. ²"If only we had died by the LORD's hand in Egypt," the Israelites told them, "when we sat by our pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted! You brought us into this wilderness to starve this whole congregation to death!"

³"I will send you bread like rain from heaven," the LORD told Moses. ⁴"And I will test them to see if they will do what I tell them or not: Each day the people will go out and gather only what they need for that day. ⁵But on the sixth day, when they

prepare what they bring home, it will be twice as much as they gather any other day."

⁶Moses and Aaron told all the Israelites: "This evening you will realize the LORD took you out of Egypt. ⁷and in the morning you will see the LORD's glory, for He has heard you complain against the LORD. What are we that you should complain against us?" ⁸Moses added: "This evening the LORD is giving you meat to eat and in the morning all the bread you want, for the LORD has heard you complain against Him. What are we? You didn't grumble against us but against the LORD."

⁹"Tell the whole assembly of Israel," Moses said to Aaron: "Come before the LORD, for He has heard you grumble." ¹⁰But then, as Aaron talked to the whole community of Israel, they turned toward the desert and saw the LORD's glory appearing in the cloud. ¹¹"I have heard Israel grumble," the LORD said to Moses. ¹²"Tell them: 'At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will get all the bread you want, and then you will realize I the LORD am your God.'"

¹³In the evening quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning a dew was lying around the camp. ¹⁴When the dew lifted, the desert ground was covered with something small and flaky as fine as hoarfrost on the ground. ¹⁵When the Israelites saw it, they asked one another, "What is it?" because they didn't know what it was.

Moses told them, "This is the food the LORD gives you to eat. ¹⁶And this is what the LORD orders you to do: Everyone should gather as much

¹⁶
4 Jn 6:31
10 2 Co 3:18

^e"Bitter"

of it as he can eat—take an omer for each as you count the persons each of you has in his tent.”

¹⁷The Israelites did so, some gathering more, some less. ¹⁸But when they measured it by the omer, *the one who gathered much didn't have too much, and the one who gathered little didn't have too little,* but each had gathered as much as he could eat.

¹⁹Moses told them, “Nobody should keep any of it till morning.” ²⁰But they didn't listen to Moses. Some men kept part of it till morning, and it bred worms and stank. So Moses was angry with them.

²¹Every morning each one gathered as much as he could eat. When the sun was hot, it melted away. ²²But on the sixth day they gathered twice as much food, two omers for each person, and all the leaders of the community came to Moses to tell him about it.

²³“This is what the LORD has said,” he told them: “Tomorrow is a rest day, the Lord's holy Sabbath. Bake what you want to bake, and boil what you want to boil, and all that is left over put aside and keep till tomorrow morning.” ²⁴They put it aside till the next morning as Moses had ordered, and it didn't smell or have worms. ²⁵“Eat it today,” Moses said: “today is the LORD's rest day. You will not find any in the field today. ²⁶Gather for six days, but on the seventh day, the rest day, there will be nothing.”

²⁷And yet on the seventh day some people went out to gather, but they didn't find anything. ²⁸“How long will you refuse to do what I ordered

and instructed you to do?” the LORD asked Moses. ²⁹“Understand this: Because the LORD has given you the day of rest. He gives you enough food on the sixth day for two days. On the seventh day everyone should stay in his place, and nobody should leave it.” ³⁰So the people rested on the seventh day.

³¹Israel called it “Manna.”^f It was white like coriander seed and tasted like a wafer with honey.

³²“This is what the LORD orders you to do,” Moses said: “Take an omer of it to keep for your descendants so they will see *the food I gave you to eat in the desert when I brought you out of Egypt.*”

³³“Take a jar,” Moses told Aaron, “put an omer of manna in it, and place it before the LORD to keep it for your descendants.” ³⁴As the LORD ordered Moses, Aaron placed it in front of the Word of Testimony, to be kept there.

³⁵The Israelites ate manna for 40 years till they came to a country where they could settle; they ate manna till they came to the border of Canaan. ³⁶(Now an omer is a tenth of an ephah.^g)

Again No Water

17 Breaking camp as the LORD directed them, the whole assembly of Israel left the desert of Sin and camped at Rephidim, where there was no water for the people to drink. ²The people quarreled with Moses. “Give us water to drink!” they said.

“Why quarrel with me?” Moses asked them. “Why test the LORD?”

³So there the people were thirsty for water, and they grumbled

^f“What is it?”

^gAn omer is about 3 quarts; an ephah about a bushel

¹⁸ 2 Co 8:15
³² Jn 6:31

against Moses. "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt?" they asked. "To have us, our children, and our cattle die of thirst?"

"Moses cried to the LORD. "What should I do with these people?" he asked. "They're almost stoning me."

"Go ahead of the people," the LORD told Moses: "take with you some of the elders of Israel, take in your hand the rod with which you struck the river, and go. "I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will flow from it, and the people will drink."

Moses did this while the elders of Israel watched him.

He called that place Massah and Meribah^b because Israel quarreled there and tested the LORD, asking, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

The First Battle

"At Raphidim Amalek came to fight against Israel. "Choose men for us," Moses told Joshua, "and go out, fight Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with God's rod in my hand."

"Joshua did as Moses told him and went to fight Amalek, but Moses, Aaron, and Hur went to the top of the hill. "As long as Moses held up his hand, Israel was winning, but as soon as he let his hand down, Amalek was winning. "Moses' hands felt heavy. So they took a rock and put it under him to sit on while Aaron on one side and Hur on the other held his hands up. And so his hands were up continually till the sun went down. "and

Joshua cut down the Amalekite army with the sword.

"Write this down and keep a record of it in the scroll," the LORD told Moses, "and also impress it on Joshua as he listens to you: I will certainly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven."

"Moses built an altar and gave it the name The-LORD-Is-My-Flag, "saying, "When a hand is lifted to the LORD's throne, the LORD will fight against Amalek in the coming ages."

Jethro

18 Jethro, priest of Midian and father-in-law of Moses, heard of everything God did for Moses and His people Israel, how the LORD took Israel out of Egypt. "Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, had received Moses' wife Zipporah, after Moses had sent her away, and also her two sons. The name of the one was Gershom, because he said, "I'm a stranger in a foreign land," and the name of the other was Eliezer,ⁱ "because my father's God helped me and saved me from Pharaoh's sword." "Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, his sons, and his wife came to Moses in the desert where he was camping near God's mountain. "He had someone tell Moses, "I, your father-in-law Jethro, your wife, and her two sons are coming to you."

"Moses went out to meet his father-in-law. He bowed down before him and kissed him. They greeted one another, then went into the tent. "Moses told his father-in-law everything the LORD did to Pharaoh and the Egyptians for

¹⁸
3 Acts 7:29

^b Testing and Quarrel"

ⁱ My-God-Is-a-Help"

Israel, all the trouble they had on the way, and how the LORD rescued them.

⁹Jethro was delighted with every good thing the LORD had done to Israel, whom He saved from the Egyptians. ¹⁰"Blessed be the LORD," Jethro said, "who saved you from the Egyptians and Pharaoh. ¹¹Now I know the LORD is greater than all other gods ¹²because He saved the people from the power of the Egyptians. ¹³who dared to be arrogant against Israel."

¹²Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brought a burnt offering and sacrifices to God. Aaron and all the elders of Israel came to eat with Moses' father-in-law before God.

¹³The next day Moses took his seat to judge the people, and the people stood before Moses from morning till evening. ¹⁴When Moses' father-in-law saw everything Moses was doing for the people, he asked, "What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you sit here alone, and all the people stand before you from morning till evening?"

¹⁵"The people come to me," Moses answered his father-in-law, "to ask God about something. ¹⁶When they have a case, they come to me, and I decide what is right between one man and another and teach them God's rules and laws."

¹⁷"You're not doing this right," Moses' father-in-law told him. ¹⁸"You're certainly wearing yourself out, you and these people who are with you. This is too much for you; you can't do it alone. ¹⁹Now listen to me, and I will give you some advice—and God be with you. You go to God for the people and bring their problems before God. ²⁰Teach them the rules and laws, show them

how to live and what to do. ²¹But choose able men from all the people, men who fear God, men you can trust, who hate corruption, and make them overseers of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens. ²²Let them judge the people at all times. Every important matter they should bring to you, but every minor matter they should decide. Make it easier for yourself by letting them help you. ²³If you do this, if God so commands, you will be able to stand the work, and all these people will go home satisfied."

²⁴Moses listened to his father-in-law and did just as he told him. ²⁵Moses chose able men from all parts of Israel and made them heads over the people, overseers of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens. ²⁶These men judged the people at all times. They brought the difficult cases to Moses, but the easier ones they decided themselves.

²⁷Then Moses said good-bye to his father-in-law, who went back to his own country.

Moses on the Mountain

19 On that day, 2 months after the Israelites left Egypt, they went into the Sinai desert. ¹Starting from Rephidim, they came into the Sinai desert, and there Israel camped in front of the mountain.

²Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain: "Say to Jacob, and tell the Israelites: ³'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I carried you on eagle's wings and brought you to Me. ⁴And now, if you will listen closely to Me and keep My covenant, among all the nations you will be a treasure to Me

although the whole world is Mine. "You will be a kingdom of priests and a holy people to Me. Tell Israel that."

Moses went and called the elders of the people and laid before them all these matters the LORD ordered him to do. "All the people answered together, "We will do everything the LORD has said." And Moses went to report to the LORD what the people said.

"I am coming to you in a thick cloud," the LORD told Moses, "so that the people will hear Me talk to you and will always believe you." Then Moses reported to the LORD what the people said.

"Go to the people," the LORD told Moses, "and consecrate them today and tomorrow; have them wash their clothes. "and be ready for the day after tomorrow. On that day all the people will see the LORD come down on Mount Sinai. ¹²Set a boundary around the mountain for the people, and tell them they must be careful not to come up the mountain or even touch its edge; *anyone who touches the mountain must be killed*: ¹³no hand should touch him, but *he should be stoned or shot with an arrow*; whether *animal or man*, he must not live. When a ram's horn sounds long, they should come up to the mountain."

"Moses went down the mountain to the people and consecrated the people, and they washed their clothes. ¹⁵"Be ready for the day after tomorrow," he told the people. "Don't go near a woman."

"On the morning of the third day there was *thunder and lightning with a heavy cloud over the mountain, and the blast of a trumpet so very loud* all the people in the

camp trembled. ¹⁷Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God as they stood at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸All of Mount Sinai was smoking because the LORD had come down on it in *fire*; it was *smoking like a kiln*, and the whole mountain *quaked* violently. ¹⁹The *blast of the trumpet* grew louder and louder. Moses spoke and God answered him with a *voice*. ²⁰The LORD came down on the top of Mount Sinai, and the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

"Go down," the LORD told Moses, "and warn the people not to break through to the LORD to see Him, or else many will perish. ²²Even the priests who come near the LORD should consecrate themselves, or the LORD will burst out against them."

"The people cannot come up on Mount Sinai," Moses said to the LORD, "because You warned us, 'Fence off the mountain, and keep it holy.'"

"Go down," the LORD told him, "and then come back up with Aaron, but the priests and the people should not break through to come up to the LORD, or He will burst out against them." ²⁵So Moses went down to the people and told them.

The Ten Commandments

20 God spoke all the following words: ¹"I the LORD am your God, who brought you out of Egypt, where you were slaves. ²Do not have any other gods besides Me. ³Do not make an idol for yourself or any likeness of anything in heaven above, on the earth below, or in the water below ground level. ⁴Do not worship or

6 1 Pt 2:9;
Rv 1:6, 9, 10
12-13 Heb 12
18-20
16-18 Heb 12:
18-19, Rv 4:
1, 5, 7:11,
8:5, 11:19;
16:18
18 Rv 9:2
19 Heb 12:18-
19, Rv 4:1,
5, 7:11, 8:5,
11:15;
16:18
24 Rv 4:1

serve them, because I the LORD your God am a jealous God. I discipline the children who hate Me for their fathers' sins to the third and fourth generations. ⁸But to the thousandth generation, I show grace to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

⁹"Do not use the name of the LORD your God in vain, because the LORD will not let anyone who misuses His name go unpunished.

¹⁰"Remember to keep the Sabbath day [rest day] holy. ¹¹Six days you should labor and do all your work, ¹²but on the seventh, the rest day of the LORD your God, do not do any work, you, your son, daughter, male or female slave, your cattle, and your foreigner who is within your gates. ¹³In six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them, and on the seventh day He rested. This is why the LORD blessed the rest day and made it holy.

¹⁴"Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long on the earth the LORD your God is giving you.

¹⁵"Do not murder.

¹⁶"Do not commit adultery.

¹⁷"Do not steal.

¹⁸"Do not lie concerning your neighbor.

¹⁹"Do not covet your neighbor's house. Do not covet your neighbor's wife, his male or female servant, his ox, donkey, or anything that is his."

²⁰When all the people heard the thunder and the blast of the trumpet and saw the flashes and the mountain smoking, they were frightened. The people trembled and stood at a distance. ²¹"You talk to us," they told Moses. "and we'll listen; but don't let God talk to us, or we'll die!"

²²"Don't be afraid," Moses told the people. "God has come to test you and to make sure you fear Him enough to keep from sinning."

²³The people kept standing at a distance while Moses went up to the dark cloud where God was.

²⁴"Tell Israel," the LORD said to Moses. "you have seen Me talk to you from heaven. ²⁵Don't make yourselves idols of silver or gold to be worshiped along with Me.

²⁶"Make Me an altar of earth, and on it sacrifice your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your flocks and your cattle. Every place where I have you confess My name I will come to you and bless you. ²⁷If you make Me an altar of stones, don't use cut stones in building it; if you swing a tool on it, you make it unholy. ²⁸Don't go up to My altar on steps, because you must not expose your nakedness over it."

Rights of a Hebrew Slave

21 "These are the laws you should lay before them: ¹When you buy a Hebrew slave, he should be your slave six years, but in the seventh year he should go free without paying anything. ²If he came alone, he should leave alone. If he had a wife, his wife should leave with him. ³If his master gives him a wife and they have sons or daughters, the wife and her children belong to her master, and he should leave alone. ⁴But if the slave insists, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I'm not going away free,' ⁵his master should bring him before God; he should take him to the door or the doorpost, and his master should pierce his ear with an awl; then he will always be his slave.

20
1 Act 4:24
14:15, Rv
10:6, 14:7
12:17 Mt 5:21
27:15, 4
19:18-19
Mt 7:10
10:19
Lk 18:20
Ro 7:7-13
Ep 6:2-3
Ja 2:11
18 Heb 12
18-20

⁷When a man sells his daughter to be a concubine, she should not go free the way male slaves do. ⁸If her master decides not to make her his wife, because he doesn't like her, he can let her go for a price, but he has no right to sell her to outsiders, since he has cheated her. ⁹If he makes her his son's wife, he must treat her like a daughter. ¹⁰If he marries another, he cannot deprive her of food, clothing, or intercourse. ¹¹If he doesn't do these three things for her, she should go free without anyone paying anything."

Bodily Injury

¹²If anyone strikes another, so that he dies, he must be killed. ¹³If he didn't plan it, but God let an accident happen to him, I will appoint a place where he can flee. ¹⁴But if one boldly attacks another to kill him by trickery, take him even from My altar to be put to death.

¹⁵If anyone strikes his father or his mother, he must be killed.

¹⁶If one kidnaps another, whether he sells him or keeps him (and so is found), he must be killed.

¹⁷*If anyone curses his father or his mother, he must be killed.*

¹⁸If men quarrel and one hits the other with a stone or with his fist and the other doesn't die but has to lie in bed, ¹⁹if he can get up again and walk around outside with his staff, the one who hit him should not be punished except that he must pay for his not working and see to it that he gets completely well again.

²⁰If someone beats his slave, man or woman, with a rod, so that he dies right away, he must be punished. ²¹But if the slave is up in a day or two, the man should not be punished,

because he is his property.

²²If men who are fighting hit a pregnant woman so that she delivers her child prematurely but there is no harm to either mother or child, the man should pay the fine her husband puts on him with the help of judges. ²³If any harm follows, give a life for a life, ²⁴an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot, ²⁵a burn for a burn, a wound for a wound, a lash for a lash.

²⁶If a man hits the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he should let him go free for his eye. ²⁷If he knocks out a tooth of his slave, male or female, he should let him go free for his tooth.

²⁸If a bull gores a man or a woman to death, the bull must be stoned to death, and its meat must not be eaten; the bull's owner is not to be punished. ²⁹But if the bull has had a habit of goring and his owner is warned and still doesn't keep him from killing a man or a woman, the bull must be stoned, and his owner must be killed too. ³⁰If only a fine is put on him, he can save his life by paying the fine put on him. ³¹If a boy or girl is gored, follow the same rule in dealing with him. ³²If the bull gores a male or female slave, thirty shekels of silver is to be paid his master, and the bull is to be stoned.

³³If a man opens a cistern or digs a cistern and doesn't cover it and a bull or a donkey falls into it, ³⁴the owner of the cistern should pay its owner and keep the dead animal.

³⁵If someone's bull gores another man's bull so that he dies, they should sell the live bull and divide the money between them, and the dead bull too. ³⁶If the bull was known to have a habit of goring and

²¹
¹⁷ Mt 15:4,
¹⁸ Mk 7:10
²⁴ Mt 5:30

his owner didn't fence him in, he should trade bull for bull and keep the dead one."

Stealing and Other Loss of Property

22 "When a man steals a bull or a sheep and butchers it or sells it, he should pay back five head of cattle for one bull and four sheep for one sheep.

²¹"When anyone catches a burglar breaking in and strikes him so that he dies, he isn't guilty of murder. ²²But if it happened after sunrise, it would be murder. The thief must certainly pay back; if he has nothing, he must be sold to pay for what he stole. ²³If the stolen animal—bull, donkey, or sheep—is found alive in his possession, he must give back double.

²⁴"When a man burns a field or a vineyard and lets the fire spread to another man's field, he must pay him back with the best from his field and vineyard. ²⁵When a fire spreads and gets into thornbushes and burns up stacked or standing grain or ruins a field, the one who started the fire must pay for the loss.

²⁶"When one hands another some money or articles to keep for him and they are stolen from that man's house, if the thief is caught, he must pay back double. ²⁷If the thief isn't caught, the owner of the house should be brought before God to make sure he himself hasn't laid hands on his neighbor's goods. ²⁸In every case of anything stolen—a bull, a donkey, a sheep, a garment—or anything lost about which somebody says, 'This is it,' the case of both persons should come before

God: The one God says is guilty must pay the other double.

²⁹"When anyone gives another a donkey, bull, sheep, or any kind of animal to keep for him and it dies, is injured, or is taken in a raid and nobody saw what happened, ³⁰he should swear by the LORD to the owner to make sure he hasn't laid hands on his neighbor's goods; then the owner should be satisfied without being paid for the loss. ³¹But if it was stolen from him, the owner must get paid for his loss. ³²If it was torn by a wild animal, the man should bring it as proof; he doesn't pay for what has been torn by an animal.

³³"When anyone borrows an animal from another and it is injured or dies while its owner wasn't with it, the borrower should pay for its loss. ³⁴If the owner is with it, he doesn't get paid. If it was hired, the money paid for the hire covers any loss."

Other Regulations

¹⁵"If a man seduces a virgin who isn't engaged and has intercourse with her, he must pay the bride-price and marry her. ¹⁶If her father absolutely refuses to give her to him, he must pay in silver an amount equal to the bride-price for virgins.

¹⁷"Don't let a witch live.

¹⁸"Anyone who has intercourse with an animal must be killed.

¹⁹"Anyone who sacrifices to any god except the LORD must be solemnly destroyed.

²⁰"Don't mistreat a foreigner or oppress him, because you were foreigners in Egypt. ²¹Don't mistreat any widow or orphan. ²²If

¹Or the judges; also in vv. 9, 28

you mistreat such a one and he cries to me. I will certainly listen to his cry. ²¹and get very angry and kill you with the sword, and then your wives will be widows and your children orphans.

²²"If you lend money to My people, to any poor person among you, don't act like a creditor toward him: don't charge him interest. ²³If you take another person's garment as security, give it back to him before the sun goes down. ²⁴It's his only covering in which to wrap his body. What else can he sleep in? When he cries to Me, I will listen because I will feel sorry for him.

²⁵"Don't dishonor God or curse a leader of your people.

²⁶"Don't be late with your offerings from your crop or your vineyard.

²⁷"Give Me your firstborn son. ²⁸Do the same with your cattle and your sheep. Let the young one stay with its mother seven days, and on the eighth give it to Me.

²⁹"Be My holy people. Don't eat meat from an animal torn in the field; throw it to the dogs.

23 "Don't spread a false rumor. Don't join hands with a wicked person by falsely accusing anyone of crime. ³Don't follow a crowd in doing wrong. When you testify in a case, don't go with the majority to pervert justice. ⁴And don't show favoritism to a poor man when he has a case.

⁵"When you happen to find your enemy's ox or donkey running loose, be sure to bring it back to him. ⁶When you see your enemy's donkey lying helpless under its load, don't leave him alone with it, but by all means help him set it free.

⁷"Don't pervert justice when your

poor man comes with a complaint. ⁸Keep away from telling lies. And don't kill an innocent and righteous person, because I will not judge the wicked to be innocent. ⁹Don't take a bribe, because bribery blinds those who have good judgment and overturns the cause of those who are righteous.

¹⁰"Don't make life hard for a foreigner. You know how it feels to be a foreigner because you were foreigners in Egypt.

¹¹"For six years sow your land and gather its crops. ¹²but in the seventh leave it alone and let it lie so that the poor of your people can eat and what they leave the wild animals may eat. Do the same with your vineyards and your olive trees. ¹³Do your work in six days, but rest on the seventh so that your ox and your donkey can rest and your maid's son and the foreigner may be refreshed.

¹⁴"Pay careful attention to everything I told you.

¹⁵"Don't mention the names of other gods or let them be heard on your lips."

Three Festivals

¹⁶Celebrate three festivals for Me in the year. ¹⁷Keep the Festival of Bread Without Yeast: As I ordered you, eat bread without yeast for seven days at the right time in the month of Abib, because that was when you left Egypt. But don't come before Me empty-handed. ¹⁸Also keep the Festival of Harvesting with the first products of your work, of your sowing the field, and the Festival of In-Gathering at the end of the year when you gather what your work produced in the field. ¹⁹All your men should appear before the LORD three times a year.

²²
²⁸ Act 23:5

¹⁸“Don’t offer the blood of a sacrifice to Me with anything that contains yeast. And don’t let the fat sacrificed at My festival lie there all night till morning.

¹⁹“Bring the first and best of the crop of your ground to the house of the LORD your God.

“Don’t boil a kid in its mother’s milk.”

“My Messenger”

²⁰“I am sending a Messenger to lead you, protect you on the way, and bring you to the place I prepared. ²¹Be careful before Him, and listen to Him. Don’t rebel against Him, because He will not forgive your wrong—My name is in Him. ²²But be sure to listen to Him and do everything I say. Then I will be an enemy to your enemies and fight those who fight you. ²³When My Messenger leads you and brings you to the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites, and Jebusites, I will wipe them out. ²⁴Then don’t worship their gods or serve them or do what they do, but tear them down, and smash their holy pillars. ²⁵and serve the LORD your God; then He will bless your food and water and take sickness away from you. ²⁶No woman in your country will miscarry or be barren. I will give you each a full number of years. ²⁷I will send My terror ahead of you and throw into a panic all the people you come to and make all your enemies flee from you. ²⁸I will send panic^k ahead of you to drive the Hivites, Canaanites, and Hittites out of your way. ²⁹I will not drive them out of your way in one year, otherwise the land may lie waste and too many

animals come against you. ³⁰Little by little I’ll drive them out ahead of you till you grow in number and can take possession of the land. ³¹I will make your country extend from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines and from the desert to the Euphrates, because I will put the people living in the land in your hands, and you must drive them out of your way. ³²Don’t make a treaty with them and their gods. ³³They must not live in your country, or they will make you sin against Me when you serve their gods—they will be a trap for you.”

The Blood of the Covenant

24 “Come up before the LORD.” He said to Moses, “you and Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy elders of Israel, and worship at a distance. ²Then only Moses shall come near the LORD; the others shall not come near, and the people shall not come up with him at all.”

³Moses went and told the people everything the LORD said, including all the regulations; and all the people answered as one man: “We will do everything the LORD has told us to do.”

⁴Moses wrote down everything the LORD said. Rising early the next morning, he built an altar at the foot of the mountain and 12 pillars for the 12 tribes of Israel. ⁵Then he sent young Israelite men to sacrifice bulls as burnt offerings and peace offerings to the LORD. ⁶Moses took half of the blood and poured it into bowls and threw the other half against the altar. ⁷Then he took the scroll of the covenant and read it while the people listened. They said:

^kHeb the hornet, used figuratively

"We will obey and do everything the LORD has said."

"Then Moses took the blood and threw it over the people, saying: "Here is the blood of the covenant the LORD made with you on the basis of all He said here."

"Moses went up with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and 70 elders of Israel. "They saw the God of Israel, and under His feet there was a kind of pavement of sapphire as clear as the sky. "God didn't hurt the leaders of Israel while they had a vision of Him and ate and drank.

Gifts for the Tabernacle

"Come up to Me on the mountain," the LORD told Moses. "and wait there, and I will give you the stone tablets with the law and the commandments I have written, so that you may teach them."

"Moses and Joshua, his assistant, got up, and Moses went up on God's mountain. "He told the elders: "Wait here for us till we come back to you. Aaron and Hur are here with you. If anyone has a problem, he may go to them."

"Moses went up on the mountain, which was covered by the cloud; "the LORD's glory rested on Mount Sinai. For six days the cloud covered it, and on the seventh He called to Moses from the cloud. "The LORD's glory looked to the Israelites like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain. "Moses went into the cloud and up on the mountain. And Moses stayed on the mountain 40 days.

25 The LORD said to Moses: "Tell the Israelites to take an offering for Me; from everyone whose heart makes him willing take the offering for

Me. "This is the kind of offering you should take from them: gold, silver, bronze; "violet, purple, and scarlet material, fine linen, goats' hair, "rams' skins dyed red, porpoise skins, and acacia wood; "oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and the fragrant incense; "onyx stones and stones in settings for the priestly apron and pouch.

"Have them make Me a holy place, so that I can live among them. "Make it exactly like the model of the tabernacle and of all its equipment that I will show you."

The Ark of Testimony

"They should make an ark of acacia wood forty-five inches long, twenty-seven inches wide, and twenty-seven inches high. "Cover it with pure gold inside and out. Put a gold molding on it all around. "Cast four gold rings for it, and put them on its four lower corners, two rings on one side and two on the other. "Make poles of acacia wood, cover them with gold, "and put the poles through the rings on the sides of the ark to carry the ark with them. "The poles should stay in the rings of the ark and not be taken away from it. "And put into the ark the Word of Testimony I give you.

"Make an atonement cover of pure gold forty-five inches long and twenty-seven inches wide. "Make two angels by hammering them out of gold; make them on the two ends of the atonement cover. "Make one angel on one end and the other angel on the other end, making the two angels of one piece with the atonement cover. "The angels should have their wings spread above, overshadowing the atone-

24
 8 Mt 26:28;
 Mk 14:24;
 Lk 22:20;
 1 Co 11:25;
 Heb 9:19-
 20, 10:29;
 1 Pt 1:2
 12 2 Co 3:3
 17 2 Co 3:18
 25
 9 Act 7:44;
 Heb 8:5

ment cover with their wings as they face each other over it. ²¹Put the atonement cover on top of the ark, and put into the ark the Word of Testimony I give you. ²²There I will meet with you and talk to you from above the atonement cover, between the two angels over the ark containing the Word of Testimony, and give you all the instructions you will bring to Israel."

The Table

²³"Make a table of acacia wood thirty-six inches long, eighteen inches wide, and twenty-seven inches high. ²⁴Cover it with pure gold, and make a gold molding around it. ²⁵Make a rim a handbreadth wide around it, and put a gold molding around the rim. ²⁶Cast four gold rings for it, and fasten the rings to the four corners at the table's legs. ²⁷The rings should be close to the rim and hold the poles to carry the table. ²⁸Make the poles of acacia wood, cover them with gold, and use them to carry the table. ²⁹Make for it platters, cups, bowls, and jars to pour drink offerings, and make them of pure gold. ³⁰And always set before Me on the table bread presented to Me."

The Lampstand

³¹"Make a lampstand by hammering it out of pure gold with its base and its shaft; its flower cups, bulbs, and petals should be one piece with it. ³²Six branches should come out of its sides, three branches on one side and three on the other. ³³Each of the six branches coming out of the lampstand should have three flower cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with a bulb and petals. ³⁴The

lampstand itself should have four flower cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with a bulb and petals. ³⁵A bulb should be under each of the three pairs of branches coming out of the lampstand. ³⁶Their bulbs and branches should be one piece with it, all being hammered of one piece of pure gold. ³⁷Make seven lamps for it, and set up its lamps so as to give light in front of it. ³⁸Its tongs and firepans should be of pure gold. ³⁹Make it and all this equipment out of one talent of pure gold. ⁴⁰And see that you make them according to the model you were shown on the mountain."

The Tabernacle

26 "Make the tabernacle of ten curtains of fine twisted linen and violet, purple, and scarlet material with angels worked into it by a skillful artist. ²Each curtain should be forty-two feet long and six feet wide, all of them the same size. ³Five curtains should be joined to one another, and the other five should also be joined to one another. ⁴Make violet loops on the edge of the end curtain in the one set, and do the same on the edge of the end curtain in the other set. ⁵making fifty loops on the one curtain and fifty loops on the edge of the curtain in the other set, placing the loops opposite each other. ⁶Make fifty golden hooks, and with them fasten the curtains to one another so as to make one tabernacle.

⁷"Make curtains of goats' hair, eleven of them, for a tent over the tabernacle. ⁸Each curtain should be forty-five feet long and six feet wide; all eleven should be the same size. ⁹Join five curtains to one another, and the other six to one

⁴⁰ Act 7:44
Heb 8:5

another, and double the sixth curtain to hang in front of the tent. ¹⁰Make fifty loops on the edge of the end curtain in the one set and fifty loops on the edge of the end curtain in the other set. ¹¹Make fifty bronze hooks, and put the hooks through the loops to join the parts of the tent and make it one. ¹²The part of the curtains that hangs over, the half curtain that is left over, should hang over the back of the tabernacle. ¹³while the eighteen inches left over on each side in the length of the tent curtains should hang over each side of the tabernacle to cover it. ¹⁴Make a cover for the tent of rams' skins dyed red and over that a cover of porpoise skins.

¹⁵Make the upright frames for the tabernacle of acacia wood. ¹⁶Each frame should be fifteen feet long and twenty-seven inches wide. ¹⁷Each frame should have two tenons to fit it tightly to the next frame: make these on all the frames in the tabernacle. ¹⁸Make twenty frames for the south side of the tabernacle. ¹⁹Make forty silver bases under the twenty frames, two bases under each frame for its two tenons. ²⁰And also twenty frames on the other, the north side of the tabernacle. ²¹and their forty silver bases, two bases under each frame. ²²Make six frames for the back, the west side. ²³Make two frames for the back corners of the tabernacle; ²⁴these should be coupled at the bottom and joined together at the top to a single ring; both should be like that; they should form the two corners. ²⁵There should be eight frames with their sixteen silver bases, two bases under each frame.

²⁶Make bars of acacia wood, five

for the frames on the one side of the tabernacle. ²⁷five for the frames on the other side of the tabernacle, and five for the frames on the back, that is, the west side of the tabernacle. ²⁸Have the middle bar, halfway up the frames, go from one end to the other. ²⁹Cover the frames with gold, make gold rings to hold the bars, and cover the bars with gold.

³⁰Set up the tabernacle according to the plan you were shown on the mountain.

³¹Make a curtain of violet, purple, and scarlet material and fine twisted linen, with a pattern of angels worked in by a skillful artist. ³²Hang this with gold hooks on four acacia posts, covered with gold, standing on four silver bases. ³³Hang the curtain from the hooks, and bring the ark containing the Word of Testimony behind the curtain. The curtain will divide for you the holy place from the most holy place. ³⁴Put the atonement cover on the ark containing the Word of Testimony in the most holy place.

³⁵Set the table outside the curtain by the north wall, and the lampstand opposite the table by the south wall of the tabernacle.

³⁶For the door of the tent make a screen of violet, purple, and scarlet material and fine twisted linen, embroidered with colored threads. ³⁷For the screen make five posts of acacia wood covered with gold, with gold hooks; and cast five bronze bases for them."

The Altar for Burnt Offerings

27 "Make the altar of acacia wood; seven and a half feet square the altar should be, and four and a half feet high. ²On its

four corners make horns that are one piece with it; and cover it with bronze.

¹¹"Make pots to take away its ashes, also shovels, bowls, forks, and firepans for it. Make all the utensils for it of bronze.

¹²"Make a grating for it, a bronze network, and make four bronze rings on the four corners of the network, and fasten it below under the ledge around the altar so that it comes halfway up the altar.

¹³"Make poles of acacia wood for the altar, and cover them with bronze. ¹⁴Its poles, put through the rings, should be along the two sides of the altar to be used in carrying it.

¹⁵"Make it hollow, with boards. Make it as it was shown to you on the mountain."

The Court

¹"Make a court for the tabernacle. The south side of the court should have curtains of fine twisted linen, one hundred fifty feet long for the one side, ²with twenty posts and twenty bronze bases for them. The hooks on the posts and their binders should be silver. ³Have the same length on the north side—curtains one hundred fifty feet long with their twenty posts and twenty bronze bases. The hooks on the posts and their binders should be silver. ⁴For the width of the court on the west side have curtains extending seventy-five feet with their ten posts and their ten bases. ⁵On the east side, toward the rising sun, the court should be seventy-five feet wide. ⁶⁻¹⁵On each side of the entrance there should be twenty-five and a half feet of curtains with three posts and three bases for them. ¹⁶For the gate of the court have a thirty-foot screen of

violet, purple, and scarlet material and fine twisted linen, embroidered with colored threads, with four posts and their bases. ¹⁷All the posts around the court should have silver bands, silver hooks, and bronze bases. ¹⁸The court should be one hundred fifty feet long, seventy-five feet wide all the way, and seven and a half feet high—fine twisted linen and bronze bases.

¹⁹"All the equipment used for serving in the tabernacle, all its tent pegs, and all the tent pegs for the court should be bronze."

Olive Oil for Lamps

²⁰"Order the Israelites to get you clear oil of crushed olives for the lights in order to set up the lamps to burn continually. ²¹Aaron and his sons should tend to this from evening till morning before the LORD in the tent where I meet with you, outside the curtain behind which is the Word of the Testimony. This is what the Israelites in the coming ages must always do."

Sacred Vestments

28 "Have your brother Aaron and his sons Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar come to you from the Israelites to serve Me as priests. ²For your brother Aaron make holy garments for honor and dignity.

³"Tell all who are skillful, whom I have filled with ability, to make Aaron's garments to sanctify him for serving Me as priest. ⁴These are the garments they should make: a pouch, a priestly apron, a robe, a tunic of checkered work, a turban, and a sash. They are to make holy garments for your brother Aaron and his sons to serve Me as priests. ⁵They are to use gold,

²⁷
8 Acts 7:44;
Heb 8:5

violet, purple, and scarlet material and fine linen.

"They should have a skilled artist make the priest's apron of gold, violet, purple, and scarlet material and fine twisted linen. "There should be two shoulder straps on its two edges, so that it can be held in place. "The waistband on it should be made like it and be one piece with it, made of gold, violet, purple, and scarlet material and fine twisted linen. "Get two onyx stones, and engrave on them the names of Israel's sons. "six of their names on one stone, the other six on the other stone, in the order in which they were born. "Have a jeweler prepare the stones and, like the engraving on a seal ring, engrave the names of Israel's sons on the two stones, setting them in filigree work of gold. "Fasten the two stones on the shoulder straps of the apron as reminder stones for the Israelites. So Aaron is to bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders as a reminder. "Make the filigrees of gold. "By twisting threads into cords make two chains of pure gold, and fasten the corded chains to the filigrees.

"Have a skilled artist make the judgment pouch: like the priest's apron, make it of gold, violet, purple, and scarlet material and fine twisted linen. "Folded double, it should be nine inches square. "On it make settings for four rows of stones. The first row: carnelian, topaz, emerald; "the second row: red garnet, lapis lazuli, sardonyx; "the third row: turquoise, agate, amethyst; "the fourth row: chrysolite, onyx, jasper. They are to be set in gold filigrees. "There

should be twelve stones corresponding to the names of Israel's sons, engraved like seals, each bearing the name of one of the twelve tribes. "On the pouch make chains of twisted cords of pure gold. "Make two gold rings on the pouch, and fasten the two rings to the two edges of the pouch. "Fasten the two gold cords to the two rings at the edges of the pouch, "and fasten the other two ends of the two cords to the two filigrees, fastening them in front to the shoulder straps of the apron. "Make two gold rings, and fasten them to the other two edges of the pouch on its inside next to the apron. "Make two more gold rings, and fasten them in front to the lower part of the shoulder straps of the apron near its seam above the waistband of the apron. "They should fasten the pouch by its rings to the rings of the apron with a violet cord, so that it will lie on the waistband of the apron and the pouch will not get away from the apron. "Aaron shall bear the names of Israel's sons on the judgment pouch over his heart when he goes into the holy place as a continual reminder before the LORD. "Put the Urim and Thummim¹ into the judgment pouch, so that they're on Aaron's heart when he goes in before the LORD and Aaron will always bear the judgment of Israel's sons on his heart before the LORD.

"Make the robe that goes with the apron entirely of violet material. "It should have a hole in it for the head, with a woven border all around, like the neck in a military garment, to keep it from tearing. "On its lower border all around

²⁸
21 Rv 21:12

¹Light and Right — meaning uncertain

make pomegranates of violet, purple, and scarlet material with gold bells between them all around. ³⁴a gold bell alternating with a pomegranate all around the lower border of the robe. ³⁵Aaron must wear it when he serves, so that its tinkling will be heard when he enters the holy place before the LORD and when he leaves it, else he may die.

³⁶“Make a flower of pure gold, and engrave on it as on a seal ring: THE LORD’S HOLY ONE. ³⁷Fasten it to a violet cord and so to the front of the turban. ³⁸It should be on Aaron’s forehead, and Aaron will bear the blame for any irregularity in ritual when the Israelites consecrate their holy gifts. It should always be on his forehead, so that the LORD will accept them.

³⁹“Weave the tunic of fine linen with a checkered design. Make the turban of fine linen, but the sash should be embroidered with colored threads.

⁴⁰“Make tunics, sashes, and headdresses also for Aaron’s sons to honor and dignify them. ⁴¹Put these on your brother Aaron and his sons, anoint them, appoint them as priests, and consecrate them to serve Me as priests.

⁴²“Make white linen pants, reaching from the hips to the thighs; to cover their naked flesh. ⁴³Aaron and his sons should wear them when they go into the tent where I meet with you or when they come near the altar to serve in the holy place, to keep from doing wrong and dying. This law should always hold for him and his descendants after him.”

Consecrating the Priests

29 “This is what you should do in consecrating them

to serve Me as priests:

“Take one young bull and two perfect rams ²and bread without yeast, cakes without yeast, mixed with oil, and wafers without yeast, covered with oil; use wheat flour in making them. ³Put them in one basket, and bring them in the basket with the young bull and the two rams.

⁴“Then have Aaron and his sons come to the door of the tent where I meet with you, and wash them with water. ⁵Take the clothes and put them on Aaron, the tunic, the robe that is with the apron, the apron itself, the pouch, and with its waistband fasten the apron on him. ⁶Put the turban on his head, and fasten the holy symbol of consecration on the turban. ⁷Then take the anointing oil, and pour it on his head to anoint him.

⁸“Then have his sons come forward and put their tunics on them. ⁹Fasten their sashes around Aaron and his sons, and bind their headdresses on them. They shall be the legal priests forever. And so you will install Aaron and his sons.

¹⁰“Then bring the young bull before the tent where I meet with you. Aaron and his sons should lay their hands on the bull’s head. ¹¹Kill the bull before the LORD at the door of the tent where I meet with you. ¹²And take some of the bull’s blood, and with your finger put it on the horns of the altar, and pour out all the blood against the base of the altar.

¹³“Take all the fat that covers the intestines, the lobe on the liver, the two kidneys with the fat on them, and burn them on the altar. ¹⁴But burn the bull’s meat, hide, and bowel contents in fire outside the

camp. It's an offering to take away sin.

¹⁵“Take one ram, and Aaron and his sons should lay their hands on the ram’s head. ¹⁶Kill the ram, take its blood, and throw it against the altar all around. ¹⁷Cut the ram into its pieces, wash the intestines and legs, and lay them with its other pieces and its head. ¹⁸Then burn the whole ram on the altar. It is a burnt offering to the LORD, an offering by fire with a fragrance that pleases the LORD.

¹⁹“Take the other ram, and Aaron and his sons should lay their hands on the ram’s head. ²⁰Kill the ram, take some of its blood, and put it on the tip of Aaron’s right ear, on the tips of his sons’ right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet, and throw the blood against the altar all around. ²¹Take some blood from the altar and some anointing oil, and sprinkle it on Aaron and his garments, also on his sons and their garments; then he and his garments, as well as his sons and their garments, will be holy.

²²“Take the fat of the ram, the fat tail, the fat that covers the intestines, the lobe of the liver, and two kidneys with the fat on them, and the right thigh—this is a ram for their installation—²³also a flat loaf of bread, a cake of bread made with oil, and a wafer from the basket of bread without yeast that is before the LORD. ²⁴and lay it all in the hands of Aaron and his sons, and wave them as you offer them to the LORD. ²⁵Then take them from their hands, and burn them on the altar with the burnt offering for a fragrance that pleases the LORD; it’s an offering by fire to the LORD.

²⁶“Take the breast of the ram for

Aaron’s installation, and wave it as you offer it to the LORD; this will be your share. ²⁷Consecrate the breast that was waved when offered and the thigh that was given and waved, both from the ram for installation, for this is what belongs to Aaron and his sons. ²⁸Coming from the Israelites, it should always legally belong to Aaron and his sons because it is a gift and should be a part of the peace offerings the Israelites give to the LORD.

²⁹“Aaron’s holy garments should belong to his sons after him, so that they can be anointed and installed in them. ³⁰The son who succeeds him as priest should wear them seven days when he goes into the tent where I meet with you, to serve in the holy place.

³¹“Take the ram for installation, and boil its meat in the holy place. ³²Aaron and his sons should eat the meat of the ram and the bread in the basket at the door of the tent where I meet with you. ³³They should eat those things by which their sins were forgiven when they were installed and consecrated, but nobody else should eat them, because they are holy. ³⁴If any meat is left from the installation or any bread left over till morning, burn what is left; it must not be eaten, because it is holy.

“Do this with Aaron and his sons exactly as I ordered you. ³⁵Take seven days to install them. ³⁶Each day sacrifice a young bull as an offering to atone for sin. And make a sin offering for the altar, cleansing it, and then anoint it and make it holy. ³⁷For seven days cleanse the altar from sin, and make it holy. Then the altar will be very holy, and anyone who touches the altar must be holy.

¹⁸ Ep 5.2.
²⁰ Phil 4.18

³⁰“This is what you should offer on the altar: two yearling lambs regularly every day. ³¹Sacrifice the one in the morning, the other in the evening. ³²With the first lamb offer a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with a quarter of a hin of oil from pressed olives, and a drink offering of a quarter of a hin of wine. ³³Sacrifice the other lamb in the evening with the same flour and drink offering as in the morning—an offering with a fragrance that pleases the LORD. ³⁴This is the regular burnt offering you and your descendants should bring before the LORD at the door of the tent where I meet with you to talk to you. ³⁵There I will meet with Israel, and My glory will make it a holy place. ³⁶I will make the tent where I meet with you and the altar holy and will make Aaron and his sons holy to serve Me as priests.

⁴⁵⁻⁴⁶ 2 Co 6: 16; Rev 21:3, 7

³⁵“I will live among the Israelites and be their God, ³⁶and they will know I the LORD am their God, who brought them out of Egypt to live among them. I the LORD am their God.”

The Altar for Incense

30 “Make an altar for burning incense; make it of acacia wood, ²eighteen inches square and thirty-six inches high. Its horns should be one piece with it. ³Cover it with pure gold, its top, its sides all around, and its horns. And make a gold molding around it. ⁴Below the molding on its opposite sides make two gold rings to hold the poles for carrying it. ⁵Make the poles of acacia wood, and cover them with gold. ⁶Set it in front of the curtain behind which is the ark containing the Word of Testimony, in front of the atonement

cover that is over the Word of Testimony, where I will meet with you.

⁷“Aaron should burn fragrant incense on it every morning when he gets the lamps ready. ⁸Also when Aaron sets up the lamps in the evening, there must be burning of incense regularly before the LORD in the coming ages.

⁹“Don’t burn strange incense on it or burnt offerings or grain offerings, and don’t pour a drink offering on it. ¹⁰Once a year Aaron should make atonement on its horns; with blood from the yearly atonement for sin, atonement must be made for it in the coming ages. It is very holy to the LORD.”

Ransom at Census

¹¹“The LORD said to Moses: ¹²“When you count the Israelites to see how many they are, everyone should give the LORD a ransom for his life when he is counted; then there will be no plague among them when they are counted. ¹³Everyone who is counted should give a half shekel of silver as it is weighed in the holy place—twenty gerahs to a shekel—a half shekel as a gift to the LORD. ¹⁴Everyone twenty years old and older as he is counted should give it to the Lord. ¹⁵The rich shouldn’t give more, and the poor shouldn’t give less than a half shekel in giving the LORD a ransom for your lives. ¹⁶Take the ransom money from the Israelites, and use it for the service in the tent where I meet with you, and it will be Israel’s reminder before the LORD that you’re ransomed.”

The Bronze Basin

¹⁷“The LORD said to Moses: ¹⁸“Make a bronze basin, with a

bronze stand, for washing, and set it between the tent where I meet with you and the altar. Pour water into it. ¹⁹Aaron and his sons should take water from it to wash their hands and feet. ²⁰When they go into the tent where I meet with you, they should wash in water so they will not die. Or when they come near the altar to minister by burning an offering to the LORD. ²¹they should wash their hands and feet; then they will not die. This is a law forever for him and his descendants in the coming ages."

The Holy Oil

²²The LORD said to Moses: ²³"Get the finest spices: five hundred shekels of liquid myrrh, half as much (that is, two hundred fifty) of fragrant cinnamon, two hundred fifty of fragrant calamus, ²⁴five hundred of cassia (according to the weight used in the holy place), and a hin of olive oil. ²⁵With these make a holy oil for anointing, a mixture blended by a perfumer: it is a holy oil to be used in anointing.

²⁶"With it anoint the tent where I meet with you, the ark with the Word of Testimony ²⁷the table with all its utensils, the lampstand with all its utensils, the altar for incense, ²⁸the altar for burnt offerings with all its equipment, and the basin with its stand. ²⁹and so make them holy. Then they will be very holy; anyone who touches them must be holy. ³⁰Anoint Aaron and his sons, and make them holy to serve Me as priests.

³¹"Tell the Israelites: You and your descendants should consider this My holy oil to be used in anointing. ³²It should not be poured on the body of just anyone, and don't make any mixture like this

one. It is holy and should be holy to you. ³³Anyone who makes a mixture like this or uses any of it on anybody else must be cut off from his people."

The Incense

³⁴The LORD told Moses: "Get spices: myrrh gum, aromatic shells, galbanum gum, these spices and clear frankincense in equal parts. ³⁵Make it into incense, a mixture made by a perfumer, salted, pure and holy. ³⁶Make a fine powder of it and put some in front of the Word of Testimony in the tent where I meet with you. It should be very holy to you. ³⁷Don't make the same kind of mixture of incense for yourselves. Treat it as holy to the LORD. ³⁸Anyone who makes anything like it to enjoy its odor must be cut off from his people."

The Workers

31 The LORD told Moses: ¹"See, I have by name called Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, ²and I have filled him with God's Spirit, with skill, intelligence, and knowledge for every kind of work: ³to make designs to be carried out in gold, silver, and bronze, ⁴to cut stones to be set, and to carve wood—for work in all kinds of craftsmanship. ⁵With him I have appointed Oholiab, Ahisamach's son, of the tribe of Dan. And to every skillful person I have given the skill to make everything I ordered you to make: ⁶the tent where I will meet with you, the ark for the Word of Testimony, the atonement cover on it, all the equipment of the tent, ⁷the table with its utensils, the pure lampstand with all its utensils, the altar for the incense, ⁸the altar for

the burnt offerings with all its equipment, the basin with its stand. ¹⁰the finely woven garments—the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments for his sons when they serve as priests. ¹¹the anointing oil, and the fragrant incense for the holy place. They should make these just as I ordered you."

The Sabbath, a Sign

¹²The LORD said to Moses: ¹³"Tell the Israelites: 'Be sure to keep My Sabbaths, because they will be a sign between Me and you and your descendants by which you can know that I the LORD am He who makes you holy. ¹⁴Keep the rest day, because it is holy to you. Anyone who makes it unholy must be killed. If anyone does any work on it, that person must be cut off from his people. ¹⁵Six days you may work, but the seventh is the LORD's holy rest day. If anyone does any work on the rest day, he must be killed. ¹⁶The Israelites and their descendants must carefully keep the rest day as an everlasting covenant. ¹⁷It will be a sign between Me and the Israelites forever, because the LORD made heaven and earth in six days, and on the seventh He rested and was refreshed.'"

¹⁸When He finished talking to Moses on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets with the Word of Testimony, stone tablets inscribed with God's finger.

The Golden Calf

32 When the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron. "Come," they said, "make us gods to lead us. We don't know what happened to

this Moses who brought us out of Egypt."

²²"Tear off the gold rings that your wives, sons, and daughters have in their ears," Aaron told them, "and bring them to me."

²³All the people tore the gold rings from their ears and brought them to Aaron. 'who took them from their hands and made a metal casting of a calf that he shaped with a chisel.

"These are your gods, Israel," they said. "who brought you out of Egypt."

²⁴When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of it. And Aaron called out. "Tomorrow shall be a festival to the LORD."

²⁵The next day the people got up early and burned sacrifices and brought peace offerings: then they sat down to eat and drink and got up to play.

²⁶"Go down," the LORD told Moses. "Your people, whom you brought out of Egypt, are doing a corrupt thing. ²⁷They have quickly left the way I ordered them to live and made themselves a casting of a calf. They're worshiping it and sacrificing to it. 'These are your gods, Israel,' they say, 'who brought you out of Egypt.' ²⁸I see these people are a stubborn people," the LORD said to Moses. ²⁹"Now let Me alone, and My anger will blaze at them, and I'll consume them. And I will make you a great people."

³⁰But Moses pleaded with the LORD his God. "LORD," he asked, "for what purpose are You so angry with Your people, whom You brought out of Egypt with great might and a strong arm? ³¹Why should the Egyptians say, 'He brought them out only to harm them, to kill them in the hills and destroy them from the earth'? Turn from Your fierce

³²
1 Ac1 7:40
8 Ac1 7:41
1 Co 10:7

singer, and change Your mind about the disaster You mean to bring on Your people. "Think of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants to whom You swore by Yourself and promised. "I will give you many descendants, like the stars in the sky, and all this land I spoke of I will give to your descendants as their possession forever."

"So the LORD changed His mind about the evil He thought to do to His people.

"Moses turned and went down the mountain, having in his hands the two tablets with the Word of Testimony, written on both sides, the front and the back. "God had made the tablets, and God had inscribed the writing on the tablets.

"Joshua heard the noise of the people shouting. "It sounds like a battle in the camp," he said to Moses.

"But he answered, "It doesn't sound like shouts of victory or cries of defeat, but it's singing I hear." "When he came near the camp, he saw the calf and the dancing, and Moses got very angry, threw the tablets out of his hands, and smashed them at the foot of the mountain. "Then he took the calf they had made, burnt it in the fire, ground it to powder, scattered it over the water, and made the Israelites drink it.

"What did these people do to you," Moses asked Aaron, "that you should bring such a great sin on them?"

"Don't get angry, my master," Aaron answered. "You know yourself how the people are out to do evil. "They told me, 'Make us gods to lead us. We don't know what happened to this Moses who brought us out of Egypt.' "So I told them,

'Anyone who has any gold, tear it off.' They gave it to me. I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!"

"When Moses saw the people were out of control—because Aaron had let them get out of control, giving their enemies something to talk about—Moses stood at the gate of the camp and said, "Who is for the LORD? Come to me!" Then all of Levi's descendants came to him.

"He told them: "The LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Each of you, put your sword on your hip, and go back and forth from gate to gate in the camp, and each of you, kill his brother, friend, and neighbor.'"

"Levi's descendants did what Moses told them, and that day about 3,000 people fell.

"Dedicate yourselves to the LORD today," Moses said, "for each of you went against his own son and brother, so that He might give you a blessing today."

"The next day Moses told the people: "You have done a great wrong. Now I will go up to the LORD. Perhaps I can get Him to forgive your sin."

"So Moses went back to the LORD and said: "Oh! These people have done a great wrong, making gods for themselves out of gold. "And now will You forgive their sin? If not, please wipe me from the scroll You have written."

"I will wipe from My scroll," the LORD told Moses, "only him who sins against Me. "And now go, lead the people where I told you. My Messenger will lead you. But when I punish, I will punish them for their sin."

"So the LORD struck down the

23 Acts 7:40
22-33 Rv 3:5
13:8, 17:8
20:12, 15,
21:27
25 Acts 7:41

people because of what they did with the calf Aaron made.

"I Will Not Go Up Among You"

33 The LORD said to Moses: "Come, leave this place, you and the people you brought up from Egypt, and go up to the land I promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob with an oath, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants.'¹ and I will send a Messenger to lead you and will drive out the Canaanite, Amorite, Hittite, Perizzite, Hivite, and Jebusite. ²He will lead you to a land flowing with milk and honey. I will not go up among you, because you are a stubborn people—I might destroy you on the way."³

⁴When the people heard this bad news, they mourned, and nobody wore his ornaments. ⁵The LORD had told Moses, "Tell the Israelites: 'You are a stubborn people. If for only a moment I went up among you, I would destroy you. And now, put away your ornaments, and I'll see what I'll do with you.'⁶ "So the Israelites stripped themselves of their ornaments, from Mount Horeb on.

⁷Moses used to take the tent and set it up outside the camp at some distance from it. He called it the tent where God met with them. Anyone who wanted to ask the LORD something would go out to the tent where God met with them, outside the camp. ⁸When Moses went out to the tent, all the people would rise, and everyone would stand at the door of his own tent and watch Moses till he went into the tent. ⁹As soon as Moses went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and stand at the door of the

tent while He spoke to Moses. ¹⁰When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the door of the tent, they would bow to the ground in worship, everyone at the door of his own tent. ¹¹The LORD would talk to Moses face to face as one talks to his friend. Then he would come back to the camp. But his assistant Joshua, Nun's son, a young man, didn't leave the tent.

¹²Moses said to the LORD, "You tell me, 'Take these people into the land,' but You haven't told me who it is You're sending with me. You say, 'I know you by name, and you have also found favor with Me.' "And now if You're really kind to me, let me know Your ways so I can understand You and continue to find favor with You. And also think of how this nation is Your people."

¹³"I Myself will go with you," He said, "and put your mind at rest."

¹⁴"If You're not going with us," Moses told Him, "don't make us leave here. ¹⁵How can anyone know You're kind to me and to Your people? Isn't it by Your going with us? Then I and Your people will be different from all other people on earth."

¹⁷"I will do what you say," the LORD answered Moses, "because I am kind to you and know you by name."

¹⁸"Please," he said, "let me see Your glory."

¹⁹"I will let all My goodness pass by you," He said, "and will pronounce the name 'the LORD'^m before you. I will be merciful to whom I want to be merciful and will pity whom I want to pity. ²⁰You can't see My face." He added, "be-

³³
³ Acts 7:51
¹⁹ Ro 9:15

^mJehovah, probably pronounced Yahweh

cause a man can't see My face and live.

"See, here is a place by Me," the LORD said. "Stand on the rock. And when My glory passes by, I will put you in a crack in the rock and cover you with My hand till I have passed by. Then I will take My hand away, and you'll see My back; but My face must not be seen."

Two New Tablets

34 The LORD said to Moses: "Cut two stone tablets like the first, and I will write on them the words that were on the first tablets that you smashed. Be ready by morning, and in the morning come up on Mount Sinai, and stand before Me there on the top of the mountain. No one should come up with you or be seen anywhere on the mountain, nor should the flocks and herds graze in front of this mountain."

"So Moses cut two stone tablets like the first, and getting up early in the morning, he went up Mount Sinai as the LORD ordered him, taking the two stone tablets in his hands.

The LORD came down in a cloud and stood with him there and pronounced the name "the LORD."

The LORD passed in front of him, declaring: "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to get angry, rich in love and faithfulness, continuing to show His love to thousands, forgiving wrong, rebellion, and sin, without treating it as innocent, but disciplining children and children's children to the third and fourth generation for the sins of their fathers."

^aCanaanite goddess of fertility

"Moses quickly bowed to the ground and worshiped. "If You are kind to me, O Lord," he said, "may the Lord go among us even though this is a stubborn people. Forgive our guilt and sin, and take us to be Your own people."

"I am making a covenant," He said. "Before all your people I will do such wonders as have never been done anywhere on earth or among any other nation, so that all the people around you will see it is the LORD's doing, for it is a terrible thing I will do with you. If you do what I order you to do today, then I will drive out the Amorite, Canaanite, Hittite, Perizzite, Hivite, and Jebusite ahead of you. Be careful not to make a treaty with anyone living in the land where you're going, or they'll be a trap among you. No, tear down their altars, smash their sacred pillars, and cut down their sacred poles of Asherah."

"Don't worship any other God, because the LORD is called the Jealous One—He is a jealous God. If you should dare to make a treaty with anyone living in the land, where they lust after their gods and sacrifice to their gods, they'll invite you, and you'll eat their sacrifices; and you'll have your sons marry their daughters, and when their daughters lust after their gods, they'll lead your sons to lust after them too.

"Don't make yourselves any gods of cast metal.

"Keep the Festival of Bread Without Yeast. As I ordered you, eat bread without yeast for seven days at the time appointed in the month of Abib, because in the month of Abib you came out of Egypt.

10 Rv. 15.3

¹⁹“Every firstborn is Mine, the males of all your animals, the firstborn of cattle and sheep. ²⁰But the firstborn donkey you may buy back with a sheep; if you don't buy it back, break its neck. Buy back every firstborn son of yours.

“And nobody shall come before Me empty-handed.

²¹“Work six days, but rest on the seventh, even during plowing and harvesting.

²²“Celebrate the Festival of Weeks with the first wheat you harvest, also the Festival of Gathering-In at the turn of the year.

²³“Three times a year all your men should appear before the LORD, the God of Israel. ²⁴because I will drive the nations out of your way and enlarge your territory, and nobody will want to get your land when you go up to appear before the LORD your God three times a year.

²⁵“Don't use yeast when you offer the blood of a sacrifice to Me. And what you sacrifice at the Passover Festival must not be left overnight till morning.

²⁶“Bring the first and best products of your ground to the house of the LORD your God.

“Don't boil a young goat in its mother's milk.”

²⁷The LORD said to Moses, “Write down these words, because according to these words I'm making a covenant with you and Israel.”

²⁸He was there with the LORD 40 days and nights without eating or drinking anything. And He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the 10 commandments.

Moses' Face Shines

²⁹Moses came down from Mount Sinai. The tablets with the Word of Testimony were in Moses' hands as

he came down the mountain. Moses didn't know the skin of his face was shining because God had talked with him.

³⁰But Aaron and all the other Israelites looked at Moses and saw the skin of Moses' face shining and were afraid to come near him. ³¹But Moses called to them, and so Aaron and all the leaders of the community came back, and Moses talked to them. ³²Afterwards all the other Israelites came near him, and he ordered them to do everything the LORD had told him on Mount Sinai. ³³When Moses finished talking to them, he put a veil over his face. ³⁴But whenever Moses went in before the LORD to talk with Him, he took off the veil till he came out. And whenever he came out and told the Israelites what the LORD had ordered. ³⁵The Israelites saw that the skin of Moses' face was shining. Then Moses would put the veil back on till he went in to talk again with Him.

35 Moses gathered the whole assembly of Israel and told them: “This is what the LORD orders you to do: ¹In six days do your work, but the seventh day shall be the LORD's holy sabbath of complete rest for you. Anyone who does any work on it will be killed. ²Don't light a fire in any of your homes on the rest day.”

Offerings for the Tabernacle

“Moses told the whole community of Israel: “This is what the LORD orders: ¹Take an offering for the LORD. Everyone with a willing heart should bring the offering for the LORD: gold, silver, and bronze; ²violet, purple, and scarlet material, fine linen, goats' hair, ³rams'

29-35 2 Co 3
7-16

skins dyed red, porpoise skins, and acacia wood: ⁹olive oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and the fragrant incense: ¹⁰onyx stones and other stones in settings on the priestly apron and the pouch.

¹¹“Every skillful person among you should come and make everything the LORD orders: ¹²the tabernacle with its tent and its covering, its hooks, frames, bars, posts, and bases: ¹³the ark with its poles, the atonement cover, and the curtain for the screen: ¹⁴the table with its poles and all its utensils, and the bread to be laid before God: ¹⁵the lampstand for the light with its utensils, its lamps and the oil for the light: ¹⁶the altar for the incense with its poles: the anointing oil and the fragrant incense: the screen for the door of the tabernacle: ¹⁷the altar for burnt offerings with its bronze grating, its poles, and all its utensils: the basin with its stand: ¹⁸the curtains for the court, its posts, bases, and the screen for the entrance to the court: ¹⁹the pegs for the tabernacle and the pegs for the court with their ropes: ²⁰the finely woven garments for serving in the holy place, the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments in which his sons are to serve as priests.”

²¹“The whole congregation of Israel came away from Moses, ²²and everyone who was willing and whose spirit moved him came and brought the LORD an offering to build the tent where He would meet with them, for all its service, and for the holy garments. ²³Men and women, all who were willing, came and brought clasps, earrings, seal rings, and necklaces, any kind of gold object, yes, everyone who offered waved gifts of gold before

the LORD. ²⁴Everyone who happened to have violet, purple, or scarlet material, fine linen, goats' hair, rams' skins dyed red, or porpoise skins brought them. ²⁵And everyone who could give silver or bronze brought it as a gift to the LORD. Everyone who happened to have acacia wood that could be used in the sacred work brought it. ²⁶Every skilled woman spun with her hands and brought what she had spun, violet, purple, and scarlet material, and fine linen. ²⁷And all the women who were willing and skillful spun the goats' hair. ²⁸The leaders brought onyx stones and other stones in the settings for the priest's apron and pouch, ²⁹and the spices, and the oil for the light, the anointing oil, and the fragrant incense. ³⁰So the Israelites brought voluntary offerings to the LORD, every man and woman bringing whatever their hearts prompted them to bring for any construction the LORD had ordered through Moses.

Bezalel and Oholiab

³¹Moses told the Israelites: “See, the LORD by name has called Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, ³²and has filled him with God's Spirit, with skill, intelligence, and knowledge for every kind of work: ³³to make designs to be carried out in gold, silver, and bronze, ³⁴to cut stones to be set and to carve wood—for work in all kinds of craftsmanship. ³⁵And He has made him and Oholiab, Ahisamach's son, of the tribe of Dan, able to train others. ³⁶And He has given them every skill to do every kind of work: engraving, designing, embroidering violet, purple and

scarlet material and fine linen, and weaving all kinds of things; and ability to make artistic designs.

36 And Bezalel and Oholiab should do the work with every other skilled workman whom the LORD has given skill and intelligence to know how to do all the work for the service of the holy place exactly as the LORD ordered."

³Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every other skilled workman whom the LORD had given skill, everyone who was willing to come and do the work.

Too Much

³Moses turned over to them every contribution the Israelites brought for the building and the service of the holy place. But they still brought him freewill offerings every morning, ⁴and all the skilled workmen doing all the work of building the holy place came, each from the work he was doing, ⁵and told Moses, "The people are bringing much more than is needed to finish the work the LORD ordered us to do."

⁶So Moses gave the order, and it was announced in the camp: "No man or woman should prepare anything more to give for the holy place." Then the people stopped bringing gifts. ⁷The material on hand was enough, yes, more than enough to finish the job.

Building the Tabernacle

⁸All those who were skilled among the workers built the tabernacle with its 10 curtains of fine twisted linen and violet, purple, and scarlet material, with a pattern of angels worked in by a skillful artist. ⁹Each curtain was 42 feet long and 6 feet wide, all the same size. ¹⁰Five

curtains were joined to one another, and the other five were joined to one another. ¹¹They made violet loops on the edge of the end curtain in the one set and the same on the edge of the end curtain in the other set, ¹²making 50 loops on the one curtain and 50 loops on the edge of the curtain in the other set, placing the loops opposite each other.

¹³They made 50 gold hooks and with them fastened the curtains to one another so as to make one tabernacle.

¹⁴They made curtains of goats' hair, 11 of them, for a tent over the tabernacle. ¹⁵Each curtain was 45 feet long and 6 feet wide, all 11 being the same size. ¹⁶Five curtains were joined together by themselves, and so were the other six. ¹⁷They made 50 loops on the edge of the end curtain in the one set and 50 loops on the edge of the adjoining curtain in the other set. ¹⁸They made 50 bronze hooks to join the parts of the tent and make it one. ¹⁹They made a cover for the tent of rams' skins dyed red and over that a covering of porpoise skins.

²⁰They made upright frames for the tabernacle of acacia wood, ²¹each 15 feet long and 27 inches wide. ²²Each frame had two tenons to fit it tightly to the next frame; they made these on all the frames in the tabernacle. ²³They made 20 frames for the south side of the tabernacle ²⁴and 40 silver bases under the 20 frames, two bases under each frame for its two tenons. ²⁵And also 20 frames on the other, the north side of the tabernacle ²⁶and their 40 silver bases, two bases under each frame. ²⁷They made six frames for the back, the west side, ²⁸and two frames for the back corners of the

tabernacle. ⁹They were coupled at the bottom and joined together at the top to a single ring; they made both of them like that for both corners. ¹⁰There were eight frames with their 16 silver bases, two bases under each frame.

¹¹They made bars of acacia wood, five for the frames on the one side of the tabernacle, ¹²five for the frames on the other side of the tabernacle, and five for the frames on the back, that is, the west side of the tabernacle. ¹³They made the middle bar, halfway up the frames, go from one end to the other. ¹⁴They covered the frames with gold, made gold rings to hold the bars, and covered the bars with gold.

¹⁵They made the curtain of violet, purple, and scarlet material and fine twisted linen with a pattern of angels worked in by a skillful artist. ¹⁶They made for it four acacia posts and covered them with gold, with their gold hooks, and they cast four silver bases for them.

¹⁷For the door of the tent they made a screen of violet, purple, and scarlet material and fine twisted linen, embroidered with colored threads, ¹⁸and five pillars for it with their hooks. Their tops and their binders they covered with gold, but their five bases were bronze.

The Ark of God's Testimony

37 Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood, 45 inches long, 27 inches wide, and 27 inches high. ²He covered it with pure gold inside and out and made a gold molding on it all around. ³He cast four gold rings for it and put them on its four lower corners, two rings on one side and two on the other. ⁴He

made poles of acacia wood and covered them with gold, ⁵and put the poles through the rings on the sides of the ark to carry it.

⁶He made an atonement cover of pure gold, 45 inches long and 27 inches wide. ⁷He made two angels by hammering them out of gold; he made them on the two ends of the atonement cover. ⁸He made one angel on one end and the other on the other end, making the two angels one piece with the atonement cover. ⁹The angels had their wings spread above, overshadowing the atonement cover with their wings as they faced each other over it.

The Table

¹⁰He made the table of acacia wood, 36 inches long, 18 inches wide, and 27 inches high. ¹¹He covered it with pure gold and made a gold molding around it. ¹²Around it he made a rim a handbreadth wide and a gold molding around the rim. ¹³He cast four gold rings for it and fastened the rings to the four corners at the table's legs. ¹⁴The rings were close to the rim to hold the poles to carry the table. ¹⁵He made the poles of acacia wood, covered them with gold, and used them to carry the table. ¹⁶And of pure gold he made the utensils to be used on the table, platters, cups, bowls, and jars to pour drink offerings.

The Lampstand

¹⁷He made a lampstand, hammering it out of pure gold with its base and its shaft; its flower cups, bulbs, and petals were one piece with it. ¹⁸Six branches came out of its sides, three branches on one side and three on the other.

¹⁹Each of the six branches coming

out of the lampstand had three flower cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with a bulb and petals. ²⁰The lampstand itself had four flower cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with a bulb and petals. ²¹A bulb was under each of the three pairs of branches coming out of the lampstand. ²²Their bulbs and branches were one piece with it, all hammered out of one piece of pure gold. ²³He made seven lamps for it with its tongs and firepans of pure gold. ²⁴He made it and all its equipment out of a talent of pure gold.

The Altar for Incense

²⁵He made an altar for burning incense, of acacia wood, 18 inches square and 36 inches high. Its horns were one piece with it. ²⁶He covered it with pure gold, its top, its sides all around, and its horns. And around it he made a gold molding. ²⁷Below the molding on its opposite sides he made two gold rings to hold the poles for carrying it. ²⁸He made the poles of acacia wood and covered them with gold.

²⁹And he made the holy anointing oil and the pure fragrant incense, blended by a perfumer.

The Altar for Burnt Offerings

38 He made the altar for burnt offerings of acacia wood, 7½ feet square and 4½ feet high. ²On its four corners he made four horns that were one piece with it, and he covered it with bronze. ³He made all the utensils for the altar, the pots, shovels, bowls, forks, and firepans for it, making them all of bronze. ⁴He made a grating for the altar, a bronze network, below, under its ledge, reaching halfway up the

altar. ⁵At the four corners of the bronze grating he cast four rings to hold the poles. ⁶He made the poles of acacia wood and covered them with bronze. ⁷He put the poles through the rings along the sides of the altar, to carry it. He made it hollow, with boards.

The Bronze Basin

⁸He made the basin of bronze and its stand of bronze, out of the mirrors of the women who came to serve at the entrance of the tent where God met with them.

The Court

⁹He made the court. On the south side the curtains of the court were 150 feet long, of fine twisted linen. ¹⁰Their 20 posts and 20 bases were bronze, and the hooks on the posts and their binders were silver. ¹¹On the north side they were also 150 feet long. Their 20 posts and 20 bases were bronze, and the hooks on the posts and their binders were silver. ¹²On the west side the curtains were 75 feet long with 10 posts and 10 bases for them. The hooks on the posts and their binders were silver. ¹³On the east side, toward the rising sun, they were 75 feet long. ¹⁴⁻¹⁵On each side of the entrance there were 22½ feet of curtains with three posts and the three bases for them. ¹⁶The curtains all around the court were fine twisted linen. ¹⁷The bases for the posts were bronze, and the hooks on the posts and their binders were silver. The tops of the posts were covered with silver. And the binders on all the posts of the court were silver. ¹⁸The embroidered screen for the gate of the court was of violet, purple, and scarlet material and fine twisted linen. ³⁰

feet long and 7½ feet high, just like the rest of the curtains of the court. ¹⁹The four posts and four bases for them were bronze, the hooks on them were silver, their tops were covered with silver, and the binders on them were silver.

²⁰And all the pegs for the tabernacle and for the court all around were bronze.

Total Gold, Silver, Bronze

²¹This is an accounting of the things used in the tabernacle, that is, the tabernacle of the Word of Testimony, which the Levites counted by Moses' order under the direction of Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest.

²²Now Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made everything the LORD ordered Moses to make. ²³With him was Oholiab, Ahisamach's son, of the tribe of Dan. He was an engraver, designer, and embroiderer of violet, purple, and scarlet material and fine linen.

²⁴The total amount of gold offered and used in all the building of the holy place weighed 29 talents, 730 shekels, according to the weight used in the holy place. ²⁵The silver that came from the men of the community who were counted weighed 100 talents, 1,775 shekels, according to the weight used in the holy place. ²⁶a beka a head, that is, half a shekel according to the weight used in the holy place, for everyone who was counted from 20 years old and up: 603,550 men. ²⁷The 100 talents of silver was used to cast the bases for the holy place and the curtain, 100 talents for 100 bases, a talent for a base. ²⁸And with the 1,775 shekels he made the hooks for the posts, covered their tops, and

made binders for them. ²⁹The bronze contributed weighed 70 talents, 2,400 shekels: ³⁰with it he made the bases for the door of the tent where God met with them, the bronze altar with its bronze grating, all the utensils for the altar, ³¹the bases for the court-all around, the bases for the gate of the court, all the pegs for the tabernacle, and all the pegs for the surrounding court.

Garments for Aaron

39 From finely woven violet, purple, and scarlet materials they made garments for serving in the holy place; they made these holy garments for Aaron as the LORD ordered Moses. ²And they made the priest's apron of gold, violet, purple, and scarlet material and fine twisted linen. ³They hammered the gold into sheets and cut these into threads in order to have a skilled artist work them into the violet, purple, and scarlet material and fine linen. ⁴They made shoulder straps on its two edges so it could be held in place. ⁵The waistband on his apron was one piece with it and made like it of gold, violet, purple, and scarlet material and fine twisted linen as the LORD ordered Moses. ⁶They prepared onyx stones set in filigree work of gold, engraved like a seal ring with the names of Israel's sons. ⁷He fastened them on the shoulder straps of the apron as reminder stones for the Israelites, as the LORD ordered Moses. ⁸He had a skilled artist make a pouch, like the apron, of gold, violet, purple, and scarlet material and fine twisted linen. ⁹folded double, it was nine inches square. ¹⁰On it they made settings for four rows of stones. The

first row: carnelian, topaz, emerald; "the second row: red garnet, lapis lazuli, sardonyx; "the third row: turquoise, agate, amethyst; "the fourth row: chrysolite, onyx, jasper—set in gold filigrees. "The 12 stones corresponded to the names of Israel's sons and were engraved like a seal, each with its name for one of the 12 tribes. "On the pouch they made chains of twisted cords of pure gold. "They made two gold filigrees and two gold rings and fastened the two rings to the two edges of the pouch. "They fastened the two gold cords to the two rings at the edges of the pouch "and fastened the other two ends to the two filigrees, attaching them in front to the shoulder straps of the apron. "They made two gold rings and fastened them to the other two edges of the pouch, on its inside next to the apron. "They made two more gold rings and fastened them in front to the lower part of the shoulder straps of the apron near its seam above the waistband of the apron. "They fastened the pouch by its rings to the rings of the apron with a violet cord so that it would lie on the waistband of the apron and the pouch would not get away from the apron, as the LORD ordered Moses.

"They had a weaver make the robe that went with the apron, entirely of violet material. "with a hole in the robe like the neck in a military garment, with a border all around to keep it from tearing. "On the lower border of the robe they made pomegranates of violet, purple, and scarlet material and twisted linen. "And they made bells of pure gold and fastened the bells between the pomegranates all

around the lower border of the robe. "a gold bell alternating with a pomegranate all around the lower border of the robe—for serving, as the LORD ordered Moses.

"They had men weave tunics of fine linen for Aaron and his sons. "the turban of fine linen, the ornamental headdresses of fine linen, the pants of white twisted linen. "and the sashes of fine twisted linen, embroidered in violet, purple, and scarlet threads, as the LORD ordered Moses.

"They made the shining flower, the holy symbol of consecration, of pure gold and engraved on it as on a seal ring: THE LORD'S HOLY ONE. "They fastened it to a violet cord and so to the top of the turban, as the LORD ordered Moses.

The Work Is Finished

"So all the work was done on the tabernacle, the tent where God met with them—the Israelites had done exactly as the LORD ordered Moses. "They brought the tabernacle to Moses, the tent with all its equipment, its hooks, frames, bars, posts, and bases: "the covering of rams' skins dyed red, the covering of porpoise skins, the curtain for the screen; "the ark with the Word of Testimony and its poles and the atonement cover; "the table with all its utensils and the bread laid before the LORD; "the pure lampstand with its lamps set in order and all its fixtures, and the olive oil for the light; "the gold altar, the anointing oil, the fragrant incense, the screen for the door of the tent; "the bronze altar with its bronze grating, its poles, and all its equipment; the basin with its stand; "the curtains for the court with its posts and bases; the screen

for the gate of the court with its ropes and pegs—all the parts needed for the service of the tabernacle, the tent where God met with His people: “the finely woven garments for serving in the holy place, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments for his sons when they served as priests. “The Israelites had done all the work exactly as the LORD ordered Moses.

“When Moses saw they had finished the whole job as the LORD ordered, Moses blessed them.

“Set Up the Tabernacle”

40 The LORD said to Moses: ¹“On the first day of the first month set up the tabernacle, the tent where I’ll meet with you. ²Put the ark with the Word of Testimony there and the curtain in front of it to hide it. ³Bring in the table, and arrange the bread on it. Bring in the lampstand, and put up its lamps. ⁴Put the gold altar for incense in front of the ark with the Word of Testimony. And put up the screen in the doorway of the tabernacle. ⁵Put the altar for burnt offerings in front of the door of the tabernacle, the tent where I’ll meet with you. ⁶Put the basin between the tent where I’ll meet with you and the altar, and put water in it. ⁷Set up the court all around, and put up the screen for the gate of the court. ⁸Take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and everything in it, consecrating it with all its equipment, so that it will be holy. ⁹Anoint the altar for burnt offerings with all its equipment, making it holy, so that the altar will be very holy. ¹⁰Anoint the basin and its stand, and make it holy.

¹¹“Bring Aaron and his sons to the door of the tent where I’ll meet with you, and wash them with water. ¹²Put the holy garments on Aaron, and anoint him, making him holy, to serve Me as priest. ¹³Then bring his sons, and put tunics on them. ¹⁴Anoint them as you anointed their father, to serve Me as priests. Their anointing shall begin a never-ending priesthood for them and their descendants.”

“Moses did this; he did exactly as the LORD ordered him. ¹⁵On the first day of the first month in the second year the tabernacle was set up. ¹⁶Moses set up the tabernacle, laid the bases for it, set up its frames, put in its bars, and set up its posts. ¹⁷He spread the tent over the tabernacle and put the tent’s covering on top of it as the LORD ordered Moses.

¹⁸He took the Word of Testimony and put it in the ark, put the poles on the ark, and put the atonement cover over the ark. ¹⁹Then he brought the ark into the tabernacle and put up the curtain as a screen to hide the ark with the Word of Testimony as the LORD ordered Moses. ²⁰He put the table in the tent where God met with them, on the north side of the tabernacle, outside the curtain. ²¹He arranged the bread on it before the LORD as the LORD ordered Moses. ²²He put the lampstand in the tent where God met with them, opposite the table, on the south side of the tabernacle, ²³and put up the lamps before the LORD as the LORD ordered Moses. ²⁴He put the gold altar in front of the curtain in the tent where God met with them. ²⁵Then he burned fragrant incense on it as the LORD ordered Moses. ²⁶He put up the screen in the doorway of the

tabernacle. ²⁹He put the altar for burnt offerings at the door of the tabernacle, the tent where God met with them. And he offered burnt offerings on it and grain offerings as the LORD ordered Moses. ³⁰He put the basin between the tent where God met with them and the altar and put water in it for washing. ³¹Moses, Aaron, and his sons used water from it to wash their hands and feet. ³²They would wash whenever they went into the tent where God met with them or went near the altar, as the LORD ordered Moses.

³³He set up the court around the tabernacle and the altar and put up

the screen for the gate of the court. So Moses finished the work.

³⁴Then the cloud covered the tent where God met with them, and *the LORD's glory filled the tabernacle.*

³⁵Moses couldn't go into the tent where God met with him, because the cloud rested on it and *the LORD's glory filled the tabernacle.*

³⁶In all their travels, whenever the cloud rose from the tabernacle, the Israelites would move on. ³⁷But if the cloud didn't rise, they wouldn't start out till the day it rose. ³⁸The LORD's cloud was over the tabernacle by day, and at night there was fire in it for all Israel to see in all their traveling.

⁴⁰
³⁴⁻³⁵ Rv 15.8

THE THIRD BOOK OF MOSES

COMMONLY CALLED

LEVITICUS

The Burnt Offering

1 The LORD called Moses, and from the tent where He met with him He told him:

²“Talk to the Israelites and tell them: When anyone of you offers an animal to the LORD, take it from the herd or the flock. ³If you offer a burnt offering from the herd, offer a perfect male. Offer it at the door of the tent where the LORD meets with you, so that He may accept it. ⁴Lay your hand on the head of the victim, and it will be accepted as an atonement for you. ⁵Kill the young bull before the LORD, and then Aaron’s sons, the priests, shall bring the blood and pour it all around against the altar that is at the doorway of the tent where He meets with you. ⁶Skin the burnt offering, and cut it in pieces. ⁷Then the sons of Aaron, the priest, should put fire on the altar and arrange the wood on the fire. ⁸Aaron’s sons, the priests, should then arrange the pieces, the head, and the fat on the wood that is on the fire on the altar. ⁹But wash its intestines and legs with water. Then the priest should burn all of it on the altar as a sacrifice completely burned in fire with a fragrance pleasing the LORD.

¹⁰“If you offer a sheep or a goat from the flock for a burnt offering, bring a perfect male. ¹¹Kill it before the LORD on the north side of the altar, and Aaron’s sons, the priests, should pour its blood against the altar all around. ¹²Cut it in quarters and with its head and its fat the priest should arrange the

quarters on the wood that is on the altar fire. ¹³Wash the intestines and the legs with water. Then the priest should offer all of it and burn it on the altar, a complete sacrifice by fire with a fragrance pleasing the LORD.

¹⁴“If you offer the LORD a bird as a burnt offering, offer turtledoves or young pigeons. ¹⁵The priest should bring it to the altar and pinch off its head, burning it on the altar, and drain its blood against the side of the altar. ¹⁶He should then take away its crop and feathers and throw them on the ashes on the east side of the altar. ¹⁷He should tear it open by its wings without severing it completely. Then the priest should burn it on the altar, on the wood that is on the fire. This is a complete sacrifice by fire with a fragrance pleasing the LORD.”

The Food Offering

2 “When anyone brings the LORD a food offering, he should bring choice flour, pour olive oil on it, put incense on it. ²and bring it to Aaron’s sons the priests. A priest should take from this a handful of flour and olive oil with all the incense and burn it on the altar as a memorial, a sacrifice by fire with a fragrance pleasing the LORD. ³The rest of the offering is for Aaron and his sons; it is a very holy part of the sacrifices made by fire to the LORD.

⁴“When you bring goods baked in an oven, they should be cakes made

of flour without yeast, mixed with olive oil, or thin cakes without yeast, covered with oil. ³If you bring food prepared on a griddle, make it of flour without yeast, mixed with oil. ⁴Break it in pieces and pour olive oil on it; it is a food offering. ⁵If you bring food prepared in a pan, make it of flour and olive oil. ⁶Bring food prepared of these ingredients to the LORD. When you bring it to the priest, he will take it to the altar. ⁷The priest will take some of the food as a memorial and burn it on the altar as a sacrifice by fire with a fragrance pleasing the LORD. ⁸The rest of the food offering is for Aaron and his sons; it is a very holy part of the sacrifices made by fire to the LORD.

⁹"No food you bring the LORD should be prepared with yeast, because in a sacrifice made by fire to the LORD you must burn no yeast or honey. ¹⁰You may bring them as offerings of the first of your produce to the LORD, but don't offer them on the altar for a fragrance. ¹¹Salt all your offerings of food. Don't omit the salt of the covenant with your God from any food you offer. Offer salt with all your offerings.

¹²"If you offer the LORD the first grain, bring heads of grain roasted on fire, freshly ground flour, as your offering of the first grain. ¹³Add olive oil to it, and put incense on it; it is a food offering. ¹⁴The priest should burn some of the flour and olive oil with all the incense as a memorial, a sacrifice made by fire to the LORD."

The Peace Offering

3 "If you bring a peace offering, if you take it from the herd, male or female, bring a perfect animal before the LORD;

²lay your hand on the head of the victim, and kill it at the door of the tabernacle where the LORD meets with you. Aaron's sons, the priests, should pour the blood against the altar all around. ³Offer part of the peace offering as a fire offering to the LORD: the fat covering the intestines, all the fat on the intestines, ⁴the two kidneys with the fat on them at the loins, and the lobe on the liver should be removed with the kidneys. ⁵Aaron's sons should burn these parts on the altar along with the burnt offering that is on the wood on the fire. It shall be a sacrifice by fire with a fragrance pleasing the LORD.

⁶"If you bring the LORD a peace offering from the flock, male or female, bring a perfect animal. ⁷If you bring a lamb, bring it before the LORD. ⁸lay your hand on the head of the lamb, and kill it in front of the tent where the LORD meets with you. Aaron's sons should pour its blood against the altar all around. ⁹Offer part of the peace offering as a sacrifice by fire to the LORD: its fat, the whole fat tail, which should be removed close to the backbone, the fat covering the intestines, all the fat on the intestines, ¹⁰the two kidneys with the fat on them at the loins, and the lobe on the liver, which should be removed with the kidneys. ¹¹The priest should burn them on the altar as food sacrificed by fire to the LORD.

¹²"If you bring a goat, bring it before the LORD. ¹³lay your hand on its head, and kill it in front of the tent where the LORD meets with you. Aaron's sons should pour its blood against the altar all around. ¹⁴Bring the LORD some of what you offer as a sacrifice by fire: the fat covering the intestines, all the fat on

the intestines, ¹⁵the two kidneys with the fat on them at the loins, and the lobe on the liver that you should remove with the kidneys. ¹⁶The priest should burn them on the altar as food sacrificed by fire with a fragrance. All the fat is the LORD's. ¹⁷This should always be a law for your descendants in the coming ages wherever you live: Don't eat any fat or blood."

Special Sacrifices for Sin— When the Priest Sins

4 Then The LORD said to Moses: ¹"Tell The Israelites: When anyone sins unintentionally and does something that is forbidden in any of the LORD's commandments—²if it is the anointed priest who sins and brings guilt on the people, he should for his sin bring the LORD a perfect young bull from the herd as a sacrifice for sin. ³He should take the bull to the entrance of the tent where the LORD meets with you and before the LORD lay his hand on the bull's head and kill the bull before the LORD. ⁴Then the anointed priest should take some of the bull's blood and bring it into the tent where the LORD meets with you. ⁵The priest should dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle some of the blood seven times before the LORD in front of the curtain of the holy place. ⁶Then the priest should put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense before the LORD in the tent where He meets with you. And all the rest of the bull's blood he should pour out at the base of the altar for burnt offerings at the entrance of the tent where the LORD meets with you. ⁷He should remove all the fat of the bull to be sacrificed for sin, the fat covering the intestines and all the fat on the in-

testines, ⁸the two kidneys and the fat on them at the loins, and the lobe on the liver that should be removed with the kidneys—⁹just as they are removed from the bull of the peace offering—the priest should burn them on the altar for burnt offerings. ¹⁰The bull's hide, all its meat with its head and legs, its intestines and dung, ¹¹that is, all the rest of the bull he should carry outside the camp to a clean place where the ashes are dumped and burn it on a wood fire there, where the ashes are dumped."

When the Community Sins

¹"If the whole community of Israel sins unintentionally, without being aware of it, by doing something forbidden in any of the LORD's commandments, they are guilty. ²When the sin they have done becomes known, the congregation should bring a young bull as a sacrifice for sin and take it before the tent where the LORD meets with you. ³The elders of the congregation should lay their hands on the bull's head before the LORD and kill the bull before the LORD. ⁴The anointed priest should bring some of the bull's blood into the tent where the LORD meets with you, ⁵and the priest should dip his finger in some of the blood and sprinkle it seven times before the LORD in front of the curtain. ⁶He should also put some blood on the horns of the altar that is before the LORD in the tent where He meets with you, and all the rest of the blood he should pour out at the base of the altar for burnt offerings that is at the door of the tent. ⁷He should remove all the fat from it and burn it on the altar. ⁸He should do the same with this bull as he did with the first bull

sacrificed for sin. And so when the priest atones for them, they will be forgiven. ²¹Then he should carry the bull outside the camp and burn it as he burned the first bull. This is the sacrifice for the community's sin."

When a Leader Sins

²²"When a leader sins by unintentionally doing something forbidden in any of the commandments of the LORD his God, he is guilty. ²³When he's told about the wrong he did, he should bring a perfect he-goat as his offering, ²⁴lay his hand on the goat's head, and kill it where the animals for the burnt offerings are killed before the LORD. It is a sacrifice for sin. ²⁵The priest should with his finger take some of the blood of the sacrifice for sin and put it on the horns of the altar for burnt offerings, and the rest of the blood he should pour out at the base of the altar for burnt offerings, ²⁶and he should burn all the fat on the altar just as is done with the fat of the peace offering. When the priest atones for his sin, he will be forgiven."

When Any of the People Sin

²⁷"If anyone of the ordinary people sins unintentionally by doing something forbidden in the LORD's commandments, he's guilty. ²⁸When he's told about the wrong he did, he should bring a perfect she-goat as a sacrifice for the wrong he did, ²⁹lay his hand on the head of the sacrifice for sin, and kill it where the animals for burnt offerings are killed. ³⁰The priest should with his finger take some of its blood and put it on the horns of the altar for the burnt offerings and pour out all the rest of the blood at the base of the al-

tar. ³¹He should remove all the fat as the fat is removed from the peace offering. And the priest should burn it on the altar with a fragrance pleasing the LORD. When the priest atones for him, he will be forgiven.

³²"If the man brings a lamb as a sacrifice for sin, he should bring a perfect female, ³³lay his hand on the head of the sacrifice for sin, and kill it for a sin offering where the animals for burnt offerings are killed. ³⁴The priest should with his finger take some of the blood of the sacrifice for sin, put it on the horns of the altar for burnt offerings, and pour out all the rest of the blood at the base of the altar. ³⁵He should remove all the fat just as the fat of the lamb for the peace offering is removed, and the priest should burn it on the altar with the sacrifice made by fire to the LORD. When the priest atones for the sin he did, he will be forgiven.

5 "Suppose you sin in one of these ways: If you hear an oath and become a witness, having seen or otherwise learned what happened, but you refuse to tell about it, then you deserve to be punished. ²Or if you touch anything unclean, the dead body of an unclean animal, wild or tame, or some crawling creature, without being aware of it—you are unclean and guilty. ³Or if you touch any human uncleanness of any kind that makes you unclean without being aware of it, when you find out about it, you're guilty. ⁴Or you swear thoughtlessly to do something bad or good in anything one might carelessly swear without being aware of what it means, but then you become aware of it, you're guilty. ⁵When you're guilty of any of these, confess

the wrong you did. "and bring the LORD a female animal from the flock, a sheep or a goat, as a sacrifice for sin, and the priest will make an atonement to free you from your sin. "But if you can't afford a sheep, bring the LORD for the wrong you did *two turtledoves or two young pigeons*, one a sacrifice for sin, the other a burnt offering. "Take them to the priest, and he should first sacrifice the one for sin, wringing off its head without severing it. "Some of the blood of the sacrifice for sin he should sprinkle on the side of the altar, and the rest of the blood he should drain at the base of the altar; it is a sacrifice for sin. "Then he should make the second a burnt offering as prescribed. And so when the priest atones for you to take away the wrong you did, you will be forgiven.

"If you can't afford two turtledoves or two young pigeons, bring for your sin a tenth of an ephah of flour as a sacrifice for sin; don't pour olive oil on it or put incense on it, because it is a sacrifice for sin. "Bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take a handful of it as a memorial and burn it on the altar with the sacrifices made by fire to the LORD. It is a sacrifice for sin. "When the priest atones for you for the wrong you did in any of these ways, you will be forgiven. And the rest, as in the food offering, is the priest's."

"The LORD said to Moses: "When you sin unintentionally by taking some of the LORD's holy things, bring the LORD for your guilt a perfect ram from the flock of the right value in silver shekels according to the weight used at the holy place. "Pay back whatever you wrongly took of the holy things, and

add a fifth to it. Give it to the priest. The priest will atone for you with the ram sacrificed for your guilt, and you will be forgiven.

"When you sin by doing something forbidden in any of the LORD's commandments, though you're not aware of it, you're guilty and deserve to be punished. "Bring the priest a perfect ram from the flock of the right value as a sacrifice for guilt, and the priest will atone for the wrong you did unintentionally, without being aware of it, and you will be forgiven. "It is an offering for guilt because you were really guilty before the LORD."

6 The LORD said to Moses, "If you sin by being unfaithful to the LORD—if it is by lying to a fellow Israelite about something entrusted to you or deposited with you or something robbed or extorted from another Israelite, "or you find something that was lost and you lie about it, or swear to a lie about any sin people commit, "then you have sinned and are guilty; you shall return what you robbed or extorted or took when it was entrusted to you or found when it was lost "or anything about which you swore to a lie. Pay it back in full, and add a fifth and give it to him to whom it belongs when you make your offering for guilt. "Bring the LORD as your sacrifice for guilt a perfect ram from the flock, of the right value for a sacrifice for guilt; bring it to the priest, "and when the priest atones for you before the LORD, you will be forgiven anything you may have done to make you guilty."

The Law for the Burnt Offering

"The LORD said to Moses: "Give Aaron and his sons this

5
7-14:2,24

order: This is the law for the burnt offering: The burnt offering must be on the fire of the altar hearth all night till morning, and the fire should be kept burning on it.

¹⁰“The priest should put on his linen garment, with the linen drawers directly on his body, and take away the ashes left by the fire that consumed the burnt offering on the altar and put them beside the altar. ¹¹Then, taking off his clothes and putting on others, he should take the ashes to a clean place outside the camp. ¹²The fire should be kept burning on the altar and not go out. The priest should burn wood on it every morning, lay out the burnt offering on it, and burn the fat of the peace offering on it. ¹³The fire should be burning continually on the altar and not go out.”

The Law for the Food Offering

¹⁴“And this is the law for the food offering: Aaron’s sons should bring it before the LORD in front of the altar. ¹⁵One of them should take a handful of the flour of the food offering and its olive oil and all the incense on the food offering and burn it as a memorial on the altar for a fragrance pleasing the Lord. ¹⁶Aaron and his sons should eat the rest of it—without yeast; they should eat it in a sacred place, in the court of the tabernacle where the LORD meets with you. ¹⁷Don’t use yeast in baking it. I have given it to them as their part of what is sacrificed to Me by fire. It is very holy, like the sacrifices for sin and guilt. ¹⁸Any male descendant of Aaron may eat it; this part of the sacrifices made by fire to the LORD is always legally theirs in the coming ages. Everyone who touches these things must be holy.”

¹⁹The LORD told Moses: ²⁰“This is the offering Aaron and his sons should bring the LORD the day he’s anointed: a tenth of an ephah of flour, a daily offering, half of it in the morning and half in the evening. ²¹Prepare it on a griddle with olive oil, mixing it well, and bring baked pieces of the food offering for a fragrance pleasing the LORD. ²²Aaron’s son who is anointed to take his place as priest should prepare it. This part will always be the LORD’s—burn all of it. ²³Every food offering made by a priest should be completely burned and not eaten.”

The Law for the Sin Offering

²⁴The LORD said to Moses: ²⁵“Tell Aaron and his sons: This is the law for the sacrifice for sin: Kill the animal to be offered for sin at the place where the burnt offering is killed before the LORD: it is very holy. ²⁶The priest who makes the sacrifice for sin shall eat it; it should be eaten in a holy place, in the court of the tabernacle where the LORD meets with you. ²⁷Everyone who touches it must be holy, and if any of its blood is sprinkled on a garment, wash the part that was sprinkled in a holy place. ²⁸Any earthenware vessel in which it was cooked must be broken, and if it was cooked in a copper vessel, it must be scoured and rinsed with water. ²⁹Any male among the priests may eat it; it is very holy. ³⁰No animal sacrificed for sin may be eaten from which some of the blood is brought into the tabernacle to make an atonement in the holy place; it must be burned.”

The Law for the Guilt Offering

7 “This is the law for the guilt offering: It is very

holy. ²The animal sacrificed for guilt should be killed where the burnt offering is killed, and its blood should be poured against the altar all around. ³All its fat should be offered, the fat tail, the fat covering the intestines, ⁴the two kidneys with the fat on them at the loins, and the lobe on the liver that should be removed with the kidneys. ⁵The priest should burn them on the altar as a sacrifice made by fire to the LORD. This is a sacrifice made for guilt. ⁶Any male among the priests may eat it; it should be eaten in a holy place; it is very holy.

⁷"The sacrifice for sin is like that for guilt; the same law holds for both; the priest who atones with it should have it. ⁸The priest who offers the burnt offerings should have the hide of the animal he offered as a burnt offering. ⁹Every offering of food baked in an oven and everything prepared in a pan or on a griddle belongs to the priest who offers it. ¹⁰Every offering of food mixed with olive oil or dry should be equally shared by all Aaron's sons."

The Law for the Peace Offering

¹¹"This is the law for the peace offering you may bring the LORD: ¹²If you make it as a thank offering, add to the thank offering cakes without yeast but mixed with olive oil, and thin cakes without yeast, covered with olive oil, and cakes of fine flour well mixed with olive oil. ¹³With the cakes bring bread with yeast in addition to your peace offering; do this with thanksgiving. ¹⁴From every offering bring one cake to the priest as a gift for the LORD; it belongs to the priest who pours out the blood of the peace offering. ¹⁵The meat of the animal sacrificed

must be eaten the day you offer it; don't leave any of it till morning. ¹⁶If the sacrifice you offer is something vowed or voluntary, it may be eaten the day you bring it, or what is left over may be eaten the next day. ¹⁷But on the third day any meat left over from the sacrifice must be burned. ¹⁸If you eat any meat of the peace sacrifice on the third day, it will not be accepted, and you who bring it will not be credited for it. It is garbage, and if you eat any of it, you deserve to be punished. ¹⁹Meat that touches anything unclean must not be eaten but be burned. Otherwise anyone who is clean may eat the meat. ²⁰If while you're unclean you eat any of the LORD's meat from a peace offering, you will be cut off from your people. ²¹If you touch anything unclean, of man or animal, or any other disgusting uncleanness, and yet eat some of the LORD's meat of the peace offering, you will be cut off from your people."

²²The LORD said to Moses: ²³"Tell the Israelites: Don't eat any fat of cattle, sheep, or goats. ²⁴The fat of an animal that dies by itself or is torn as prey use for any other purpose, but don't eat it. ²⁵If anyone eats the fat of an animal, part of which is sacrificed by fire to the LORD, he must be cut off from his people. ²⁶And don't eat the blood of any bird or beast wherever you live. ²⁷Anyone who eats any blood must be cut off from his people."

²⁸The LORD said to Moses: ²⁹"Tell the Israelites: If you bring the LORD a peace offering, bring a part of that sacrifice as a gift to the LORD. ³⁰With your own hands bring the LORD the sacrifices by fire, the fat with the breast, to wave

the breast as you offer it to the LORD. "The priest should burn the fat on the altar, but the breast belongs to Aaron and his sons. "Give the priest the right thigh of your peace offering. "When any of Aaron's sons offers the blood of the peace offering and the fat, he should get the right thigh as his share. "I have taken the breast as a wave offering and the thigh as a gift from the peace offerings of the Israelites and given them to Aaron the priest and his sons as the part legally due them from the Israelites."

"This is Aaron's and his sons' part of the sacrifices made by fire to the LORD given to them on the day they were appointed to serve the LORD as priests. "The LORD ordered the Israelites to give it to them the day He anointed them. Their descendants will always be bound to give it to them.

"This is the law for the burnt offerings, the food offerings, the sin offerings, and the guilt offerings, the offerings at installations, and the peace offerings "which the LORD on Mount Sinai ordered Moses to make when He ordered the Israelites to bring the LORD their offerings in the wilderness of Sinai.

Moses Installs Aaron and His Sons

8 The LORD said to Moses: "Take Aaron and his sons with him, the garments, the anointing oil, the young bull to be sacrificed for sin, the two rams, and the basket of bread without yeast, and have the whole community gather at the door of the tent where I meet with you."

"Moses did as the LORD ordered

him. When the congregation had gathered at the door of the tent where God met with them, "Moses told the community, "This is what the LORD orders to be done."

"Then Moses had Aaron and his sons come forward, and he washed them with water. "He put the tunic on him, fastened the sash around him, put the robe on him and then the apron, tying it with the skillfully woven band of the apron and so fastening it on him. "Then he put the pouch on him and into it the Light and the Right.^a "He put the turban on his head and fastened the gold flower, the holy diadem, to the front of the turban as the LORD ordered Moses.

"Moses took the anointing oil, anointed the tabernacle and everything in it, and made them holy. "With some of it he sprinkled the altar seven times and anointed the altar with all its utensils and the laver with its base to make them holy.

"He also poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him to make him holy.

"Then Moses had Aaron's sons come forward, put tunics on them, fastened their sashes around them, and bound caps on them as the LORD ordered Moses. "He got the young bull, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the head of the young bull that was to be sacrificed for sin. "When it was killed, Moses took the blood and with his finger put it on the horns of the altar all around and cleansed the altar from sin; then he poured the rest of the blood at the base of the altar and made it holy, to make atonement on it. "Taking all the fat that was on

^aHeb Urim and Thummim—meaning uncertain

the intestines, the lobe of the liver, the two kidneys with their fat, Moses burned them on the altar. ¹⁷The rest of the young bull, its hide, meat, and bowel contents he burned outside the camp, as the LORD ordered Moses. ¹⁸He then got the ram for the burnt offering. Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the ram's head. ¹⁹When it was killed, Moses poured the blood against the altar all around. ²⁰When the ram was cut in pieces, Moses burned the head with the other pieces and the fat. ²¹The intestines and the legs were washed with water. Then Moses burned the whole ram on the altar as a complete sacrifice by fire for a fragrance pleasing the LORD, as the LORD ordered Moses.

²²Then he got the second ram, the ram for installing the priest, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the ram's head. ²³When it was killed, Moses took some of its blood and put it on the lobe of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. ²⁴Then Moses had Aaron's sons come forward, and he put some of the blood on the lobes of their right ears, on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their right feet, and the rest of the blood Moses poured against the altar all around. ²⁵He took the fat, the fat tail, all the fat on the intestines, the lobe on the liver, the two kidneys with their fat, and the right thigh. ²⁶and out of the basket of cakes without yeast which was placed before the LORD he took one cake, a cake of bread made with olive oil, and one thin cake, and put them on the fat and the right thigh. ²⁷and laid it all in the hands of Aaron and his sons and waved them as he offered them to the

LORD. ²⁸Moses took them from their hands again and burned them on the altar, on top of the burnt offering. This was an installation sacrifice by fire for a fragrance pleasing the LORD. ²⁹Moses took the breast of the ram for the installation and waved it as he offered it to the LORD; it was Moses' share as the LORD had ordered.

³⁰Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood that was on the altar, sprinkled it on Aaron and his clothes and on his sons and their clothes, and so made Aaron with his clothes and his sons with their clothes holy.

³¹Then Moses told Aaron and his sons: "Cook the meat at the entrance of the tent where the LORD meets with us, and eat it there and also the bread in the basket for the installation as I ordered when I said: 'Aaron and his sons should eat it.' ³²Burn any meat or bread that is left over. ³³For seven days don't leave the entrance of the tent where the LORD meets with us, till the last day of installing you is over; it will take seven days to install you. ³⁴What I did today the LORD ordered me to do to atone for you. ³⁵Stay seven days day and night at the entrance of the tent where the LORD meets with us, and do what the LORD tells you; then you won't die. This is what I was ordered to do."

³⁶Aaron and his sons did everything the LORD ordered through Moses.

Aaron Sacrifices

9 On the eighth day Moses called Aaron and his sons and the elders of Israel. ²and told Aaron, "Bring a bull calf from the herd to sacrifice it for sin and a ram

for a burnt offering, both perfect, and offer them before the LORD. ³And tell the Israelites, 'Bring a male goat to be sacrificed for sin, and a calf, and a lamb, each a year old and perfect, for a burnt offering, ⁴a bull and a ram for peace offerings to be sacrificed before the LORD, and bring flour mixed with olive oil, because the LORD will appear to you today.' "

⁵They brought what Moses ordered in front of the tent where God met with them, and the whole community came and stood before the LORD.

⁶"Do what the LORD orders," Moses said, "and you will see the LORD's glory."

⁷"Come to the altar," Moses told Aaron, "and make the sacrifice for sin and the burnt offering to atone for you and for the people, and make an offering for the people, and atone for them as the LORD ordered."

⁸Aaron went to the altar and killed the calf to take away his own sin. ⁹Aaron's sons brought him the blood, and he dipped his finger in the blood and put it on the horns of the altar and poured out the blood at the base of the altar. ¹⁰He burned the fat, the kidneys, and the lobe on the liver of the victim on the altar as the LORD ordered Moses. ¹¹The meat and the hide he burned outside the camp. ¹²He then killed the animal for the burnt offering, and Aaron's sons handed him the blood, and he poured it against the altar all around. ¹³They also handed him the burnt offering, cut in pieces, including the head, and he burned them on the altar. ¹⁴He washed the intestines and the legs and burned them on top of the burnt offering on the altar.

¹⁵Then he brought the people's

offering. He took the male goat to be sacrificed for the people's sins, and they killed it and made a sacrifice to take away sins as he had done previously for himself. ¹⁶He brought forward the burnt offering and offered it in the proper way. ¹⁷Then he brought the food offering and, taking a handful of it, burned it on the altar in addition to the morning burnt offering. ¹⁸He killed the bull and the ram, the people's peace offering, and Aaron's sons handed him the blood, which he poured against the altar all around. ¹⁹But the fat from the bull and the ram, the fat tail, and the fatty covering, the kidneys, and the lobe on the liver ²⁰they placed on the breasts and burned them all on the altar. ²¹But the breasts and the right thighs Aaron waved as he offered them to the LORD as Moses ordered.

²²Then Aaron raised his hands toward the people and blessed them, and having made the sacrifices for sin, the burnt offerings, and the peace offerings, he stepped down. ²³Moses and Aaron went into the tent where God met with them, and when they came out, they blessed the people. Then the LORD's glory appeared to all the people, ²⁴and fire came out from the LORD and burned up the burnt offering and the pieces of fat on the altar. When all the people saw this, they shouted and bowed down with their faces on the ground.

Two of Aaron's Sons Die

10 Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu each took his fire pan, put fire in it and laid incense on it, and brought a strange fire before the LORD that He hadn't ordered them to bring. ²A fire flashed from

the LORD and struck them, and they died before the LORD.

¹Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD says: 'I must be treated as holy by those who are near Me; I must be glorified by all the people.'" Aaron was speechless.

²Then Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Aaron's uncle Uzziel. "Come," he told them, "and take your relatives from the holy place and carry them outside the camp." ³They came and carried them in their tunics outside the camp as Moses told them.

⁴Then Moses told Aaron and his sons Eleazar and Ithamar: "Don't let your hair hang wild or tear your clothes; you will not die. He is angry with the whole community. All your fellow Israelites should weep over the fire the LORD sent. ⁵But don't leave the entrance of the tent where I meet with you, or you will die, because the LORD has anointed you with His oil." They did as Moses told them.

⁶The LORD told Aaron, ⁷"Don't drink any wine or liquor, you and your sons, when you go into the tent where I meet with you, or you will die. This is a law for your descendants forever. ⁸I want you to distinguish between what is holy and what is not, what is clean and not clean, ⁹and to teach the Israelites all the laws the LORD told them through Moses."

¹⁰Moses told Aaron and his surviving sons Eleazar and Ithamar, "Take the food left over from the sacrifices made by fire to the LORD, and eat it without yeast beside the altar, because it is very holy. ¹¹Eat it in a holy place because it is the part of the sacrifices made by fire to the LORD that legally belong to you

and your children; that is the order I received. ¹²"Eat also the breast, offered by waving, and the thigh that is presented as a gift, in a clean place, you and your sons and daughters, because they are given to you and your children as your legal part of the peace offerings of the Israelites. ¹³The thigh that was presented as a gift and the breast that was waved when the fat was burned shall be brought as an offering that is waved before the LORD. These parts shall then legally belong to you and your children forever, as the LORD ordered."

¹⁴Moses searched carefully for the male goat to be sacrificed for sin and found that it had already been burned. He got angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's surviving sons. ¹⁵"Why didn't you eat the animal sacrificed for sin in the holy place?" he asked. "It is very holy and was given to you to take away the sins of the community and so to atone for them before the LORD. ¹⁶Since its blood wasn't brought inside the holy place, you certainly should have eaten it there, as I ordered."

¹⁷Then Aaron answered Moses, "Today they made their sacrifice for sin and their burnt offering before the LORD, and yet such things have happened to me! If I had eaten the animal sacrificed for sin, would the LORD have approved?"

¹⁸When Moses heard this, he was satisfied.

Clean and Unclean Animals

11 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, ²"Tell the Israelites: Of all the land animals you may eat the following: ³You may eat any animal that has a split hoof, completely divided, and that

chews the cud. ⁴But don't eat the following that either chew the cud or have a divided hoof: the camel—it chews the cud but doesn't have a divided hoof; it is unclean for you; ⁵the rock badger—it chews the cud but doesn't have a divided hoof; it is unclean for you; ⁶the rabbit—it chews the cud but doesn't have a divided hoof; it is unclean for you; ⁷and the pig—it has a split hoof, completely divided, but doesn't chew the cud; it is unclean for you. ⁸Don't eat any meat from them or touch their dead bodies; they are unclean for you.

⁹"Of all that lives in the water you may eat the following: anything in the water, in seas and streams, that has fins and scales you may eat; ¹⁰but anything living in seas or streams, anything moving in shoals in the water, any creature living in the water that has no fins or scales, is abominable to you. ¹¹Since they are abominable to you, don't eat meat from them, and consider their dead bodies abominable. ¹²Anything in the water without fins or scales is abominable to you.

¹³"Consider the following birds abominable, and because they are abominable, don't eat them: the vulture, the griffon, the osprey, ¹⁴the kite, any kind of buzzard, ¹⁵any kind of crow, ¹⁶the ostrich, the nighthawk, the seagull, any kind of falcon, ¹⁷the horned owl and the great owl, the cormorant, ¹⁸the ibis, the pelican, the carrion vulture, ¹⁹the stork, any kind of heron, the hoopoe, and the bat.

²⁰"Any swarming things with wings crawling on four feet are abominable to you. ²¹But you may eat any swarming things with wings that above their feet have legs so they can jump over the ground. ²²Of

these you may eat any kind of grasshopper, all the migrating, devouring, wingless, or jumping kinds. ²³Every kind of swarming thing with wings that has merely four feet is abominable to you.

²⁴"These make you unclean: anyone who touches their dead bodies will be unclean till evening; ²⁵and anyone who carries any part of their dead bodies must wash his clothes and be unclean till evening. ²⁶All animals whose hoofs are split but not completely divided and that don't chew the cud are unclean for you; anyone who touches them is unclean. ²⁷All four-footed animals walking on their paws are unclean for you; anyone who touches their dead bodies will be unclean till evening. ²⁸And if you carry their dead bodies, wash your clothes and be unclean till evening; they are unclean for you.

²⁹"The following smaller animals moving on the ground are unclean for you: the weasel, the mouse, and every kind of lizard— ³⁰the groaning, scaly, and nimble kinds—the salamander, and the chameleon. ³¹Among all the small animals moving on the ground these are unclean for you. Anyone who touches them when they're dead is unclean till evening. ³²If one of them when it is dead falls on anything, it is unclean; it may be a wooden article, some clothing, leather, a sack, anything used for any purpose; it should be put in water and be unclean till evening; then it will be clean again.

³³"When any of them fall into any earthen vessel, break it, because everything in it is unclean; ³⁴if water comes on any food that can be eaten, the food is unclean; also any liquid that may be drunk from any

vessel like that is unclean. ³⁵Everything that any part of their dead bodies falls on is unclean; be it an oven or a stove, break it in pieces. They are unclean and should remain unclean for you. ³⁶A spring or a cistern holding water is clean, but anyone touching their dead bodies in it is unclean. ³⁷If any of their dead bodies falls on seed to be sown, it is clean. ³⁸But if water is poured on the seed and any of their dead bodies falls on it, it is unclean for you.

³⁹When any animal that you may eat dies and you touch its dead body, you are unclean till evening. ⁴⁰If you eat any of its dead body, wash your clothes and stay unclean till evening. If you carry its dead body, wash your clothes and stay unclean till evening.

⁴¹Any small animal crawling on the ground is abominable and must not be eaten. ⁴²Don't eat the meat of any animal crawling on its belly or on four legs, or anything with many legs, and any small animal crawling on the ground, because they are abominable. ⁴³Don't make yourselves abominable by anything crawling on the ground, or make yourselves unclean by them and defile yourselves by them.

⁴⁴"I the LORD am your God; you should make yourselves holy and be holy because I am holy. Don't make yourselves unclean by anything moving and crawling on the ground. ⁴⁵"I the LORD am He who brought you up out of Egypt to be your God. And so you should be holy because I am holy.

⁴⁶This is the law about animals, birds, and every living thing moving in the water and every small animal crawling on the ground. ⁴⁷It distinguishes between the unclean

and the clean, the animals you may eat and those you may not eat."

Cleansing After Childbirth

12 The LORD said to Moses: ¹"Tell the Israelites: When a woman gives birth and has a boy, she is unclean for seven days, the same number of days she is unclean during her menstruation. ²But on the eighth day he should be circumcised. ³And for thirty-three days she should stay home because she must be cleansed from her bleeding and not touch anything holy or go into the holy place till the time the cleansing from her bleeding is over. ⁴If she has a girl, she should be unclean for two weeks as in menstruation and should stay home sixty-six days because she must be cleansed from her bleeding.

⁵When the days in which she gets cleansed for a son or a daughter are over, she should bring to the priest at the entrance of the tent where I meet with you a yearling lamb for a burnt offering and a young pigeon or a turtledove to be sacrificed for sin. ⁶He should offer it before the LORD and atone for her; then she will be clean from her flow of blood. This is the law for her who gives birth to a boy or a girl. ⁷If she is too poor to give a lamb, she should take two turtledoves or two young pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other to be sacrificed for sin, and so the priest shall atone for her, and she will be clean."

Leprosy

13 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron: ¹"When anyone has a swelling, a rash, or a bright spot in the skin of his body that may turn into the disease of leprosy in his skin, he should be

¹¹
⁴⁴⁻⁴⁵ 1Pr 1:16
¹²
⁶ Lk 2:22
⁸ Lk 2:24

taken to Aaron the priest or to one of his sons who are priests. ³The priest should look at the disease in the skin, and if the hair on the spot has turned white and the spot looks deeper than the rest of the skin, it is the disease of leprosy. When the priest has examined him, he should declare him unclean. ⁴But if the bright spot in his skin is white and doesn't look deeper than the rest of the skin and the hair hasn't turned white, the priest should shut up the one with the disease seven days. ⁵On the seventh day the priest should look at him, and if he sees the disease looks the same and hasn't spread in the skin, the priest should shut him up another seven days. ⁶On the seventh day the priest should look at him again, and if the spot has faded and not spread in the skin, the priest should declare him clean; it's only a rash. He should wash his clothes and be clean. ⁷But if, after showing himself to the priest to be declared clean, the rash spreads in the skin, he should again show himself to the priest. ⁸The priest should look at him, and if the rash has spread in the skin, the priest should pronounce him unclean; it is leprosy.

⁹"When anyone has the disease of leprosy, he should be taken to the priest. ¹⁰The priest should look at him, and if there is a white swelling in the skin that has turned the hair white and raw flesh is growing in the swelling, ¹¹it is a chronic leprosy in his skin. Without shutting him up the priest should declare him unclean because he is unclean. ¹²If the leprosy breaks out in the skin and covers the whole skin of the diseased person from head to foot as far as the priest can see, ¹³the priest should look at him, and if

leprosy covers his whole body, he should declare him clean. It has all turned white—he's clean. ¹⁴But when raw flesh shows on him, he's unclean. ¹⁵The priest should look at the raw flesh and declare him unclean. The raw flesh is unclean; it is leprosy. ¹⁶But if the raw flesh turns white again, he should come to the priest. ¹⁷The priest should look at him, and if the sick spot has turned white, the priest should declare the diseased one clean—he's clean.

¹⁸"When a boil on the skin of the body has healed ¹⁹and in its place comes a white swelling or a bright reddish-white spot, it should be shown to the priest. ²⁰The priest should look at it, and if it looks deeper than the rest of the skin and its hair has turned white, the priest should declare him unclean. The disease of leprosy has broken out in the boil. ²¹But if the priest looks at it and the hair on it isn't white and it isn't deeper than the rest of the skin and has faded, the priest should shut him up seven days. ²²If it spreads in the skin, the priest should declare him unclean; it is the disease. ²³But if the bright spot stays where it is and doesn't spread, it's a scar caused by the boil. The priest should declare him clean.

²⁴"When anyone has a burn on the skin of his body, and the raw flesh of the burn turns into a reddish-white or bright white spot, ²⁵the priest should look at it, and if the hair on the bright spot has turned white and looks deeper than the rest of the skin, it's leprosy that has broken out in the burn. The priest should declare him unclean; it's the disease of leprosy. ²⁶But if the priest who sees it finds no white hair on the bright spot and it isn't deeper than

13
7 Mt 8:4,
Mk 1:44,
Lk 5:14,
17:14

the rest of the skin and has faded, the priest should shut him up seven days. ²⁷On the seventh day the priest should look at him: if it has spread in the skin, the priest should declare him unclean; it's the disease of leprosy. ²⁸But if the bright spot stays where it is and doesn't spread in the skin but has faded, it's only a swelling caused by the burn. The priest should declare him clean because it's the scar caused by the burn.

²⁹“When a man or a woman has some disease on his head or in his beard, ³⁰the priest should look at the disease, and if it looks deeper than the rest of the skin and there's thin yellow hair on it, the priest should declare him unclean. It is a scab, a leprosy on the head or in the beard. ³¹But when the priest examines the scabby spot and it doesn't look deeper than the rest of the skin but there's no black hair on it, the priest should shut up the man with the scabby spot seven days. ³²On the seventh day the priest should look at the diseased spot, and if the scab hasn't spread and there's no yellow hair on it and the scab doesn't look deeper than the rest of the skin, ³³he should shave himself but not the scab. The priest should shut up the man with the scab another seven days. ³⁴On the seventh day the priest should look at the scab, and if the scab hasn't spread in the skin and doesn't look deeper than the rest of the skin, the priest should declare him clean, and when he has washed his clothes, he will be clean. ³⁵But after being declared clean, if the scab spreads in the skin, ³⁶the priest should look at him, and if the scab has spread in the skin, the priest doesn't have to look for yellow hair: he's unclean.

³⁷But if he sees the scab has stayed where it is and black hair grows on it, the scab is healed. He is clean, and the priest should declare him clean.

³⁸“When a man or a woman has bright white spots on the skin of the body, ³⁹the priest shall look, and if the bright spots on the skin of the body are pale white, it is a rash broken out on the skin—he's clean.

⁴⁰“When a man loses his hair on the back of his head, he's bald, but he's clean. ⁴¹If he loses his hair on the front of his head, he's bald on the forehead, but he's clean. ⁴²But if there is a reddish-white spot on the bald places in back or in front, it is leprosy breaking out in the bald places in back or in front. ⁴³The priest should look at him, and if the swelling of the disease in the bald places in back or in front is reddish-white and looks like leprosy in the skin elsewhere on the body, ⁴⁴the man is a leper and unclean, and the priest must certainly declare him unclean; he has the disease on his head.

⁴⁵“Anyone who is suffering from leprosy should wear his clothes torn and let the hair on his head hang wild. He should cover his upper lip and call, ‘Unclean, unclean!’ ⁴⁶As long as he has the disease, he's unclean and must live by himself outside the camp.”

Leprosy in Cloth or Leather

⁴⁷“When there's leprosy in a woolen or linen garment, ⁴⁸woven or knitted from linen or wool, or in leather or anything made of leather, ⁴⁹if the spot in the garment or leather, woven or knitted, or in any leather article is greenish or reddish, it is leprosy and must be shown to the priest. ⁵⁰The priest

should look at the diseased spot and put that which has it away seven days. ³¹On the seventh day he should look at the diseased spot, and if it has spread in the woven or knitted garment or in anything made of leather, the spot is a malignant leprosy and unclean. ³²He should burn the garment, woven or knitted, woolen or linen, or any leather article having the spot, because it is a malignant leprosy; it must be burned. ³³If the priest sees the spot hasn't spread in the woven or knitted garment or in any leather article, ³⁴the priest should order that which has the spot washed and then put it away seven more days. ³⁵The priest should look at the spot after it is washed, and if it doesn't look different, though it hasn't spread, it is unclean. Burn it, whether the spot is on the outer or the inner side. ³⁶If the priest sees the spot is pale after washing, he should tear it out of the woven or knitted garment or the leather. ³⁷If it shows up again in a woven or knitted garment or any leather article, it is breaking out again. Burn anything having the spot. ³⁸But if the diseased spot disappears from the woven or knitted garment or any leather article that you wash, wash it again, and it will be clean.

³⁹"This is the law in regard to leprous spots on a woven or knitted garment, woolen or linen, or any leather article to decide whether it is clean or unclean."

Cleansing a Leper

14 The LORD said to Moses: ¹"This is the law for the leper when he is to be cleansed. He should be taken to the priest. ²The

priest should go outside the camp and look at him, and if the leper is healed, ³the priest should order someone to get for the one to be cleansed two living clean birds, some cedar wood, scarlet string, and hyssop. ⁴Then the priest should order someone to kill one bird over fresh water in an earthenware pot. ⁵He should take the living bird with the cedar wood, the scarlet string, and the hyssop and dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the fresh water, ⁶and sprinkle it seven times on the one to be cleansed from leprosy and declare him clean and let the living bird fly away over the field.

⁷"The one to be cleansed should wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, and bathe in water; then he's clean. After that he will go into the camp but for seven days must live outside his tent. ⁸On the seventh day he should shave off all the hair on his head, his beard, and his eyebrows, and when he has shaved off all his hair, he should wash his clothes and bathe his body in water; then he's clean.

⁹"On the eighth day he should take two perfect male lambs and one perfect female lamb, a year old, three tenths of an ephah of flour mixed with olive oil as an offering of food, and a log^b of olive oil. ¹⁰The priest cleansing him should present the man and the other things before the LORD at the entrance of the tent where He meets with you. ¹¹The priest should take the one male lamb and sacrifice it for guilt with the log of olive oil and wave them as he offers them to the LORD. ¹²He should kill the lamb where he kills

^ba liquid measure of about a pint

the sin offering and burnt offering in the holy place, because the guilt offering, like the sin offering, is the priest's; it is very holy. ¹⁴Taking some of the blood sacrificed for guilt, the priest should put it on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. ¹⁵Taking some of the log of olive oil, the priest should pour it into his left hand. ¹⁶dip his right finger in the oil in his left hand, and with his finger sprinkle some of the oil seven times before the LORD. ¹⁷The priest should put some of the rest of the oil in his hand on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot—on the blood offered for guilt. ¹⁸The rest of the oil in his hand the priest should put on the head of the one to be cleansed and so atone for him before the LORD. ¹⁹The priest should make the sacrifice for sin and atone for the one to be cleansed and after that should kill the burnt offering, ²⁰offering it and the food offering on the altar, atoning for him; then he's clean.

²¹“But if he is poor and can't afford so much, he may take one lamb to be waved and sacrificed for guilt and to atone for him with only one tenth of an ephah of flour mixed with olive oil as a food offering and a log of olive oil, ²²and with two turtledoves or two young pigeons, such as he can afford, the one for sin and the other as a burnt offering. ²³On the eighth day he should take them to the priest for his cleansing at the entrance of the tent of meeting before the LORD. ²⁴The priest should take the lamb to be sacrificed for guilt with the log of

olive oil and wave them as he offers them to the LORD. ²⁵After the lamb is killed for guilt, the priest should take some of the blood of this sacrifice and put it on the lobe of the right ear of the man to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. ²⁶The priest should pour some of the olive oil into his own left hand ²⁷and with his right finger sprinkle some of the oil in his left hand seven times before the LORD. ²⁸The priest should put some of the oil that is in his hand on the same places he put the blood of the sacrifice for guilt—on the lobe of the right ear of the one to be cleansed, on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. ²⁹The rest of the oil in his hand the priest should pour on the head of the one to be cleansed to atone for him before the LORD. ³⁰Then he should sacrifice one of the turtledoves or the young pigeons, ³¹such as he can afford; the one he should sacrifice for sin and the other as a burnt offering with the food offering. And so the priest should atone for the one to be cleansed before the LORD. ³²This is the law for one who has suffered from leprosy but can't afford what is needed for his cleansing.”

Cleansing Leprosy in Houses

³³The LORD said to Moses and Aaron: ³⁴“When you come to the land of Canaan that I'm giving you as your own and I inflict leprosy on a house in the land you own, ³⁵the owner of that house should come and tell the priest. 'There is something that looks to me like a disease in my house.'

³⁶“Then the priest should order everything taken out of the house before he goes in, so that nothing

in the house may become unclean, and after that the priest should go in to look at the house. ³⁷He should look at the diseased spots in the walls of the house, and if they are green and reddish cavities, looking deeper than the rest of the wall, ³⁸the priest should step out of the house to its door and close the house for seven days. ³⁹On the seventh day the priest should go back and look at it, and if the disease has spread in the walls of the house. ⁴⁰the priest should order the stones having the disease torn away and thrown down at an unclean place outside the town. ⁴¹He should scrape the inside of the house all around and dump the scraped-off dust in an unclean place outside the town. ⁴²Fresh stones should be gotten and substituted for the other stones, and fresh clay to plaster the house. ⁴³After the stones are torn away and the house is scraped and plastered with clay again, if the disease breaks out again in the house, ⁴⁴the priest should go and look at it, and if the disease has spread in the house, there is a malignant leprosy in the house, and it is unclean. ⁴⁵The house, its stones, wood, and all its clay plaster must be torn down and taken to an unclean place outside the town. ⁴⁶Anyone who goes into the house any time it is closed should be unclean till evening. ⁴⁷Anyone who lies down in the house should wash his clothes, and anyone who eats in the house should wash his clothes. ⁴⁸But if the priest comes and looks and the disease hasn't spread in the house after it is plastered, the priest should declare the house clean since the plague is healed.

⁴⁹"To cleanse the house from sin, he should take two birds, cedar

wood, scarlet string, and hyssop ⁵⁰and kill the one bird over fresh water in an earthenware pot. ⁵¹He should take the cedar wood, the hyssop, the scarlet string, and the living bird and dip them in the blood of the bird that was killed and in the fresh water and sprinkle the house seven times ⁵²and cleanse the house from sin with the bird's blood and the fresh water, with the living bird, the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the scarlet string. ⁵³and let the living bird fly from the town into the open country and so atone for the house; then it's clean.

⁵⁴"This is the law for any kind of leprosy or fungus. ⁵⁵for leprosy in clothes or in a house, ⁵⁶for a swelling, a rash, and a bright spot. ⁵⁷to show when it is unclean and when it is clean. This is the law for leprosy."

Unclean Discharge in Men

15 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron: ²"Speak to the Israelites and tell them: When a man has a discharge from his body, his discharge is unclean. ³This will be the law of his uncleanness when there is a discharge: whether it flows from his body or is stopped, he is still unclean. ⁴Any bed that anyone with a discharge lies on is unclean, and anything he sits on is unclean. ⁵Anyone who touches his bed should wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean till evening. ⁶Anyone who sits on anything that a person with the discharge sat on should wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean till evening. ⁷Anyone who touches the body of anyone with the discharge should wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean till evening. ⁸If a person with the discharge spits on

anyone who is clean, that one should wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean till evening. ⁹Any saddle a person with the discharge sits on is unclean. ¹⁰Anyone who touches anything under him is unclean till evening, and anyone who carries such things should wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean till evening. ¹¹Anyone whom a person with the discharge touches without rinsing his hands in water should wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean till evening. ¹²Any pottery a person with the discharge touches should be broken, and any wooden bucket should be rinsed with water.

¹³When a person with the discharge is getting cleansed from it, he should add seven days for his cleansing and wash his clothes and bathe in fresh water; then he's clean. ¹⁴On the eighth day he should take two turtledoves or two young pigeons and come before the LORD at the entrance of the tent where He meets with you and give them to the priest, ¹⁵who should sacrifice them, one for sin, the other for a burnt offering, and so the priest will atone for him before the LORD for his discharge.

¹⁶When a man has an emission of semen, he should bathe his whole body in water and be unclean till evening. ¹⁷Any garment and any leather with semen on it should be washed in water and be unclean till evening. ¹⁸When a man has sex relations with a woman with an emission of semen, they should bathe in water and be unclean till evening.

Unclean Flow in Women

¹⁹When a woman has her regular flow of blood from her body, she

goes on being unclean seven days, and anyone who touches her is unclean till evening. ²⁰Anything she lies on during her uncleanness is unclean, and anything she sits on is unclean. ²¹Anyone who touches her bed should wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean till evening. ²²Anyone who touches anything she sits on should wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean till evening. ²³If anyone touches anything on the bed or on anything she sits on, he should be unclean till evening. ²⁴If a man lies with her and some of her menstruation comes on him, he is unclean seven days, and any bed he lies on is unclean.

²⁵If a woman has a flow of blood for many days at some other time than her menstruation or she flows beyond the time of her menstruation, she is unclean as long as she flows, as unclean as during her regular flow. ²⁶As long as she flows, any bed she lies on is like her bed during her menstruation, and anything she sits on is as unclean as during her menstruation. ²⁷Anyone who touches such things is unclean and should wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean till evening.

²⁸If she is clean from her flow, she should add seven days, and after that she is clean. ²⁹On the eighth day she should take two turtledoves or two young pigeons and bring them to the priest at the entrance of the tent where the LORD meets with you. ³⁰The priest should sacrifice the one to take away her sins, the other as a burnt offering, and so the priest will atone for her before the LORD for her unclean flow.

³¹Warn the Israelites about their

uncleanness, or they will die from it by making My tabernacle among them unclean.

“That is the law for one who has a discharge or a flow of semen to make him unclean. “for her who is unclean from menstruation, for anyone, man or woman; having a flow, and for a man who lies with a woman when she’s unclean.”

The Great Day of Atonement

16 After the death of Aaron’s two sons, who had come before the LORD and died, the LORD spoke to Moses. “Tell your brother Aaron,” the LORD told Moses, “not to come just at any time into the holy place within the curtain in front of the atonement cover on the ark, or he will die, because I appear in a cloud over the atonement cover. “This is how Aaron should come into the holy place: with a young bull to sacrifice it for sin and a ram for a burnt offering. “He should put on the holy linen tunic, wear the linen drawers on his body and a linen sash as a belt and a linen turban. These are holy garments. He should bathe his body in water and then put them on. “He should get two male goats from the community of Israelites to be sacrificed for sin and a ram for a burnt offering.

“Aaron should sacrifice the young bull to take away his own sins and atone for himself and his family. “He should take the two goats and have them stand before the LORD at the entrance of the tent where He meets with you. “Then Aaron should throw lots for the two male goats, to give one to the LORD and the other for the scapegoat. “Aaron should bring forward the goat that by lot was given to the LORD and sacrifice him for sin,

“while the goat assigned by lot for the scapegoat should stand alive before the LORD, ready to atone for him and be sent for the scapegoat in the wilderness.

“Aaron should bring forward the young bull to sacrifice him for his sins and atone for himself and his family and kill the young bull as a sacrifice for his sins. “He should take a pan full of burning coals from the altar before the LORD and his hands full of finely ground fragrant incense and take them inside the curtain “and put the incense on the fire before the LORD, so that the cloud of incense covers the atonement cover, which is over the Word of Testimony, so that he will not die. “Taking some of the bull’s blood, he should with his finger sprinkle it on the east side of the atonement cover, and then he should with his finger sprinkle some of the blood seven times in front of the atonement cover.

“He should kill the goat as a sacrifice for the people’s sins, and taking the blood inside the curtain, he should do with its blood what he did with the bull’s blood—sprinkle it on the atonement cover and in front of the cover “and atone for the holy place, taking away the uncleanness of the Israelites, their wrongs, that is, all their sins. He must do the same for the tent where the LORD meets with you, which remains with the people in the midst of their uncleanness. “Nobody else should be in the tent where He meets with you when he goes into the holy place to atone till he comes out and has atoned for himself and his family and the whole community of Israel. “Then he should go out to the altar that is before the LORD and atone for it and take some of the

16
2 Heb 6:12
Ro 3:25
Heb 9:5
12 Rv 8:5

bull's blood and some of the goat's blood and put it on the horns of the altar all around. ¹⁹and with his finger he should sprinkle some of the blood on it seven times and cleanse it from the uncleanness of the Israelites and make it holy.

²⁰When he has finished atoning for the holy place, the tent where the LORD meets with you, and the altar, he should bring forward the living goat. ²¹Aaron should lay both hands on the head of the living goat, confess over it all the wrongs of the Israelites, all their transgressions, that is, all their sins, and so put them on the goat's head and have a man, standing ready, take him into the wilderness. ²²The goat will carry on him all their wrongs and take them away to a deserted place as the man lets the goat go into the wilderness.

²³Then Aaron should go into the tent where the LORD meets with you, strip off the linen clothes he put on to go into the holy place, and leave them there. ²⁴He should bathe his body in water in the holy place, put on his other clothes, and come out and make the burnt offering for himself and for the people to atone for himself and for the people. ²⁵The fat of the sacrifice for sin he should burn on the altar. ²⁶The man who let the scapegoat go should wash his clothes, bathe his body in water, and then return to the camp. ²⁷The young bull and the goat, both sacrifices for sin, whose blood was brought into the holy place to atone, he must take outside the camp, where their hides, meat, and dung are to be burned. ²⁸The one who burns them should wash his clothes, bathe his body in water, and then return to the camp.

²⁹This should be a law for you forever: On the tenth day of the seventh month don't eat any food or do any work, neither the Israelite nor the stranger who lives among you. ³⁰This is the day atonement is made for you to cleanse you; from all your sins you will be clean before the LORD. ³¹It should be your most important day of rest on which you eat nothing; it is a law forever. ³²The priest who is anointed and installed to serve as priest in his father's place will make the atonement. He will put on the linen, the holy garments, ³³and atone for the holy place, the tent where the LORD meets with you, and the altar; and he will atone for the priests and all the people of the community.

³⁴This is a law for you forever to atone for the Israelites, taking away all their sins once a year."

Aaron did what the LORD ordered Moses.

Bringing Sacrifices to the Tent

17 The LORD said to Moses: ¹"Speak to Aaron, his sons, and all the Israelites, and tell them: This is what the LORD orders: ²Anyone in Israel who butchers a bull, sheep, or goat inside or outside the camp ³and doesn't bring it to the entrance of the tent where He meets with you to give it to the LORD before the LORD's house is guilty of blood—he has poured out blood—and that man must be cut off from his people. ⁴The sacrifices the Israelites have been making in the open field I want them to bring to the LORD at the entrance of the tent where He meets with you, to the priest, and sacrifice them as a peace offering to the LORD. ⁵The priest should pour the blood against the LORD's altar at

²⁷ Heb 13
¹¹⁻¹³

the entrance of the tent where He meets with you and burn the fat for a fragrance pleasing the LORD. ⁷They must no more bring their sacrifices to evil spirits, whom they are lusting after. This is a law forever for them in the coming ages.

⁸“Tell them: If anyone in Israel or a stranger who lives among them brings a burnt offering or any sacrifice ⁹but doesn’t bring it to the entrance of the tent where the LORD meets with you to offer it to the LORD, he must be cut off from his people.”

Eating Blood

¹⁰“If anyone in Israel or a stranger who lives among them eats any blood, I will oppose the person who eats the blood and cut him off from his people. ¹¹A body’s life is in the blood, and I direct you to put it on the altar to atone for your lives, because it is the blood that atones for a life. ¹²That is why I tell the Israelites: No one among you should eat blood; the stranger who lives among you shouldn’t eat blood either.

¹³“If anyone of the Israelites or of the strangers who live among you hunts and catches an animal or a bird that may be eaten, he should let its blood run out and cover it with dirt. ¹⁴because the life of any body is its blood. So tell the Israelites: Don’t eat the blood of any body, because the life of any body is its blood; anyone who eats it must be cut off.

¹⁵“Anybody, Israelite or stranger, who eats the body of an animal that dies by itself or is torn by beasts, should wash his clothes, bathe in water, and be unclean till evening; then he’s clean. ¹⁶If he doesn’t

wash his clothes and bathe his body, he deserves to be punished.”

Forbidden Sex Relationships

18 The LORD said to Moses: ²“Speak to the Israelites and tell them: I the LORD am your God. ³Don’t do what the people do in Egypt, where you lived, and don’t do what the people are doing in Canaan, where I’m taking you, or follow their customs. ⁴You must keep My rules and follow them. I the LORD am your God. ⁵Follow My rules and My decisions. *By doing them a man lives.* I am the LORD.

⁶“Don’t have sex relations with anyone related to you by blood: I am the LORD. ⁷Don’t have sex relations with your mother, who is one with your father. She is your own mother; don’t have sex relations with her. ⁸Don’t have sex relations with your father’s wife; she belongs to your father. ⁹Don’t have sex relations with your sister, your father’s or your mother’s daughter, whether she is a full sister or half sister. ¹⁰Don’t have sex relations with your son’s or your daughter’s daughter, because they are your own flesh. ¹¹Don’t have sex relations with a daughter of your father and his wife; she’s your own sister. ¹²Don’t have sex relations with your father’s sister; she’s your father’s relative by blood. ¹³Don’t have sex relations with your mother’s sister; she’s your mother’s relative by blood. ¹⁴Don’t have sex relations with the wife of your father’s brother; she’s your aunt. ¹⁵Don’t have sex relations with your daughter-in-law; she’s your son’s wife; don’t have intercourse with her. ¹⁶Don’t have sex relations with your brother’s wife; she belongs to your brother.

¹⁸
5 Lk 10:26
Ro 10:5
G1 3:12

¹⁷Don't have sex relations with a woman and her daughter; don't take the daughter of her son or of her daughter and have sex relations with them; they are your relatives by blood; it is a shameful wrong.

¹⁸While your wife is living, don't marry her sister as a rival and have sex relations with her.

¹⁹Don't go to a woman to have intercourse with her while she is unclean from menstruation.

²⁰Don't have sex relations with your neighbor's wife and so become unclean with her.

²¹Don't give Molech any of your children by burning them alive—don't defile the name of your God; I am the LORD.

²²Don't lie with a man as with a woman; it is abominable. ²³Don't have intercourse with any animal and become unclean with it; and a woman must not offer herself to an animal for intercourse; it is perversion.

²⁴Don't make yourselves unclean in any of these ways, because by these practices all the people made themselves unclean whom I'm driving out ahead of you; ²⁵and so the land became unclean; I'm punishing it for its wrongs, and the land is vomiting up those who live in it. ²⁶Keep My rules and My laws, and don't any of you, Israelites or strangers living among you, do any of these abominable things. ²⁷The people of the land who were there before you did all these abominable things, and so the land became unclean. ²⁸The land will vomit you up too, if you make it unclean, as it vomited up the people who were there before you. ²⁹If you do any of these abominable things, you will be cut off from your people. ³⁰So keep My instructions, and don't practice

any of the abominable things done before you came, and don't make yourselves unclean with them; I the LORD am your God."

Various Rules of Conduct

19 The LORD said to Moses: ²"Speak to the whole community of the Israelites, and tell them: *Be holy, because I the LORD your God am holy.*

³"Every one of you, respect your mother and father, and keep My rest days; I the LORD am your God. ⁴Don't turn to idols or cast metal gods for yourselves; I the LORD am your God.

⁵"When you make a peace sacrifice to the LORD, do it in a way that will be accepted. ⁶Eat your sacrifice the day you make it and the next, but on the third day burn what is left over. ⁷If you eat it on the third day, it is garbage and not acceptable. ⁸Anyone eating it deserves to be punished because he has made the LORD's holy thing unholy; that person must be cut off from his people.

⁹"When you cut the grain in your fields, don't cut everything in the corners of your fields or glean what is left after your harvesting. ¹⁰Don't glean your vineyard or gather grapes lying scattered in your vineyard. Let the poor man and the stranger have them. I the LORD am your God.

¹¹Don't steal, lie, or cheat one another.

¹²Don't use My name to swear to a lie and so make the name of your God an unholy thing. I am the LORD.

¹³Don't get anything from anyone by extortion, and don't rob. Don't keep the pay you owe a hired man with you all night till morning. ¹⁴Don't curse the deaf. Don't put

¹⁹
² 1 Pt 1:16
¹² Mt 5:33

anything in the way of a blind person to make him stumble; but respect your God. I am the LORD.

¹⁵“Don’t be unjust in passing a sentence, giving special favors to the poor or honors to the great, but be fair in judging your neighbor. ¹⁶“Don’t go around slandering among your people. Don’t take a stand that endangers your neighbor’s life. I am the LORD. ¹⁷“Don’t hate another Israelite in your heart. Correct him, so you will not be guilty of a sin on account of him. ¹⁸“Don’t avenge yourself or hold a grudge against your fellow Israelites, but love your neighbor *like yourself*. I am the LORD.

¹⁹“Keep My laws. Don’t have two kinds of animals mate. Don’t sow your field with two kinds of seed. Don’t put on a garment woven of two kinds of thread.

²⁰“When a man has intercourse with a woman who is a slave promised to another man and whose freedom was never bought or given her, they should be punished but not by death, because she isn’t free. ²¹He must bring a ram as a sacrifice for his guilt to the LORD at the entrance of the tent where the LORD meets with you, ²²and for the sin he did the priest should atone for him by sacrificing a ram for his guilt before the LORD, and the sin he did will be forgiven him.

²³“When you come into the land and plant all kinds of fruit trees, treat their fruit as uncircumcised; consider it uncircumcised for three years, and don’t eat it. ²⁴In the fourth year all the fruit from them should be a holy offering of praise to the LORD. ²⁵In the fifth year eat the fruit from them, and gather their

produce for yourselves. I the LORD am your God.

²⁶“Don’t eat anything with its blood.

“Don’t tell the future by signs of magic.

²⁷“Don’t cut your hair at your temples in a circle around your head or mar the edges of your beard. ²⁸Don’t make cuts in your bodies for the dead or tattoo your skin. I am the LORD.

²⁹“Don’t make your daughter unholy by making her a prostitute, or the country will turn to prostitution and be full of vice.

³⁰“Keep My rest days, and respect My holy place. I am the LORD.

³¹“Don’t go to mediums or wizards to get help and so become unclean with them. I the LORD am your God.

³²“Get up before a gray-haired person, and honor an old man, and so respect your God. I am the LORD.

³³“When a stranger lives with you in your country, don’t mistreat him. ³⁴Treat the stranger who lives with you like one of your own people. Love him like yourself. You were strangers in Egypt. I the LORD am your God.

³⁵“Don’t be unjust in passing a sentence or in measures of length, in weights, in liquid measures.

³⁶Have an honest scale, honest weights, an honest ephah, an honest hin.^c I the LORD am your God, who brought you out of Egypt.

³⁷“Keep all My laws and all My rules, and do what they say. I am the LORD.”

Punishments

20 The LORD said to Moses: ²¹“Tell the Israelites: If any Israelite or any stranger who

¹⁸ Mt 5:43;
19:19; 22:
39; Mk 12:
31; 32; Lk
10:27; Ro
12:9; Cf
5:14; Ja 2:8

^ca hin was about 1 1/2 gallons

lives in Israel gives any of his children to Molech, he must be killed. The people of the land must stone him. ²I will oppose that man and cut him off from his people for giving some of his children to Molech, making My holy place unclean and My holy name unholy. ³If the people of the country shut their eyes to a person who gives some of his children to Molech and don't kill him, ⁴I will oppose that man and his family; I will cut him off from his people, and all who go after him lusting after Molech.

⁶"I will oppose the person who turns to mediums and wizards to lust after them, and I will cut him off from his people.

⁷"Make yourselves holy and be holy, because I the LORD am your God. ⁸Keep My laws and do what they say. I the LORD make you holy.

⁹"Anyone who curses his father or his mother must be killed; he has cursed his father or mother; he deserves to die.

¹⁰"When anyone has sex relations with another man's wife, with his neighbor's wife, both must be killed for their adultery. ¹¹If a man lies with his father's wife, he has violated his father's marriage; both must be killed because they deserve to die. ¹²If a man lies with his daughter-in-law, both must be killed; they have done a perverted thing; they deserve to die. ¹³When a man lies with another man as with a woman, both do something abominable and must be killed; they deserve to die. ¹⁴When a man marries a woman and her mother, it is a shameful wrong. The man and the two women must be burned to get rid of a shameful wrong among you. ¹⁵A man who has intercourse with an animal must be killed. Kill

the animal too. ¹⁶When a woman goes to any animal for intercourse, kill the woman and the animal. They must be killed because they deserve to die. ¹⁷When a man takes his sister, his father's or his mother's daughter, and they have intercourse, it is a shameful thing, and they must be cut off before the eyes of the people. He has had intercourse with his sister and deserves to be punished. ¹⁸When a man lies with a woman while she is menstruating and has intercourse with her, he lays bare her source, and she has uncovered the source of her blood; both must be cut off from their people. ¹⁹Don't have intercourse with your mother's sister or your father's sister, because such a person lays bare one related by blood; they deserve to be punished.

²⁰When a man lies with his uncle's wife, he violates his uncle's marriage; they deserve to be punished and must die without children. ²¹When a man marries his brother's wife, it is unclean because he is violating his brother's marriage. They will have no children.

²²"Be careful to do everything My laws and regulations say; then the land where I'm bringing you to live will not vomit you out. ²³Don't follow the customs of the people I'm driving out ahead of you. Because they did all these things, I abhor them. ²⁴And I have told you that you will take their land. I will give it to you as your own, a land flowing with milk and honey. I the LORD am your God, who separated you from the other people. ²⁵Distinguish between clean and unclean animals, between unclean and clean birds, and don't defile yourselves with any animal, bird, or any reptile on the ground that I have set aside as

²⁰
9 Mt 15:4
Mk 7:10

unclean to you. ²⁸Be My holy people because I the LORD am holy and have separated you from other people to be Mine.

²⁷"A man or woman who is a medium or a wizard must be killed. They must be stoned because they deserve to die."

Rules for Priests

21 The LORD said to Moses: "Speak to the priests, Aaron's sons, and tell them: None of them should make himself unclean with the dead among his family ²except for those closely related to him by blood: his mother, his father, his son, his daughter, his brother, ³his sister if she isn't married but a virgin still close to him—for her he may get unclean. ⁴As the head of his family he should not get unclean, making himself unholy.

⁵"They must not make their heads bald or shave the edges of their beards or make cuts on their bodies.

⁶"They should be holy men of God and not make the name of their God unholy, because they bring to the LORD sacrifices by fire, the food of their God, and so they must be holy. ⁷They must not marry a woman defiled by prostitution or one divorced from her husband, because a priest is God's holy man. ⁸Then treat him as holy because he offers the food of your God. He should be holy to you because I the LORD, who makes you holy, am holy. ⁹When a priest's daughter makes herself unholy by being a prostitute, she makes her father unholy. She must be burned.

¹⁰"But the one who is the high priest among his brothers, on whose head the oil was poured to anoint him and who was appointed to wear

the garments, must not let his hair hang wild or tear his clothes. ¹¹He must not go near any dead bodies or make himself unclean even for his father or his mother. ¹²He should not leave the holy place or make the holy place of his God unholy, because his God has anointed him with oil and so dedicated him to be holy. I am the LORD.

¹³"He must marry a virgin. ¹⁴He must not marry a widow, divorced woman, fallen woman, or prostitute, but a virgin of his own people ¹⁵to avoid making his children unholy among his people, because I the LORD make him holy."

¹⁶The LORD said to Moses: ¹⁷"Tell Aaron: If any of your descendants in his time has a defect, he must not come and offer the food of his God. ¹⁸No one should come near who has a defect, who is blind or lame, no one with a mutilated face or a limb too long, ¹⁹with a broken foot or hand, ²⁰no hunchback, no dwarf, no one with a disease of his eyes, with any skin diseases, no one with crushed testicles. ²¹No descendant of Aaron the priest who has a defect should come near to offer sacrifices by fire to the LORD. He has a defect; he should not come to offer the food of his God. ²²He may eat the food of his God, some of the most holy and some of the holy things, ²³but he must not come behind the veil or near the altar, because he has a defect and must not make My holy places unholy. I the LORD make them holy."

²⁴So Moses spoke to Aaron and his sons and all the Israelites.

Who May Eat the Holy Things

22 The LORD said to Moses: ¹"Tell Aaron and his sons

²⁶ 1st 1:16

they must treat as holy the holy things the Israelites give Me, to avoid defiling My holy name. I am the LORD.

¹¹“Tell them: In the coming ages, if any of your descendants, while he is unclean, comes near the holy things the Israelites give the LORD, that person must be cut off before Me. I am the LORD.

¹²“No descendant of Aaron who is a leper or has a discharge should eat any of the holy gifts till he is clean. If you touch anyone unclean by contact with the dead or you have an emission of semen, ¹³or you touch any reptile that makes you unclean or a human being whatever way he may be unclean— ¹⁴if you touch them, you will be unclean till evening and must not eat any of the holy things unless you have bathed your body in water. ¹⁵When the sun is down, you’re clean, and then you may eat the holy gifts because they are your food. ¹⁶Don’t eat the meat of an animal that died by itself or was torn by beasts, or it will make you unclean. I am the LORD. ¹⁷Do what I order you, or you’ll become guilty and die because you made a holy thing unholy. I the LORD make you holy. ¹⁸Anyone who isn’t a priest must not eat a holy gift, nor should a foreigner staying with a priest or a hired man eat a holy gift. ¹⁹But a slave whom a priest buys with his money may eat it; also anyone born in his house may eat his food. ²⁰A priest’s daughter whose husband isn’t a priest must not eat the food taken from the holy gifts. ²¹But if a priest’s daughter is a widow or divorced and without a child and comes back to be in her father’s home as in her childhood, she may eat her father’s food. But

anyone who is not a priest shouldn’t eat it.

²²“When anyone by mistake eats a holy gift, he should add a fifth and give the holy gift back to the priest. ²³Priests mustn’t let anyone defile the holy things the Israelites give the LORD; ²⁴they should make such a one pay the penalty for his guilt because he has eaten their holy gifts. I the LORD make them holy.”

Sacrifices Must Be Perfect

¹The LORD said to Moses: ²“Speak to Aaron, his sons, and all the Israelites, and tell them: If anyone in Israel or a stranger in Israel brings as his gift anything he vowed to give or if he offers the LORD anything voluntarily as a burnt offering, ³to be accepted, it must be a perfect male from the herd, from the sheep or the goats. ⁴Don’t bring any animal with a fault, because you will not get it accepted. ⁵If you bring the LORD a peace offering to keep a vow or make a voluntary gift, to be accepted, it must be a perfect animal from the herd or the flock; it must have no fault. ⁶Don’t bring the LORD a blind animal, a cripple, a mutilated one, or one with running sores or skin diseases, and don’t give the LORD any of these in a sacrifice by fire on the altar. ⁷You may use a bull or a sheep with too long a limb or stunted as a voluntary offering, but it will not be accepted as something you vow. ⁸Don’t bring the LORD any animal whose testicles are bruised, crushed, torn, or cut out; you must not do this in your country. ⁹And don’t accept such animals from any stranger to give them as food to your God, because they are marred and faulty and you will not get them accepted.”

²⁶The LORD said to Moses:
²⁷“When a calf, a lamb, or a goat is born, it should stay with its mother seven days, but from the eighth day on it will be accepted as a sacrifice by fire to the LORD. ²⁸Don’t sacrifice a cow or a sheep with its young the same day.

²⁹“When you bring a sacrifice to thank the LORD, do it in the acceptable way. ³⁰Eat it the same day, and don’t leave any of it till morning; I am the LORD.

³¹“Carefully do what I order you; I am the LORD. ³²Don’t defile My holy name. I will be kept holy among the Israelites—I the LORD, who makes you holy. ³³Who brought you out of Egypt to be your God. Yes, I am the LORD.”

Festivals

23 The LORD said to Moses:
²⁴“Speak to the Israelites and tell them: The following are the LORD’s festival days when you should call them to holy meetings. ²⁵Work six days, but the seventh is a day of absolute rest with a holy meeting. Don’t do any work. It is the LORD’s Sabbath day of rest in all your homes.

“The following are the LORD’s festival days with holy meetings to which you should call the people at their appointed times.

³⁴“On the fourteenth day of the first month, in the evening, is the LORD’s Passover. ³⁵On the fifteenth day of that month is the LORD’s festival of bread without yeast—for seven days eat bread without yeast. ³⁶On the first day you are to have a holy meeting. Don’t undertake any regular work. ³⁷Bring the LORD a sacrifice by fire for seven days; on the seventh is a

holy meeting; don’t undertake any regular work.”

³⁸The LORD said to Moses:
³⁹“Speak to the Israelites and tell them: When you come to the land I’m giving you and you’re cutting its grain, bring the priest a bundle of the first grain you cut. ⁴⁰He will wave the bundle before the LORD to have you accepted. He will wave it on the day after the Sabbath. ⁴¹The day you wave the bundle bring the LORD a perfect male lamb, a year old, as a burnt offering. ⁴²And with it bring a food offering of two tenths of an ephah of flour mixed with olive oil as a sacrifice made by fire to the LORD with a fragrance pleasing Him, and with one quarter of a hin of wine as a drink offering. ⁴³Don’t eat bread or roasted or fresh grain till this same day when you’ve brought the gift to your God. It is a law forever for your descendants in all your homes.

⁴⁴“From the day after the Sabbath, the day you bring the bundle of grain as a wave offering, count seven full weeks. ⁴⁵Count fifty days, till the day after the seventh Sabbath, and then bring the LORD an offering of new grain. ⁴⁶From your homes bring two loaves of bread made of two tenths of an ephah of flour baked with yeast, and offer them by waving them as firstfruits to the LORD. ⁴⁷With the bread bring seven perfect lambs, a year old, one young bull, and two rams. They are a burnt offering for the LORD, with their food offerings and drink offerings, a sacrifice made by fire with a fragrance pleasing the LORD. ⁴⁸Also sacrifice one he-goat for sin and two yearling lambs as a peace offering. ⁴⁹The priest should offer them with the bread of the firstfruits by

waving them before the LORD. All this along with the two lambs will be holy and will belong to the LORD and the priests. ²¹On that day announce and have a holy meeting. Don't undertake any ordinary work. It is a law forever in all the homes of your descendants in the coming ages.

²²"When you cut the grain on your land, don't cut everything at the edges of your fields or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Let the poor and the stranger have them. I the LORD am your God."

²³The LORD said to Moses: ²⁴"Tell the Israelites: On the first day of the seventh month have a Sabbath as a memorial day for prayer with blowing of trumpets and a holy meeting. ²⁵Don't undertake any regular work, and bring the LORD a sacrifice by fire."

²⁶The LORD said to Moses: ²⁷"But on the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement. Have a holy meeting, go without food, and bring the LORD a sacrifice by fire. ²⁸Don't do any work that day. It is a day of atonement, a time to atone for you before the LORD your God. ²⁹Anyone who doesn't do without food that day must be cut off from his people. ³⁰And anyone who does any work that day I will destroy and rid his people of him. ³¹Don't do any work. It is a law forever in all the homes of your descendants in the coming ages. ³²It is a day of absolute rest for you, when you eat nothing. In the evening of the ninth day of the month, from one evening to the next, you must keep your Sabbath."

³³The LORD said to Moses: ³⁴"Tell the Israelites: On the fifteenth day of this seventh month

and for seven days is the festival of booths for the LORD. ³⁵On the first day there's a holy meeting. Don't undertake any ordinary work. ³⁶Bring the LORD a sacrifice by fire for seven days; on the eighth have a holy meeting, and bring the LORD a sacrifice by fire; this is the final meeting. Don't undertake any ordinary work.

³⁷"These are the LORD's festivals which you should announce as holy meetings for bringing the LORD sacrifices by fire, burnt offerings, food offerings, other sacrifices, and drink offerings, each on its right day. ³⁸besides the LORD's Sabbaths and besides the gifts you vow or bring voluntarily to the Lord.

³⁹"But on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered the products of the land, you should celebrate the LORD's festival seven days. The first is a rest day, and the eighth is a rest day. ⁴⁰On the first day take choice fruits, palm branches, the branches of leafy trees and poplars by the rivers, and be glad before the LORD your God seven days. ⁴¹Celebrate the LORD's festival seven days each year. It is a law forever for your descendants in the coming ages. Celebrate it in the seventh month. ⁴²Live in booths seven days. Everyone born an Israelite should live in booths. ⁴³so that your descendants will learn how I had the Israelites live in booths when I brought them out of Egypt. I the LORD am your God."

"So Moses told the Israelites about the LORD's festivals.

Olive Oil for the Light

24 The LORD said to Moses: ²"Order the Israelites to get you pure olive oil for the

lampstand, so that the lamps may burn regularly. ³In the tent where I meet with you, outside the curtain behind which is the Word of Testimony, Aaron should regularly keep the lamp supplied before the LORD from evening till morning. It is a law forever for your descendants in the coming ages. ⁴On the pure lampstand Aaron should continually keep the lamps in trim."

Bread Set Before the LORD

⁵"Take flour and bake twelve loaves, two tenths of an ephah of flour in each. ⁶Set them up in two rows of six on the table of pure gold before the LORD. ⁷and by the rows lay pure incense. This will be bread offered as a token as the incense is burned. ⁸Every week on the Sabbath day this should be set up before the LORD, coming from the Israelites as an unending covenant. ⁹Aaron and his sons should have it and eat it in the holy place since it is a very holy part of the sacrifices by fire given to the LORD that belongs to Him forever."

One Who Cursed God

¹⁰A man whose mother was an Israelite and his father an Egyptian went out among the Israelites and had a fight with an Israelite in the camp. ¹¹and the son of the Israelite woman cursed the Name and treated it with contempt, and so he was taken to Moses. His mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan. ¹²He was put under guard to see what the LORD would clearly tell them to do.

¹³The LORD told Moses: ¹⁴"Take the man who cursed outside the camp, and all who heard him should lay their hands on his head, and

then the whole congregation should stone him.

¹⁵"And tell the Israelites: When anyone curses his God, he must be punished for his sin; ¹⁶he who curses the LORD's name must be killed. The whole congregation should stone him. Treat the stranger like the Israelite: If he curses the Name, he must be killed.

¹⁷"When someone kills another person, he must be killed. ¹⁸When anyone kills an animal, he must replace it, a life for a life. ¹⁹If someone injures his neighbor, then as he did, so it should be done to him: ²⁰a broken limb for a broken limb, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth: as he injured the other one, so it should be done to him. ²¹If anyone kills an animal, he should replace it; if anyone kills a man, he must be killed. ²²Judge the stranger just as you judge anyone born an Israelite, because I the LORD am your God."

²³Moses told the Israelites, so the man who had cursed they took outside the camp and stoned him. The Israelites did as the LORD ordered Moses.

Holy Years

25 The LORD said to Moses on Mount Sinai: ²"Speak to the Israelites and tell them: When you come into the land I'm giving you, the land should have a time of rest for the LORD. ³For six years sow your field, and for six years prune your vineyard and gather its products. ⁴but in the seventh year the land should have a complete rest, a rest for the LORD, when you don't sow your field or prune your vineyard. ⁵Don't gather what grows by itself or pick the grapes of your untrimmed vines; the land must

24
8 MI 12 4
MR 2 26
LU 6 4
20 MI 5 38

rest a year. ⁶Whatever the resting land produces you may eat, you, your male and female slaves, your hired men, and the strangers living with you. ⁷All it produces will also feed your cattle and wild animals in the country.

⁸Count seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, and the seven weeks of years will be forty-nine years. ⁹On the tenth day of the seventh month, the day of atonement, give a loud blast on the horn, and blow horns all over the country. ¹⁰and so set aside the fiftieth year as holy, and announce liberty to all who live in the land. This is your jubilee when everyone will return to his family's property and everyone to his own clan. ¹¹That fiftieth year will be your jubilee year: you won't sow or reap what grows by itself or gather grapes from the untrimmed vines in the land. ¹²The jubilee will be a holy time to you, and you will eat what the field itself produces. ¹³In this year of jubilee everyone will return to his family's property. ¹⁴If you sell anything to your neighbor or buy anything from him, don't drive a hard bargain with one another. ¹⁵When you buy from your neighbor, pay him according to the number of years since the year of jubilee; when he sells to you, he should charge you according to the number of years with crops. ¹⁶If there are still many years, pay more for it; if there are only a few years, pay less for it, because he is selling you only the number of crops. ¹⁷Don't drive hard bargains with one another, but respect your God, because I the LORD am your God.

¹⁸Do what I tell you in My laws, and be careful to put My rules into practice, and you will live safely in

the land. ¹⁹the land will give you its products, and you will eat all you want and live safely there. ²⁰If you ask, 'What'll we eat in the seventh year if we don't sow or bring in our crops?' ²¹I will provide My blessing in such a way in the sixth year it will produce enough for three years. ²²You will sow in the eighth year but live on the old crop; even in the ninth year, till its crop comes in, you will eat the old.

²³The land must never be sold permanently, because the land is Mine, and you're only foreigners staying with Me. ²⁴In all the land you possess you must allow for a way to buy it back. ²⁵When an Israelite gets so poor he has to sell some of his property, his nearest relative should come to him and buy back what he sold. ²⁶If a man has nobody to buy it back, but he himself prospers and earns enough to buy it back, ²⁷he should count the years after he sold it and pay back the rest to the man he sold it to, and then he can go back to his property. ²⁸But if he can't earn enough to get it back, what he sold stays in the hands of the man who bought it till the year of jubilee; then it is his again, and he can go back to his property.

²⁹If anyone sells a home in a walled town, he has the right to buy it back for a whole year after selling it; only within that time may he buy it back. ³⁰If he doesn't buy it back during that whole year, the house in the walled town permanently belongs to the one who bought it and his descendants; it does not leave its owner in the jubilee. ³¹But in villages with no wall around them the houses are regarded as belonging to the fields of the land; they can

be bought back, and in the jubilee they go back to the owner.

¹¹“The Levites always have the right to buy back their family’s houses in the cities they own. ¹²And if anyone buys one from the Levites, the house sold in their city goes back to the owner in the jubilee, because the houses in the cities of the Levites are their family property among the Israelites. ¹³But a field that is a part of the land around their cities must not be sold, because it is their family property forever.

¹⁴“When your fellow Israelite gets so poor he cannot support himself with you, help him as you would a stranger or an alien, so that he can live with you. ¹⁵Don’t take interest from him in money or goods, but respect your God, so that your fellow Israelite can live with you. ¹⁶Don’t take interest on money you loan him or on food you let him have. ¹⁷I the LORD am your God, who brought you out of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan and to be your God.

¹⁸“When your fellow Israelite gets so poor he must sell himself to you, don’t make him work like a slave. ¹⁹He should be like a hired man or a stranger staying with you; he should work with you till the year of jubilee. ²⁰Then he and his children shall leave you and go back to his relatives and the property of his fathers. ²¹They are My servants, whom I brought out of Egypt, and must not be sold as slaves. ²²Don’t be a slave driver to him, but respect your God.

²³“Your male and female servants whom you may have shall come from the nations around you. ²⁴You may also buy them from the descendants of foreigners living with you, from

their families who are with you who have been born in your country; those you may own ²⁵and leave as an inheritance to your children for them to own forever. You may use them as slaves, but don’t be a slave driver to any of your fellow Israelites.

²⁶“If a stranger or anyone living among you gets rich and your fellow Israelite gets so poor he sells himself to the foreigner living among you or to a member of the foreigner’s family. ²⁷After he has sold himself, he has the right to be bought back. One of his brothers may buy him back; ²⁸or his uncle or his cousin may buy him back; or if he’s able to do it, he himself may buy his freedom. ²⁹With the man who bought him he should count from the year he sold himself to the year of jubilee, and the money paid for him should be according to the number of years, counted as time he was with him as a hired man. ³⁰If there are many years left, he gets to be free by paying as much of the price paid for him as he owes him for those years. ³¹If there are only a few years left till the year of jubilee, he should count with him and get to be free by paying back for the years he would still have to serve. ³²He should be with him like a man hired by the year. You shouldn’t allow his master to be a slave driver to him. ³³If he can’t get his freedom in these ways, he and his children go free in the year of jubilee.

³⁴“The Israelites are My servants; they are My slaves whom I brought out of Egypt—I the LORD your God.

26 “Don’t make any idols for yourselves or set up a carved image or a holy pillar for yourselves or put figures of hewn

stone in your country to worship them, because I the LORD am your God.

“Keep My Sabbath days of rest, and respect My holy place; I am the LORD.”

Blessings on Obedience

“If you will live according to My laws and carefully do what I order, ‘I will give you rain at the right time, the land will produce its crops, and the trees in the field their fruits. ‘You will thresh until the time to pick grapes and pick grapes till the time to sow. You will eat all you want and live safely in your land. ‘I will give peace in your land. You will lie down with nobody to scare you. I will clear the land of dangerous animals, and no sword will go through your land. ‘You will chase your enemies, and they will fall before your sword. ‘Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall before your sword. ‘I will look kindly at you, give you children and make you many, and carry out My covenant with you. ‘You will eat old stores of food until you clear out the old to make room for the new. ‘I will put My dwelling^d among you and not abhor you. ‘I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be My people. ‘I the LORD am your God, who brought you out of Egypt, so that you’re no longer their slaves. I have broken the bars of your yoke and made you walk with heads high.”

Threats for Disobedience

“But if you will not listen to Me and fail to keep all these commands,

“if you despise My laws and abhor My regulations and don’t do everything I order but break My covenant, ‘then I too will do this to you: I will bring a sudden ruin on you, consumption and a burning fever that will make your eyes weak and your appetite fail. You will sow your seed for nothing—your enemies will eat the crops. ‘I will oppose you, so that as you face your enemies you will be struck down; those who hate you will rule over you, and you’ll run when nobody’s chasing you.

“If even this will not get you to listen to Me, I will go on to punish you seven times for your sins. ‘I will crush your strong pride. I will make your sky like iron and your ground like bronze. ‘You will spend your strength for nothing; your land will not produce its crops or the trees on the land their fruit. ‘If you don’t follow Me and don’t want to listen to Me, I will bring seven more plagues on you for your sins. ‘I will send wild animals among you that will rob you of your children, destroy your cattle, make you few in number, so that your roads will be deserted. ‘And if this doesn’t correct you to turn to Me but you still oppose Me, ‘then I too will oppose you and strike you seven times for your sins ‘and bring a sword on you to avenge My covenant, and you will huddle together in your towns. I will send a pestilence among you, and you will be put in the hands of the enemy. ‘When I break the staff of your bread, ten women will bake your bread in one oven and dole the bread out to you by weight. You will eat and not be satisfied.

26
11-12 2 Co
6 16
21 Ru 15 1 6
8 21 9

^dHeb tabernacle

²⁷“If this will not get you to listen to Me but you still oppose Me. ²⁸I will fiercely oppose you and punish you seven times for your sins. ²⁹You will eat the flesh of your sons and daughters. ³⁰I will destroy your hill shrines, cut down your incense altars, and pile your corpses on the carcasses of your idols, and I will abhor you. ³¹I will lay waste your cities and reduce your holy places to ruins and no longer smell the fragrance of your sacrifices. ³²I will make such a waste of your land that it will amaze your enemies as they settle in it. ³³I will scatter you among the nations, drawing out the sword after you, and your country will be a waste and your cities ruins.

³⁴“Then the land will enjoy its rest as long as it lies waste and you’re in your enemies’ land. The land will then rest and take the sabbaths it failed to get ³⁵during the sabbatical years of rest when you lived there. ³⁶Those of you who are left I will fill with fear; in the land of your enemies the sound of a wind-blown leaf will make you run. You will flee as from a sword; you’ll fall with nobody chasing you. ³⁷You’ll fall over one another as if running from a sword when nobody’s chasing you. You won’t be able to stand up to your enemies. ³⁸You will perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies will devour you. ³⁹Those of you who are left will for your guilt pine away in your enemies’ countries; and also for your fathers’ guilt you will pine away.

⁴⁰“Then they will confess their sins and their fathers’ sins, the treacherous things they did to Me in setting themselves against Me. ⁴¹“So I too will set Myself against

them and bring them into their enemies’ country. If then their *uncircumcised hearts* are humbled and they accept the punishment for their wrongs. ⁴²then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land. ⁴³But the land, forsaken by them, will enjoy its rest while it lies waste without them and they make the payment for their wrongs, for rejecting My regulations and abhorring My laws. ⁴⁴But even so, while they’re in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them or abhor them so as to wipe them out and cancel My covenant with them, because I the LORD am their God. ⁴⁵But for their sake I will remember the covenant with their fathers, whom, while the nations were watching, I brought out of Egypt to be their God, I the LORD.”

⁴⁶These are the regulations, decrees, and laws the LORD set up through Moses on Mount Sinai between Himself and the Israelites.

Buying Back What Is the LORD’s

27 The LORD said to Moses: ¹“Speak to the Israelites and tell them: When anyone makes a special vow to give persons to the LORD according to a price you set, ²set the value of a man from twenty to sixty years old at fifty shekels of silver according to the weight used at the holy place. ³For a woman set it at thirty shekels. ⁴For a boy from five to twenty years old set the value at twenty shekels and for a girl at ten shekels. ⁵For a boy from a month to five years old set the value at five shekels of silver and for a girl at three. ⁶For a man sixty years and up set it at fifteen shekels and for a woman at ten.

⁴¹ Acts 7:51
⁴² Lk 1:72

⁸But if the person is too poor to pay the price you set, he should be brought before the priest, and the priest should set a price for him according to what the one who vowed can give.

⁹If it is an animal such as is given to the LORD, any such animal that may be given to the LORD is holy. ¹⁰He must not substitute anything for it or exchange it, a good one for a bad one or a bad one for a good one. If he does exchange one animal for another, then both animals are holy. ¹¹If it is any unclean animal, which can't be offered to the LORD, he should bring the animal before the priest. ¹²and the priest should determine its value as either good or bad, and what the priest decides will be its price. ¹³If he wants to buy it back, he should add a fifth to the price you set.

¹⁴When anyone gives his house as something holy to the LORD, the priest should determine its value as either good or bad, and what the priest decides will be its price. ¹⁵If the man who gives his house to be something holy wants to buy it back, he can have it by adding a fifth to the price that is set. ¹⁶If anyone gives the LORD a part of his inherited field as something holy, decide what it is worth according to the seed sown on it, taking the ground sown with one homer of barley to be worth fifty shekels of silver. ¹⁷If the field he gives is to be holy beginning with the jubilee year, its value will be what you say it is. ¹⁸But if the field he gives is to be holy beginning sometime after the jubilee year, the priest should set its price according to the years left till the next jubilee year, and its value is reduced accordingly. ¹⁹If the man who gives the field as something

holy wants to buy it back, he can have it by adding a fifth to the price that is set. ²⁰If he doesn't buy it back and it is sold to someone else, he can't buy it back. ²¹When the field leaves its owner in the jubilee year, it will be holy and belong to the LORD, like a field totally given to God, and it will belong to the priest. ²²But if a man gives the LORD as something holy a field he bought, one that is not a part of his inherited property, ²³the priest should figure out for him what it is worth till the jubilee year, and he shall give what it is worth on that day as a holy thing belonging to the LORD. ²⁴At the jubilee year the field should go back to the man from whom it was bought, to whom it belongs as a family property.

²⁵Every weight should be according to the weight used in the holy place, twenty gerahs to the shekel.

²⁶But a firstborn animal, already being the LORD's by being born first, can't be given as a holy thing; whether it's a bull or a sheep, it is the LORD's. ²⁷If it is an unclean animal, it may be bought back at the price you set with a fifth added to it. But if it isn't bought back, it should be sold at the price you set.

²⁸But if a man devotes anything unconditionally to the LORD: a man, an animal, or a field that is his inheritance, it must not be sold or bought back. Everything so devoted is very holy and the LORD's. ²⁹No human being who is condemned by such a vow can be bought back; he must be killed.

³⁰One tenth of what comes from the land, whether of the grain or the fruit of the trees, is the LORD's; it is holy and belongs to the LORD. ³¹If

anyone wants to buy back any part of his tenth, he should add a fifth to it. ³²As for the tenth part of all the cattle or sheep, of all that pass under the shepherd's rod, each tenth animal is holy and the LORD's. ³³He shouldn't look to see if it's good

or bad or exchange it. But if he does exchange it, both the first animal and its substitute are holy and can't be bought back."

³⁴These are the commandments the LORD gave Moses on Mount Sinai for the Israelites.

THE FOURTH BOOK OF MOSES

COMMONLY CALLED

NUMBERS

Take a Census

1 On the first day of the second month in the second year after leaving Egypt the LORD said to Moses in the tabernacle where He met with them in the wilderness of Sinai: "Take a census of the whole community of Israel by clans and families, counting each head of all the men twenty years old and up, everyone in Israel who can serve as a soldier. You and Aaron should count them by their army groups. One man from every tribe, each one the head of his family, will be with you. The following are the names of the men who will help you: from Reuben, Elizur, Shedeur's son; from Simeon, Shelumiel, Zurishaddai's son; from Judah, Nahshon, Amminadab's son; from Issachar, Nethanel, Zuar's son; from Zebulun, Eliab, Helon's son; from Joseph's descendants, from Ephraim, Elishama, Ammihud's son, and from Manasseh, Gamaliel, Pedahzur's son; from Benjamin, Abidan, Gideoni's son; from Dan, Ahiezer, Ammishaddai's son; from Asher, Pagiël, Ochran's son; from Gad, Eliasaph, Reuel's son; from Naphtali, Ahira, Enan's son."

"These were the men chosen from the community, the leaders of the tribes of their fathers, and heads of the Israelite clans. Moses and Aaron took these men as indicated by name and gathered the whole community on the first day of the second month, and they registered their males by their clans and families, counting the head of each

man 20 years old and up. As the LORD ordered him to do, Moses counted them in the wilderness of Sinai.

The people of Reuben, Israel's firstborn, as they were descended by clans and families, counting every man 20 years old and up who could serve as a soldier—their total in the tribe of Reuben was 46,500.

The people of Simeon as they were descended by clans and families, counting every man 20 years old and up who could serve as a soldier—their total in the tribe of Simeon was 59,300.

The people of Gad as they were descended by clans and families, counting every man 20 years old and up who could serve as a soldier—their total in the tribe of Gad was 45,650.

The people of Judah as they were descended by clans and families, counting every man 20 years old and up who could serve as a soldier—their total in the tribe of Judah was 74,600.

The people of Issachar as they were descended by clans and families, counting every man 20 years old and up who could serve as a soldier—their total in the tribe of Issachar was 54,400.

The people of Zebulun as they were descended by clans and families, counting every man 20 years old and up who could serve as a soldier—their total in the tribe of Zebulun was 57,400.

²²Of Joseph's people, those of Ephraim as they were descended by clans and families, counting every man 20 years old and up who could serve as a soldier—²³their total in the tribe of Ephraim was 40,500. ²⁴Those of Manasseh as they were descended by clans and families, counting every man who could serve as a soldier—²⁵their total in the tribe of Manasseh was 32,200.

²⁶The people of Benjamin as they were descended by clans and families, counting every man 20 years old and up who could serve as a soldier—²⁷their total in the tribe of Benjamin was 35,400.

²⁸The people of Dan as they were descended by clans and families, counting every man 20 years old and up who could serve as a soldier—²⁹their total in the tribe of Dan was 62,700.

³⁰The people of Asher as they were descended by clans and families, counting every man 20 years old and up who could serve as a soldier—³¹their total in the tribe of Asher was 41,500.

³²The people of Naphtali as they were descended by clans and families, counting every man 20 years old and up who could serve as a soldier—³³their total in the tribe of Naphtali was 53,400.

³⁴These are they who were counted by Moses and Aaron and the 12 leaders of Israel, each representing his family. ³⁵All the Israelites counted by families, 20 years old and up who could serve as soldiers. ³⁶were 603,550.

The Levites

³⁷But the tribe of Levi with its families wasn't included in this number. ³⁸The LORD told Moses:

³⁹"Don't count the tribe of Levi or take a census of them among the Israelites. ⁴⁰Put the Levites in charge of the tabernacle where the Word of Testimony is kept, of its equipment and everything else that is there. They should move the tabernacle with all its equipment, do its work, and camp around the tabernacle. ⁴¹When the tabernacle has to move, the Levites should take it down, and when it has to be set up, the Levites should set it up. Anyone else who comes near it must be killed.

⁴²"While the other Israelites camp like an army, each on his own camping ground and under his own flag, ⁴³the Levites should camp all around the tabernacle where the Word of Testimony is kept, and so God will not be angry with the community of Israel. The Levites will be in charge of the tabernacle where the Word of Testimony is."

⁴⁴The Israelites did this; just as the LORD ordered Moses, so they did it.

2 The LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron: ²"Every Israelite should camp under his own flag by the emblems of his family; they should camp at some distance around the tent where I meet with you.

³The following should camp on the east side, toward the rising sun: the flag of the camp of Judah, in battle array, with Nahshon, Amminadab's son, as leader of Judah's descendants, ⁴his regiment totaling 74,600. ⁵Camping next to him shall be the tribe of Issachar with Nethanel, Zuar's son, as leader of Issachar's descendants, ⁶his regiment totaling 54,400. ⁷Then the tribe of Zebulun with

Eliab, Helon's son, as leader of Zebulun's descendants, ⁸his regiment totaling 57,400. ⁹The total of all the troops in Judah's camp: 186,400. These march first.

¹⁰On the south side should be the flag of the camp of Reuben, in battle array, with Elizur, Shedeur's son, as leader of Reuben's descendants, ¹¹his regiment totaling 46,500. ¹²Camping next to him shall be the tribe of Simeon with Shelumiel, Zurishaddai's son, as leader of Simeon's descendants, ¹³his regiment totaling 59,300. ¹⁴Then the tribe of Gad with Eliasaph, Reuel's son, as leader of Gad's descendants, ¹⁵his regiment totaling 45,650. ¹⁶The total of all the troops in Reuben's camp: 151,450. These march second.

¹⁷In the middle of the other divisions the tent where I meet with you should move with the division of the Levites. As they camp, so they march, everyone in his place, one flag after another.

¹⁸On the west side should be the flag of the camp of Ephraim, in battle array, with Elishama, Ammihud's son, as leader of Ephraim's descendants, ¹⁹his regiment totaling 40,500. ²⁰Next to him the tribe of Manasseh with Gamaliel, Pedahzur's son, as leader of Manasseh's descendants, ²¹his regiment totaling 32,200. ²²Then the tribe of Benjamin with Abidan, Gideon's son, as leader of Benjamin's descendants, ²³his regiment totaling 35,400. ²⁴The total of all the troops in Ephraim's camp: 108,100. They march third.

²⁵On the north side should be the flag of the camp of Dan, in battle array, with Ahiezer, Ammishaddai's son, as leader of Dan's descendants, ²⁶his regiment totaling 62,700.

²⁷Camping next to him shall be the tribe of Asher with Pagiel, Ochran's son, as leader of Asher's descendants, ²⁸his regiment totaling 41,500. ²⁹Then the tribe of Naphtali with Ahira, Enan's son, as leader of Naphtali's descendants, ³⁰his regiment totaling 53,400. ³¹The total in Dan's camp: 157,600. They march last, one flag after another."

³²These were the Israelites as they were counted according to their families. The total of all the troops in the camps was 603,550. ³³But the Levites were not included in the total of the Israelites, as the LORD had ordered Moses.

³⁴The Israelites did this. Just as the LORD ordered Moses, so they camped by their flags, and so they marched, everyone with his clan and family.

The Tribe of Levi

3 The following were the descendants of Aaron and Moses when the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai. ²These were the names of Aaron's sons: Nadab, the firstborn, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar; ³and these were the names of Aaron's sons, the priests who were anointed and installed to serve as priests. ⁴Nadab and Abihu died before the LORD because they brought a strange fire before the LORD in the wilderness of Sinai; and they had no children. Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests while their father Aaron was living.

⁵The LORD told Moses: ⁶"Get the tribe of Levi, and have them stand before Aaron the priest to serve him. ⁷They must work for him and the whole community before the tent where I meet with you, doing the work that needs to be

done at the tabernacle. ⁸They must take care of all the equipment of the tent where I meet with you and do for Israel the work that needs to be done at the tabernacle. ⁹Give Levi's descendants to Aaron and his sons; they're like gifts to him from the Israelites. ¹⁰Appoint Aaron and his sons to do the priestly work, and anyone else who comes near must be killed."

¹¹The LORD told Moses: ¹²"I took Levi's descendants out of Israel as a substitute for every firstborn son of any mother in the rest of Israel—Levi's descendants are Mine ¹³because every firstborn is Mine. The day I killed every firstborn in Egypt I made every firstborn in Israel, man or animal, a holy thing that is Mine—they belong to Me. I am the LORD."

¹⁴The LORD told Moses in the wilderness of Sinai: ¹⁵"Count Levi's descendants by families and clans, every male a month old and up." ¹⁶So Moses counted them as the LORD ordered him.

¹⁷The names of Levi's sons were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. ¹⁸The names of Gershon's sons by clans were Libni and Shimei. ¹⁹Kohath's sons by clans were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. ²⁰Merari's sons by clans were Mahli and Mushi. These were Levi's clans, family by family. ²¹From Gershon came the clan of Libni and the clan of Shimei; these were Gershon's clans. ²²All the males a month old and up totaled 7,500. ²³Gershon's clans camped on the west, behind the tabernacle. ²⁴The leader of Gershon's families was Eliasaph, Lael's son. ²⁵In the tent where God met with the people Gershon's descendants were in charge of the tabernacle, the tent with its cover-

ing, the screen for the doorway of the tent where God met with them. ²⁶the curtains of the court, the screen for the entrance of the court that surrounds the tabernacle and the altar, the tent ropes, and all the work connected with them.

²⁷From Kohath came the clan of Amram, the clan of Izhar, the clan of Hebron, and the clan of Uzziel; these were Kohath's clans. ²⁸All the males a month old and up totaled 8,600. They were in charge of the holy place. ²⁹The clans of Kohath's descendants camped on the south side of the tabernacle. ³⁰The leader of the families of Kohath's clans was Elizaphan, Uzziel's son. ³¹They were in charge of the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, and the equipment of the holy place used in serving, and the screen, and all the work connected with them.

³²Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, was head of the leaders of Levi's descendants and supervised those who were in charge of the holy place.

³³From Merari came the clan of Mahli and the clan of Mushi; these were Merari's clans. ³⁴All the males a month old and up totaled 6,200. ³⁵The leader of the families of Merari's clans was Zuriel, Abihail's son. They camped on the north side of the tabernacle. ³⁶Merari's descendants were appointed to be in charge of the frames of the tabernacle, its bars, posts, bases, all its utensils, and all the work connected with them. ³⁷as well as the posts of the surrounding court with their bases, pegs, and ropes.

³⁸Moses and Aaron with his sons camped in front of the tabernacle and the tent where God met with

them, toward the rising sun. They were in charge of the holy place and what needed to be done for the Israelites: but anyone else who came near had to be killed.

³All of Levi's descendants that Moses and Aaron counted according to their clans as the LORD told them, every male a month old and up, totaled 22,000.

⁴The LORD told Moses: "Count every firstborn male of the Israelites a month old and up, and take their census by name. "As a substitute for all the firstborn of the Israelites take Levi's descendants for Me—I am the LORD—and as a substitute for all the firstborn animals of the Israelites take the animals of the Levites."

⁵As the LORD ordered him, Moses counted all the firstborn of the Israelites. ⁶All the firstborn males a month old and up, counted by name, totaled 22,273.

⁷The LORD told Moses: "As a substitute for all the firstborn of the Israelites take Levi's descendants, and as a substitute for their animals the animals of the Levites, and the Levites will belong to Me. I am the LORD. "As a ransom for the two hundred seventy-three firstborn of the Israelites beyond the total of the Levites "take for each person five shekels of silver as it is weighed in the holy place, twenty gerahs to a shekel. "Give Aaron and his sons the money paid to ransom those who were beyond the total of the Levites."

⁸Moses took the ransom money from those left over after the others had been ransomed by the Levites, ⁹taking from the firstborn of the Israelites 1,365 shekels of silver as it was weighed in the holy place, ¹⁰and Moses gave Aaron and his

sons the ransom money as the LORD ordered Moses.

The Work of the Levites

4 The LORD told Moses and Aaron: ²"Among Levi's descendants get the total of Kohath's descendants by clans and families, ³from thirty to fifty years old, all who go into service to work in the tent where I meet with you. ⁴In the tent of meeting, the work of Kohath's descendants is to be with the most holy things. ⁵When the camp is going to move, Aaron and his sons should go in and take down the curtain serving as a screen and with it cover the ark containing the Word of Testimony. ⁶They should put over it a covering of dolphin skins and spread over the top of that a cloth made entirely of violet material and put its poles in their place. ⁷They should spread a violet cloth over the table where the bread is laid before God and put on it the dishes, pans, bowls, jars for the drink offerings; and the bread that is regularly laid out should be on it. ⁸They should spread over them a scarlet cloth and cover this with a covering of dolphin skins and put its poles in their places. ⁹They should take a violet cloth to cover the lampstand that provides the light, its lamps, tongs, firepans, and all the oil containers used to supply them with olive oil. ¹⁰They should put it and all its equipment into a covering of dolphin skin and sling it from a pole. ¹¹They should spread a violet cloth over the golden altar and over that a covering of dolphin skins and put its poles in their places. ¹²They should take all the utensils that are used in serving in the holy place and put them in a violet cloth and cover them with a

covering of dolphin skins and sling them from a pole. ¹¹They should clear away the ashes from the altar and spread a purple cloth over it ¹⁴and put on it all the utensils used on it, the firepans, forks, shovels, basins, all the utensils of the altar, and spread over it a covering of dolphin skins, and they should put its poles in their places. ¹⁵When Aaron and his sons have finished covering the holy things, all the holy utensils, and the camp starts moving, then Kohath's descendants should come to carry them—but without touching the holy things, or they will die. These are the things in the tent where I meet with you that Kohath's descendants have to carry.

¹⁶“Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, should be in charge of the oil for the lights, the fragrant incense, the regular food offering, and the anointing oil. He is in charge of the whole tabernacle and everything in it, the holy place and its equipment.”

¹⁷The LORD told Moses and Aaron: ¹⁸“Don't cut off Kohath's clans from the Levites.” ¹⁹So that they may live and not die when they come near the holy things, do this for them: Aaron and his sons should go in and assign to each of them what he should do and what he should carry. ²⁰They must not go in to look at the holy things even for a moment, or they will die.”

²¹The LORD told Moses: ²²“Get the total of Gershon's descendants by families and clans, ²³from thirty to fifty years old, all who go into service to work in the tent where I meet with you. ²⁴This is what Gershon's families should do and what they should carry: ²⁵They should carry the curtains of the tabernacle, the tent where I meet

with you, with its covering and the covering of dolphin skins that goes over it and the screen for the door of the tent where I meet with you, ²⁶the curtains of the court, the screen for the opening of the gate of the court that is around the tabernacle and the altar, with the ropes for them, and all the utensils used in their work; everything that needs to be done with these they should do. ²⁷Aaron and his sons should direct all the work of Gershon's descendants, all they should carry and all they should do. Charge them to be responsible for everything they should carry. ²⁸This is the work of the clans of Gershon's descendants in the tent where I meet with you, and Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest, should supervise what they do.

²⁹“Count Merari's descendants by clans and families. ³⁰Count them from thirty to fifty years old, all who go into service to do the work of the tent where I meet with you. ³¹In all their work for the tent where I meet with you they should be in charge of carrying the following: the frames of the tabernacle, its bars, posts, and bases. ³²the posts of the surrounding court, their bases, pegs, ropes—all their instruments and all the work connected with them. Assign to each one by name the things they are to carry. ³³This is the work of the clans of Merari's descendants in all the work they have to do under the supervision of Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest, in the tent where I meet with you.”

³⁴Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of the community counted Kohath's descendants by their clans and families. ³⁵all from 30 to 50 years old who went into service to do the work in the tent where God met with

them; ³⁶those who were counted by their clans totaled 2,750. ³⁷This is the total of Kohath's clans, all serving in the tent where God met with the people; and Moses and Aaron counted them as the LORD through Moses had ordered.

³⁸Gershon's descendants were counted by clans and families, ³⁹from 30 to 50 years old, all who went into service to do the work in the tent where God met with them; ⁴⁰those who were counted by their clans and families totaled 2,630. ⁴¹This is the total of Gershon's descendants, counted by clans, all who went to work in the tent where God met with them, whom Moses and Aaron counted by the LORD's direction.

⁴²Merari's descendants were counted by clans and families, ⁴³from 30 to 50 years old, all who went into service to do the work in the tent where God met with them; ⁴⁴those who were counted by their clans totaled 3,200. ⁴⁵This is the total of the clans of Merari's descendants, whom Moses and Aaron counted as the LORD through Moses ordered them.

⁴⁶All the Levites whom Moses, Aaron, and the leaders of Israel counted by clans and families, ⁴⁷from 30 to 50 years old, all who went to do the work of serving and carrying the tent where God met with them, totaled 8,580. ⁴⁸By the LORD's direction through Moses each of them was appointed to do his work and carry his load, and they were counted as the LORD ordered Moses.

Put Unclean Persons Outside the Camp

5 The LORD told Moses: ²"Order the Israelites to put outside the camp every leper, everyone who has a discharge, and everyone who has become unclean by touching a dead body. ³Male or female, put them outside the camp to keep them from making unclean the camp of those among whom I live." ⁴The Israelites did this; they put them outside the camp, doing just as the LORD had told Moses.

Righting a Wrong

¹The LORD told Moses: ²"Tell the Israelites: When any man or woman does any of the wrongs that people do, being unfaithful to the LORD, and that person is guilty, ³he should confess the sin he has done and pay for the whole loss and add a fifth to it and give this to the one he wronged. ⁴But if the man has no close relative^a to whom the loss can be paid back, it must be paid to the LORD, that is, to the priest, in addition to the ram which the priest will offer to take away his sin.

⁵"Any gift among the holy offerings the Israelites bring the priest belongs to him; ⁶what anyone sets aside as holy belongs to him; what anyone gives the priest is his."

When a Woman Is Suspected of Adultery

¹The LORD said to Moses: ²"Speak to the Israelites and tell them: If any man's wife goes wrong and is unfaithful to him ³and another man has intercourse with her without her husband knowing it

^aImplying that the man he wronged has died

and she has become unclean but keeps it secret, not having been caught in the act and there being no witness to accuse her. ¹⁴If then a jealous spirit comes over him and makes him jealous over his wife who has become unclean, or a jealous spirit comes over him and makes him jealous over his wife although she has not become unclean—¹⁵the man should bring his wife to the priest and bring a tenth of an ephah of barley flour as the offering for her. He shouldn't pour olive oil on it or put incense on it, because it is a food offering of jealousy, an offering that brings to mind some wrong that was done. ¹⁶The priest should have her come forward and stand before the LORD. ¹⁷Then the priest should take holy water in a clay jar, and the priest should pick up some dust from the floor of the tabernacle and put it in the water. ¹⁸While the priest has the woman stand before the LORD, he should loosen the hair of her head and put in her hands the food offering of jealousy that brings to mind a wrong done, while the priest holds in his hands the bitter water that brings a curse. ¹⁹The priest should have her swear, saying to the woman, 'If no other man has had intercourse with you and you haven't become unclean by being unfaithful to your husband, this bitter water that brings a curse should bring no punishment on you. ²⁰But if you have been unfaithful to your husband and have become unclean and someone beside your husband had intercourse with you'—²¹here the priest should have the woman swear and bind herself with a curse as he tells the woman—'the LORD make you an example of a curse and an oath among your people by making your

thigh waste away and your belly swell. ²²May this water with its curse go into your bowels to make your belly swell and your thigh waste away!' And the woman should say, 'Certainly, so be it!' ²³The priest should write these curses on a page and wash them off into the bitter water. ²⁴Then he should make the woman drink the bitter water with the curse, and the cursed water that brings trouble will go into her. ²⁵The priest should take from the woman's hand the flour offering of jealousy and wave it before the LORD, bringing it to the altar. ²⁶The priest should take a handful of the flour as a memorial and burn it on the altar, and then he should make the woman drink the water. ²⁷When he has made her drink the water, if she has become unclean by being unfaithful to her husband, the water with the curse will go into her and bring on trouble: her belly will swell, her thigh will waste away, and the woman will be an example of a curse among her people. ²⁸But if the woman is not unclean but pure, she will be unpunished and have children.

²⁹'This is the law of jealousy when a woman is unfaithful to her husband and becomes unclean ³⁰or when a jealous spirit comes over a man and makes him jealous over his wife: He should have the woman stand before the LORD, and the priest should do to her everything ordered here. ³¹The man will be free from guilt, but the woman will be punished.'

The Vow to Live for the Lord

6 The LORD said to Moses: ¹'Speak to the Israelites and tell them: If a man or a woman makes a special vow, the vow to live

for the LORD as a Nazirite. *‘he must keep away from wine and liquor, drink no vinegar from wine or from liquor or drink any kind of grape juice, and eat no fresh or dried grapes. ‘As long as he is under his vow, he mustn’t eat anything made from the grapevine, from seed to skin. ‘As long as he is under his vow, no razor should be used on his head. He should be holy and let the hair on his head grow long till the days he vowed to live for the LORD are over. ‘All the time that he vowed to live for the LORD he must not come near a dead body. ‘He shouldn’t make himself unclean even by touching his father, mother, brother, or sister when they die, because the Nazirite vow to his God is on his head. ‘All the time he’s under the vow he should be the LORD’s holy one.*

“If somebody dies very suddenly near him and makes his consecrated head unclean, he should shave his head on the day of his cleansing—on the seventh day. ‘On the eighth day he should bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest at the door of the tent where the LORD meets with you. ‘The priest should sacrifice the one for sin and the other as a burnt offering and so free him from the sin he brought on himself by the dead body. That day he should consecrate his head again ‘and vow to give the LORD the same period he vowed before, while he brings a yearling male lamb as a sacrifice for sin. The first period can’t be counted, because his consecration became unclean.

““This is the law for the Nazirite when the days of his vow are over: He should be brought to the door of the tent where the LORD meets with you. ‘and he should bring the

LORD his offering: one perfect lamb, a male yearling, as a burnt offering, one perfect lamb, a female yearling, as a sin offering, one perfect ram as a peace offering. ‘a basket of bread without yeast, cakes of flour mixed with olive oil, and wafers without yeast covered with olive oil, along with their food and drink offerings. ‘The priest should bring these before the LORD and make the sacrifice for sin and the burnt offering for him. ‘He should offer the ram as a peace offering to the LORD with the basket of bread without yeast and make the food and drink offerings. ‘Then the Nazirite should shave his consecrated head at the entrance of the tent where I meet with you and take the hair of his head, which was under the vow, and put it on the fire under the peace offering. ‘The priest should take the shoulder of the ram after it is boiled, one cake of bread without yeast from the basket, and one wafer without yeast and put them in the hands of the Nazirite after he has shaved off his hair that was under the vow. ‘The priest should wave them as an offering before the LORD. They are the priest’s holy portion along with the breast that is waved and the thigh that is given. Then the Nazirite may drink wine.

““This is the law for the Nazirite who has made a vow: He must bring the LORD his offerings according to his vow, besides anything else he can give. He must do what he vowed according to the law regulating his Nazirite vow.”

The Blessing

“The LORD said to Moses: ‘Tell Aaron and his sons: This is

6
3 Lk 1:15
9 Acts 21:24
15 Acts 21:26
18-19 Acts
21:24

how you should bless the Israelites:
Say to them:

²⁴The LORD bless you and keep you!

²⁵The LORD let His face shine on you and be merciful to you!

²⁶The LORD look kindly at you and give you peace!

²⁷"When they pronounce My name over the Israelites, I will bless them."

Offerings to Dedicate the Altar

7 When Moses finished setting up the tabernacle and had anointed and sanctified it and all its equipment, the altar and all its utensils, which he also anointed and sanctified, ²the leaders of Israel, the heads of the families (they were the tribal leaders in charge of the census), came forward ³and brought their gifts before the LORD: six covered wagons and 12 oxen, a wagon for every two leaders and an ox for each of them, and they brought them in front of the tabernacle.

⁴The LORD told Moses: ⁵"Take these from them and let them be used in the service of the tent where I meet with you, and assign them among the Levites as they need them for their work." ⁶Moses took the wagons and the oxen and gave them to the Levites. ⁷He gave two wagons and four oxen to Gershon's descendants for the work they had to do. ⁸And four wagons and eight oxen he gave to Merari's descendants for the work they had to do under the direction of Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest. ⁹But he didn't give any to Kohath's descendants, because they had to do the work of the holy things, which they carried on their shoulders.

¹⁰The leaders brought gifts to dedicate the altar when it was anointed, bringing their gifts before the altar. ¹¹"Each day," the LORD told Moses, "a different leader should bring his gift to dedicate the altar."

¹²On the first day Nahshon, Amminadab's son, of the tribe of Judah, brought his gift: ¹³He gave one silver dish weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels, according to the weight used in the holy place, both filled with flour mixed with olive oil for a food offering; ¹⁴one gold pan weighing 10 shekels, filled with incense; ¹⁵one young bull, one ram, and one yearling of the sheep or goats for a burnt offering; ¹⁶one he-goat for a sin offering; ¹⁷and for a peace offering two bulls, five rams, five he-goats, and five yearling male lambs. This was the gift of Nahshon, Amminadab's son.

¹⁸On the second day Nethanel, Zuar's son, leader of Issachar, brought his gift: ¹⁹he gave one silver dish weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels, according to the weight used in the holy place, both filled with flour mixed with olive oil for a food offering; ²⁰one gold pan weighing 10 shekels, filled with incense; ²¹one young bull, one ram, and one yearling of the sheep or goats for a burnt offering; ²²one he-goat for a sin offering; ²³and for a peace offering two bulls, five rams, five he-goats, and five yearling male lambs. This was the gift of Nethanel, Zuar's son.

²⁴On the third day the leader of Zebulun's descendants, Eliab, Helon's son, ²⁵brought his gift: one silver dish weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels,

according to the weight used in the holy place, both filled with flour mixed with olive oil for a food offering; ¹⁶one gold pan weighing 10 shekels, filled with incense; ¹⁷one young bull, one ram, and one yearling of the sheep or goats for a burnt offering; ¹⁸one he-goat for a sin offering; ¹⁹and for a peace offering two bulls, five rams, five he-goats, and five yearling male lambs. This was the gift of Eliab, Helon's son.

²⁰On the fourth day the leader of Reuben's descendants, Elizur, Shedeur's son, ²¹brought his gift: one silver dish weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels, according to the weight used in the holy place, both filled with flour mixed with olive oil for a food offering; ²²one gold pan weighing 10 shekels, filled with incense; ²³one young bull, one ram, and one yearling of the sheep or goats for a burnt offering; ²⁴one he-goat for a sin offering; ²⁵and for a peace offering two bulls, five rams, five he-goats, and five yearling male lambs. This was the gift of Elizur, Shedeur's son.

²⁶On the fifth day the leader of Simeon's descendants, Shelumiel, Zurishaddai's son, ²⁷brought his gift: one silver dish weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels, according to the weight used in the holy place, both filled with flour mixed with olive oil for a food offering; ²⁸one gold pan weighing 10 shekels, filled with incense; ²⁹one young bull, one ram, and one yearling of the sheep or goats for a burnt offering; ³⁰one he-goat for a sin offering; ³¹and for a peace offering two bulls, five rams, five he-goats, and five yearling male

lambs. This was the gift of Shelumiel, Zurishaddai's son.

³²On the sixth day the leader of Gad's descendants, Eliasaph, Reuel's son, ³³brought his gift: one silver dish weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels, according to the weight used in the holy place, both filled with flour mixed with olive oil for a food offering; ³⁴one gold pan weighing 10 shekels, filled with incense; ³⁵one young bull, one ram, and one yearling of the sheep or goats for a burnt offering; ³⁶one he-goat for a sin offering; ³⁷and for a peace offering two bulls, five rams, five he-goats, and five yearling male lambs. This was the gift of Eliasaph, Reuel's son.

³⁸On the seventh day the leader of Ephraim's descendants, Elishama, Ammihud's son, ³⁹brought his gift: one silver dish weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels, according to the weight used in the holy place, both filled with flour mixed with olive oil for a food offering; ⁴⁰one gold pan weighing 10 shekels, filled with incense; ⁴¹one young bull, one ram, and one yearling of the sheep or goats for a burnt offering; ⁴²one he-goat for a sin offering; ⁴³and for a peace offering two bulls, five rams, five he-goats, and five yearling male lambs. This was the gift of Elishama, Ammihud's son.

⁴⁴On the eighth day the leader of Manasseh's descendants, Gamaliel, Pedahzur's son, ⁴⁵brought his gift: one silver dish weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels, according to the weight used in the holy place, both filled with flour mixed with olive oil for a food offering; ⁴⁶one gold pan weighing 10 shekels, filled with in-

cense; ⁵⁷one young bull, one ram, and one yearling of the sheep or goats for a burnt offering; ⁵⁸one he-goat for a sin offering; ⁵⁹and for a peace offering two bulls, five rams, five he-goats, and five yearling male lambs. This was the gift of Gamaliel, Pedahzur's son.

⁶⁰On the ninth day the leader of Benjamin's descendants, Abidan, Gideoni's son, ⁶¹brought his gift: one silver dish weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels, according to the weight used in the holy place, both filled with flour mixed with olive oil for a food offering; ⁶²one gold pan weighing 10 shekels, filled with incense; ⁶³one young bull, one ram, and one yearling of the sheep or goats for a burnt offering; ⁶⁴one he-goat for a sin offering; ⁶⁵and for a peace offering two bulls, five rams, five he-goats, and five yearling male lambs. This was the gift of Abidan, Gideoni's son.

⁶⁶On the 10th day the leader of Dan's descendants, Ahiezer, Amishaddai's son, ⁶⁷brought his gift: one silver dish weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels, according to the weight used in the holy place, both filled with flour mixed with olive oil for a food offering; ⁶⁸one gold pan weighing 10 shekels, filled with incense; ⁶⁹one young bull, one ram, and one yearling of the sheep or goats for a burnt offering; ⁷⁰one he-goat for a sin offering; ⁷¹and for a peace offering two bulls, five rams, five he-goats, and five yearling male lambs. This was the gift of Ahiezer, Amishaddai's son.

⁷²On the 11th day the leader of Asher's descendants, Pagiel, Ochrans son, ⁷³brought his gift: one silver dish weighing 130 shekels,

one silver basin weighing 70 shekels, according to the weight used in the holy place, both filled with flour mixed with olive oil for a food offering; ⁷⁴one gold pan weighing 10 shekels, filled with incense; ⁷⁵one young bull, one ram, and one yearling of the sheep or goats for a burnt offering; ⁷⁶one he-goat for a sin offering; ⁷⁷and for a peace offering two bulls, five rams, five he-goats, and five yearling male lambs. This was the gift of Pagiel, Ochrans son.

⁷⁸On the 12th day the leader of Naphtali's descendants, Ahira, Enans son, ⁷⁹brought his gift: one silver dish weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels, according to the weight used in the holy place, both filled with flour mixed with olive oil for a food offering; ⁸⁰one gold pan weighing 10 shekels, filled with incense; ⁸¹one young bull, one ram, and one yearling of the sheep or goats for a burnt offering; ⁸²one he-goat for a sin offering; ⁸³and for a peace offering two bulls, five rams, five he-goats, and five yearling male lambs. This was the gift of Ahira, Enans son.

⁸⁴This was the gift of the leaders of Israel to dedicate the altar when it was anointed: 12 silver dishes, 12 silver basins, 12 gold pans, ⁸⁵each silver dish weighing 130 shekels, each basin 70 shekels, the total weight of the silver vessels being 2,400 shekels according to the weight used in the holy place; ⁸⁶the 12 gold pans filled with incense, each weighing 10 shekels according to the weight used in the holy place, the total weight of the gold pans being 120 shekels; ⁸⁷the total of the animals for burnt offerings: 12 young bulls, 12 rams, 12 yearlings of

the sheep or goats, with their food offerings; and 12 he-goats for sin offerings; ⁶⁶the total of the animals for peace offerings: 24 bulls, 60 rams, 60 he-goats, and 60 yearling male lambs. This was the gift to dedicate the altar after it was anointed.

⁶⁸When Moses went to talk with God in the tent where He met with the people, he heard the Voice talking to him from above the atonement cover on the ark containing the Word of Testimony, from between the two angels. And so He talked to him.

The Shining of the Lamps

8 The LORD said to Moses: ²¹Speak to Aaron and tell him: When you put up the lamps, the seven lamps should throw their light in front of the lampstand."

¹Aaron did that—he put the lamps on the lampstand in such a way as to throw light in front of it as the LORD ordered Moses.

⁴This is how the lampstand was made: It was hammered out of gold; even its stem base and its petals were hammered out of it. Moses made the lampstand according to the design the LORD showed him.

Cleansing the Levites

¹The LORD told Moses: ²"Separate the Levites from the Israelites, and cleanse them. ³To make them clean, do this to them: Sprinkle them with the water to take away sin, and have them shave their whole bodies, wash their clothes, and cleanse themselves. ⁴They should take a young bull and flour mixed with olive oil to offer with it, and you take another young bull as a sin offering. ⁵Then bring the Levites in front of the tent where I

meet with you, and gather the whole community of Israel. ¹⁰Bring the Levites before the LORD, and the Israelites should lay their hands on the Levites. ¹¹Aaron should present the Levites to the LORD as a wave offering from the Israelites to do the LORD's work. ¹²The Levites should lay their hands on the heads of the young bulls, then sacrifice the one for sin and the other as a burnt offering to the LORD to pay for the Levites' sins and take them away. ¹³Have the Levites stand before Aaron and his sons, and present them as a wave offering to the LORD. ¹⁴So you will separate the Levites from the other Israelites that the Levites may be Mine. ¹⁵Then the Levites should go in to do the work in the tent where I meet with you, once you have cleansed them and presented them as a wave offering. ¹⁶because they are separated from the other Israelites and completely given to Me. I took them to be Mine as a substitute for every mother's first son in Israel. ¹⁷Every firstborn in Israel, of men or animals, is Mine. The day I struck down every firstborn in Egypt I sanctified them to be Mine. ¹⁸I took the Levites as a substitute for all the firstborn in Israel. ¹⁹and I appointed the Levites from among the Israelites to belong to Aaron and his sons to do Israel's work in the tent where I meet with you and to atone for Israel's sins and take them away and so the Israelites would not be struck down when they come too close to the holy place."

²⁰Moses and Aaron and the whole community of Israel did to the Levites what they were told. The Israelites did to the Levites just as the LORD ordered Moses. ²¹The Levites cleansed themselves from

sin and washed their clothes; then Aaron presented them as a wave offering before the LORD, and Aaron paid for their sins to cleanse them. ²²After that the Levites went in to do their work before Aaron and his sons in the tent where God met with Israel. So they did to the Levites just as the LORD had instructed Moses in regard to them.

²³The LORD told Moses: ²⁴"This is the rule for the Levites: Everyone twenty-five years old and up must serve in the work of the tent where I meet with you. ²⁵but when he's fifty years old, he must retire from active service and not serve anymore. ²⁶He may help the other Levites doing their duties in the tent where I meet with you, but he mustn't do any regular work. This is how you should deal with the Levites in the work they have to do."

The Second Passover

9 In the first month of the second year after they left Egypt the LORD told Moses in the wilderness of Sinai: ²"The Israelites should celebrate the Passover at the time set for it: ³Celebrate it at the right time, on the fourteenth day of this month in the twilight, and follow its rules and regulations." ⁴And so Moses told the Israelites to celebrate the Passover, ⁵and they celebrated it on the 14th day of the first month in the twilight while they were in the wilderness of Sinai. The Israelites did just as the LORD ordered Moses.

⁶But there were some men who had become unclean by touching a dead body and couldn't celebrate the Passover that day. They came before Moses and Aaron that day. ⁷"We are unclean because we touched a dead body," these men

told him. ⁸"But why should we be kept from bringing the LORD's gift at the right time with the rest of Israel?"

⁹"Stand by," Moses answered them. ¹⁰"till I hear what the LORD orders you to do."

¹¹"Tell the Israelites," the LORD told Moses. ¹²"when anyone of you or your descendants gets unclean by touching a dead body or is on a long trip, he should celebrate the Passover. ¹³Such people should celebrate it on the fourteenth day of the second month in the twilight; eat it with bread without yeast and with bitter herbs. ¹⁴They shouldn't leave any of it till morning or break any bone in it. They should follow all the regulations of the Passover when they celebrate it. ¹⁵But if a man is clean and not traveling and yet fails to celebrate the Passover, that person must be cut off from his people because he didn't bring his gift to the LORD at the time set. That man will be responsible for his sin. ¹⁶If a stranger living with you celebrates the Passover to the LORD, he should follow its rules and regulations. The same law holds for both the stranger and the Israelite born in the land."

The Cloud

¹On the day the tabernacle was set up the cloud covered the tabernacle, that is, the tent containing the Word of Testimony, but from evening till morning it looked like fire over the tabernacle. ²And so it continued: The cloud covered it, but at night it looked like fire. ³Whenever the cloud rose from the tent, then the Israelites would move, and wherever it came down, there the Israelites would camp. ⁴By the LORD's direction the Israelites

⁹
12 Jn 19:36

would move and by the LORD's direction they would camp, and they would camp as long as the cloud rested on the tabernacle. ¹⁹When the cloud continued to stay on the tabernacle for a long time, the Israelites worshiped the LORD and wouldn't move. ²⁰Sometimes the cloud would stay only a few days over the tabernacle—at the LORD's direction they camped, and at the LORD's direction they moved. ²¹Sometimes the cloud stayed from evening till morning—when the cloud rose in the morning, they moved. Or it stayed a day and a night—when the cloud rose, they moved. ²²Or for two days or a month or a year: as long as the cloud continued to stay over the tabernacle, the Israelites would stay in camp and not move, but when it rose, they would move. ²³By the LORD's direction they camped, and by the LORD's direction they moved. They worshiped the LORD according to the direction the LORD gave through Moses.

Two Trumpets

10 The LORD told Moses: ¹"Make two trumpets by hammering them out of silver. Use them to call the community together and to get the camps started when they move. ²Blow them to have the whole congregation gather around you at the door of the tent where I meet with you. ³If only one trumpet is blown, the leaders of Israel's clans should gather before you. ⁴But when you blow an alarm, those who camp on the east side will start out; ⁵when you blow a second alarm, those who camp on the south will start out—blowing an alarm is the signal for them to start out. ⁶But when you call the community

together, blow without sounding an alarm. ⁷Aaron's sons, the priests, should blow the trumpets. And this should always be a law for you and your descendants.

⁸"When you go into battle in your own country against an enemy who oppresses you, blow the alarm on the trumpets, and the LORD your God will remember you and save you from your enemies. ⁹Also on the days you celebrate, on your appointed festivals, and on the first day of the month blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and peace offerings; the trumpets will be a way to call on God to remember you; I the LORD am your God."

Israel Leaves Mount Sinai

¹"On the 20th day of the second month of the second year the cloud rose from the tabernacle containing the Word of Testimony. ²So the Israelites broke camp and moved out of the Sinai desert till the cloud stopped in the wilderness of Paran.

³They broke camp according to the LORD's command through Moses. ⁴First to move was the flag of Judah's camp, in battle array, with Nahshon, Amminadab's son, heading its forces; ⁵Nethanel, Zuar's son, headed the forces of the tribe of Issachar; ⁶and Eliab, Helon's son, headed the forces of the tribe of Zebulun. ⁷The tabernacle was then taken down, and Gershon's and Merari's descendants moved out, carrying the tabernacle.

⁸Then the flag of Reuben's camp started out, in battle array, with Elizur, Shedeur's son, heading its forces; ⁹Shelumiel, Zurishaddai's son, headed the forces of the tribe of Simeon; ¹⁰and Eliasaph, Reuel's son, headed the forces of the tribe of Gad. ¹¹Then Kohath's descendants

moved out, carrying the holy things. By the time they arrived, the tabernacle was set up.

²²Then the flag of Ephraim's camp started out, in battle array, with Elishama, Ammihud's son, heading its forces; ²³Camaliel, Pedahzur's son, headed the forces of the tribe of Manasseh; ²⁴and Abidan, Gideon's son, headed the forces of the tribe of Benjamin.

²⁵Bringing up the rear for all the camps, the flag of Dan's camp started out, in battle array, with Ahiezer, Ammishaddai's son, heading its forces; ²⁶Pagiel, Ochrans son, headed the forces of the tribe of Asher; ²⁷and Ahira, Enan's son, headed the forces of the tribe of Naphtali.

²⁸This was the order in which Israel started out, in battle array, and so they moved.

²⁹Moses said to Hobab, the son of his father-in-law Reuel, the Midianite: "We are moving to the place of which the LORD said, 'I will give it to you.' Come along with us, and we will be good to you, because the LORD has promised Israel good things."

³⁰"I will not go," he answered him. "but I will go to my own country and relatives."

³¹"Please don't leave us," he said: "you know the places in the wilderness where we can camp, and you can guide us. ³²If you will come with us, the good things the LORD will do to us we will share with you."

³³Leaving the LORD's mountain, they moved three days, and the ark of the LORD's covenant led them for the three days to find a place for them to rest. ³⁴The LORD's cloud

was over them during the day when they moved from the camp.

³⁵When the ark started, Moses would say:

"Rise, Lord! May Your enemies be scattered, and those who hate You flee from You."

³⁶And when it stopped he would say:

"Return, LORD, to the many, many thousands of Israel."

"We Want Meat"

11 The people were complaining before the LORD about their troubles. Hearing them, the LORD got very angry, and a fire from the LORD began to burn among them and raged in the outskirts of the camp. ²The people cried to Moses, and Moses prayed to the LORD, and the fire died down. ³That place was called Taberah^b because the LORD's fire burned among them there.

⁴The rabble of non-Israelites among them had a strong craving, and the Israelites also wept and said, "Who will give us meat to eat? ⁵We think of the fish we could eat for nothing in Egypt, the cucumbers, watermelons, leeks, onions, and garlic. ⁶but now our appetites are shriveled, and there's nothing but this manna for us to look at."

⁷The manna was like coriander seed and looked like a resinous gum. ⁸The people would go around and gather it, grind it in handmills or crush it in mortars, boil it in a pot, and make cakes of it. It tasted like a delicacy baked with olive oil. ⁹When the dew fell on the camp at night, the manna fell on it.

¹⁰Moses heard the people weep, in family groups, everyone at the door

^b Burning"

of his tent; and the LORD got very angry, and Moses was troubled. "Why do You mistreat Your servant?" Moses asked the LORD. "Why are You so unkind to me to burden me with all these people? "Did I conceive these people or give birth to them that You should make me carry them in my bosom like a nurse carrying a sucking child, to the land that You with an oath promised their fathers? "Where can I get meat to give all these people when they trouble me with their weeping, saying, 'Give us meat to eat?' "I can't carry all these people by myself; they're too much for me. "If this is how You're going to treat me, please, if You're kind to me, kill me, and don't let me suffer more of this."

"Bring me seventy elders of Israel who you know are elders and officers of the people," the LORD told Moses, "and take them to the tent where I meet with you, and have them stand there with you. "I will come down and talk with you there. I will take of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them, and they will help you carry the burden of the people, and you won't have to carry it alone. "Tell the people: 'Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, and you will eat meat because the LORD has heard you weep and say: Who will give us meat to eat? We were well off in Egypt. The LORD will give you meat to eat. "You will eat it, not one day or two or five or ten or twenty days "but a whole month, till it comes out of your nose and you loathe it—because you have despised the LORD who is among you and have wept before Him, asking: Why did we ever leave Egypt?' "

"The people I'm with number six

hundred thousand men on foot," Moses said. "and yet You say, 'I will give them meat to eat for a whole month!' "Could enough flocks and herds be butchered for them, or could all the fish in the sea be caught for them and be enough for them?"

"Is the LORD's power so limited?" the LORD asked Moses. "You will see now if what I said will happen or not."

Moses went out and told the people what the LORD had said, and he gathered 70 of the elders of the people and had them stand around the tent. "Then the LORD came down in a cloud and talked to him. And He took of the Spirit who was on him and put Him on the 70 elders, and as soon as the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied; but they didn't do it again.

"Two men had been left in the camp. The name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad. They were among those listed but hadn't come out to the tent. The Spirit rested on them too, and they spoke God's Word in the camp.

"Then a young man ran and told Moses: 'Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.' "So Joshua, Nun's son, who from his youth was Moses's servant, spoke up.

"My lord Moses," he said, "stop them."

"Are you zealous for me?" Moses asked him. "I wish all the LORD's people were prophets and that the LORD would put His Spirit on them."

"Then Moses and the elders went back to the camp.

"The LORD sent a wind that brought quails from the sea, and

they spread out around the camp about as far as you could walk in a day in any direction, flying about three feet above the ground.

²²The people went out, and all that day and night and all the next day they gathered the quails, the one who got the least gathering ten homers. And they spread them out for themselves around the camp.

²³The meat was still between their teeth and not yet chewed when the LORD got angry with the people and struck them down with a terrible illness. ²⁴That place was called Kibroth-hattaavah^c because it was there they buried the people who had been so greedy.

²⁵From Kibroth-hattaavah the people moved to Hazeroth, and they stayed there.

Miriam Rebels

12 Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses on account of the Cushite woman he had married: "He married a Cushite woman!"

²"Does the LORD speak only through Moses?" they asked. "Doesn't He also speak through us?" The LORD heard it.

³Now Moses was very humble, more than anyone else on earth.

⁴Suddenly the LORD spoke to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam: "Come out, you three, to the tent where I meet with you." And the three came out.

⁵Then the LORD came down in the pillar of a cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent. "Aaron and Miriam," He called. And they came out to Him. ⁶"Listen to what I say," He said. "If one of you were the LORD's prophet, I would make

Myself known to him in a vision or speak to him in a dream. ⁷But with My servant Moses it is different: he is the *most faithful in My whole family*: "to him I talk face to face, clearly and not in mysteries; and he sees what the LORD is like. Why, then, weren't you afraid to speak against My servant Moses?"

⁸The LORD was angry with them and left. ⁹When the cloud had left the tent, Miriam was a leper; her skin was white as snow. Aaron turned to Miriam and saw she was a leper. ¹⁰"O my master," Aaron said to Moses, "don't punish us for a sin we did so foolishly. ¹²Don't let her be like a child born dead whose flesh is half consumed."

¹³Moses cried to the LORD. "Please, God, heal her!"

¹⁴"If her father had spit in her face," the LORD told Moses, "wouldn't she feel ashamed seven days? Shut her up seven days outside the camp, and then she may be taken back."

¹⁵Miriam was shut up outside the camp seven days, and the people didn't move till Miriam was taken back. ¹⁶After that the people moved from Hazeroth and camped in the wilderness of Paran.

12 Spies

13 The LORD told Moses: ²"Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I'm giving to Israel. Send one from each tribe of their fathers, every one of them a chief."

³As the LORD directed him, Moses sent them from the wilderness of Paran, and all of them were leaders in Israel.

⁴These were their names: from the

^c"Graves-of-Greed"

²⁴ 1 Co 10:6
¹²
⁷ Heb 3:2,5,6

tribe of Reuben. Shammua, Zaccur's son; ⁶from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat, Hori's son; ⁷from the tribe of Judah, Caleb, Jephunneh's son; ⁸from the tribe of Issachar, Igal, Joseph's son; ⁹from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea, Nun's son; ¹⁰from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti, Raphu's son; ¹¹from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel, Sodi's son; ¹²from the tribe of Joseph, that is, from the tribe of Manasseh, Gaddi, Susi's son; ¹³from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel, Gemalli's son; ¹⁴from the tribe of Asher, Sethur, Michael's son; ¹⁵from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi, Vophsi's son; ¹⁶from the tribe of Gad, Geuel, Machi's son. ¹⁷These were the names of the men Moses sent to spy out the country. But Hoshea, Nun's son, Moses called Joshua.

¹⁷Moses sent them to spy out Canaan. "Go up into the Negeb," he told them, "and up into the hills, and see what kind of country it is. Are the people living there strong or weak, few or many? ¹⁸Is the country they live in good or bad? Are the towns they live in open camps or fortified? ¹⁹Is the soil rich or poor? Does it have trees or not? Do your best to bring back some of the country's fruit." The first grapes were ripe just then.

²¹So they went up and spied out the country from the wilderness of Zin to Rehob, by the pass at Hamath. ²²They went into the Negeb and came to Hebron, where the Anakites^d Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmi lived. (Hebron was built 7 years before Zoan in Egypt.) ²³Coming as far as Cluster Valley, they cut off a branch there with a

single cluster of grapes, and two of them carried it on a pole, and also some pomegranates and some figs. ²⁴The place was called Cluster^e Valley on account of the cluster of grapes the Israelites cut off there.

²⁵After 40 days they came back from spying out the country. ²⁶They went and came to Moses and Aaron and the whole community of Israel at Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran and brought them and the whole community a report and showed them the fruit from the country.

²⁷"We came to the country you sent us to," they told them, "and it really is flowing with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. ²⁸But the people who live in the country are fierce, and the cities have walls and are very large, and we also saw the Anakites there. ²⁹The Amalekites live in the Negeb, the Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites live in the hill country, and the Canaanites live by the sea and along the Jordan."

³⁰But Caleb silenced the people before Moses. "Let's by all means go up and take it," he said, "because we are very well able to conquer it."

³¹But the men who went up with him said, "We can't attack the people, because they're too strong for us." ³²So they began to spread lies among the Israelites about the country they had spied out. "The country we passed through and scouted," they said, "is one that devours those who live there, and all the people we saw there were gigantic. ³³We saw giants there and the group of giants^f called Anakites, and we felt like grasshop-

^dor long-necked (tall) men ^eHeb Eshcol ^fHeb Nephilim

pers. and that's how we looked to them."

The People Rebel

14 Then the whole community broke into loud crying, and the people wept that night. ²All Israel complained against Moses and Aaron. "If only we had died in Egypt," the whole congregation told them, "or had died in this wilderness! ³Why is the LORD taking us into this country? Just to have us cut down by the sword? And our wives and children taken by the enemy? Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt? ⁴Let's appoint a leader and go back to Egypt," they told one another.

⁵Moses and Aaron went down on their faces in front of the whole gathering of the community of Israel. ⁶while Joshua, Nun's son, and Caleb, Jephunneh's son, two of those who had scouted the country, tore their clothes. ⁷"The country we explored," they told the whole congregation of Israel, "is very, very good. ⁸If the LORD is pleased with us, He will bring us into this country and give it to us—a land flowing with milk and honey. ⁹But don't rebel against the LORD, and don't be afraid of the people of the country, because we can eat them like bread. They have nothing to protect them anymore, and the LORD is with us. Don't be afraid of them." ¹⁰But the whole congregation talked of stoning them.

Then the LORD's glory appeared to all Israel at the tent where God met with them. ¹¹"How long will these people treat Me with scorn?" the LORD asked Moses. "How long are they going to distrust Me in spite

of all the miracles I did among them? ¹²I'll send a plague on them, destroy them, and make of you a greater and mightier people than they are."

¹³But Moses told the LORD: "When the Egyptians hear about this—for You took these people from among them by Your power—¹⁴they'll tell the news to the people living in this country, who have already heard that You the LORD are among the Israelites, that You the LORD are seen face to face, that Your cloud stands over them, and that You lead them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night. ¹⁵But if You kill all these people at one time, then the nations who hear about You will say: ¹⁶'The LORD couldn't bring these people into the land He swore to give them, so He slaughtered them in the wilderness.' ¹⁷Now then, my Lord, be as strong as You promised when You said: ¹⁸'The LORD is slow to become angry and very kind; He forgives sin and rebellion without declaring it innocent, for He even disciplines children to the third and fourth generation for the sins of their fathers.' ¹⁹Please forgive the sins of these people—You are so very kind and have forgiven these people ever since they left Egypt."

²⁰"I forgive them as you ask," the LORD said. ²¹"But as sure as I live and the LORD's glory will fill the whole world, ²²none of the men who saw My glory and the miracles I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet tested Me ten times and refused to obey Me, ²³will see the country which I by oath promised their fathers; none of those who spurned Me will see it. ²⁴But My servant

14
16 1 Co 10:5
22 Heb 3:18

Caleb has a different Spirit and has followed Me fully, and so I'll take him into the country to which he went, and his descendants will own it. ²⁵Now the Amalekites and Canaanites are living in the valley; so turn tomorrow and move through the wilderness on the way to the Red Sea."

²⁶Then the LORD asked Moses and Aaron: ²⁷"How long should I put up with this wicked community that keeps on complaining against Me? I've heard the complaints the Israelites are muttering against Me. ²⁸Tell them: 'As I live,' says the LORD, 'I will do to you exactly as I heard you say: ²⁹Your bodies will drop dead in this wilderness. Because you complained against Me, none of you who were counted, from twenty years old and up, ³⁰will get into the country where I swore with a raised hand you should live except Caleb, Jephunneh's son, and Joshua, Nun's son. ³¹You said your children would be taken away by the enemies, but I will bring them in so they can know the country you rejected. ³²But your own bodies will drop dead in this wilderness. ³³while for forty years your children will roam in the wilderness and suffer for your unfaithfulness till the last of your bodies lies dead in the wilderness. ³⁴You spied out the country for forty days; for forty years, a year for each day of spying, you will suffer for your sins and know what it means when I turn against you.' ³⁵I the LORD have spoken: I will certainly do this to this whole wicked community who have joined against Me: to the last man they will die in this wilderness."

³⁶So the men Moses sent to explore the country, who when they returned made the whole community

complain against him by spreading lies about the country— ³⁷these who spread the lies about the country were struck dead before the LORD. ³⁸Of all the men who went to explore the country only Joshua, Nun's son, and Caleb, Jephunneh's son, stayed alive.

Israel Defeated

³⁹When Moses told all Israel about this, the people wept very much. ⁴⁰And they got up early the next morning to go up to the top of the hill country, saying, "We're ready to go up to the place the LORD promised—we have sinned."

"Why do you keep on sinning against the LORD's order?" Moses asked. "You will not succeed. ⁴²Don't go up, or the enemies will strike you down, because the LORD is not among you. ⁴³The Amalekites and Canaanites are there to face you, and the sword will cut you down. Now that you have deserted the LORD, the LORD will not be with you."

"But they were brazen enough to go up to the top of the hill-country, even though the ark of the LORD's covenant and Moses didn't leave the camp. ⁴⁵The Amalekites and Canaanites living in those hills came down and with a smashing defeat drove them back to Hormah.

Flour and Wine with Sacrifices

15 The LORD said to Moses: ¹"Speak to the Israelites and tell them: When you come into the country I'm giving you as a home and from the herd or the flock you bring the LORD a sacrifice by fire, be it a burnt offering, a sacrifice to keep a special vow, or a freewill offering, or at your festivals you want to have a fragrance pleasing

²⁹ Heb 3:17
³³ Acts 7:36

the LORD. ⁴then the one who brings the offering should also give the LORD a tenth of an ephah of flour mixed with a quarter of a hin of olive oil. ⁵and a drink offering of a quarter of a hin of wine with the burnt offering or sacrifice of each sheep or goat. ⁶If it is a ram, prepare two tenths of an ephah of flour mixed with a third of a hin of oil. ⁷and a drink offering of a third of a hin of wine, and offer them as a fragrance that pleases the LORD. ⁸When you give the LORD a young bull as a burnt offering, a sacrifice to keep a special vow, or a peace offering, ⁹offer with the young bull three tenths of an ephah of flour mixed with half a hin of oil. ¹⁰and offer a drink offering of half a hin of wine with the sacrifice made by fire as a fragrance that pleases the LORD. ¹¹Do this for each bull, each ram, each sheep or goat. ¹²Do it for each animal, as many as you sacrifice. ¹³Every Israelite should do it this way when he brings a sacrifice by fire, for a fragrance pleasing the LORD. ¹⁴When a stranger lives with you or is among you in future generations and brings a sacrifice by fire, with a fragrance pleasing the LORD, he should do just as you do. ¹⁵For you who belong to the congregation and for the stranger living with you the same rule will apply forever among your descendants. You and the stranger are alike before the LORD. ¹⁶The same law and regulation holds for you and the stranger living with you."

Give the LORD the First Flour

¹⁷The LORD said to Moses: "Speak to the Israelites and tell them: When you come into the country I'm taking you to, ¹⁹and eat of the bread of the

land, set aside some of it for the LORD. ²⁰Offer a loaf from the first part of your dough, and bring it like the offering from the threshing floor. ²¹From the first part of your dough you and your descendants in the coming ages should give the LORD an offering."

For Unintentional Sins

²²"When you sin unintentionally and don't obey all these commandments the LORD told Moses— ²³everything the LORD through Moses ordered you to do from the day the LORD gave His commandments and down through the coming ages— ²⁴if it is an unintentional sin and the community doesn't know about it, the whole community should bring a young bull as a burnt offering with a fragrance pleasing the LORD, along with its food and drink offering as prescribed, and a he-goat as an offering to take away sin. ²⁵The priest should make an atonement for the sins of the whole community of Israel, and they will be forgiven because the sin was unintentional and they brought the LORD a sacrifice by fire and their sin offering before the LORD for the unintentional sin. ²⁶So the whole community of Israel will be forgiven, including the stranger who lives among them, since all the people were responsible for the unintentional sin.

²⁷"If one person sins unintentionally, he should offer a yearling she-goat as a sin offering. ²⁸The priest should make a sacrifice before the LORD to atone for the person who sinned unintentionally, to take away his sin, and he will be forgiven.

²⁹"When anyone sins unintentionally, the same law holds for him

who was born an Israelite and for a stranger living among them.

³⁰“But the person, whether an Israelite or a stranger, who sins willfully mocks the LORD, and that person must be cut off from his people ³¹because he has despised the LORD’s Word and broken His commandment—that person must be cut off, his guilt staying on him.”

Case of the Sabbathbreaker

³²While the Israelites were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering wood on the sabbath day. ³³Those who found him gathering wood brought him to Moses and Aaron and the whole community. ³⁴They put him under guard because it wasn’t clear what was to be done with him.

³⁵“The man certainly must die.” the LORD told Moses. “The whole community must stone him outside the camp.” ³⁶The whole community took him outside the camp and stoned him to death as the LORD ordered Moses.

Tassels

¹The LORD said to Moses: ²“Speak to the Israelites and tell them: They and their descendants should make tassels for themselves on the corners of their garments and put a violet string on the tassel of each corner. ³They will be tassels for you to look at and remind you to do all the LORD’s commandments and not eagerly go after what your hearts desire and your eyes see, which you, forsaking Me, used to lust for. ⁴“Do this so that you can remember to do everything I ordered and be the holy ones of your God. ⁵“I the LORD am your God, who took you out of Egypt to be your God—I the LORD am your God!”

Korah’s Rebellion

16 Korah son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, Eliab’s sons, and On, Peleth’s son, who were Reuben’s descendants, ²took a stand against Moses, along with 250 Israelites, well-known leaders of the community, picked men of the assembly. ³They banded together against Moses and Aaron. “You’ve gone far enough!” they told them. “The whole community is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why, then, do you put yourselves above the LORD’s congregation?”

⁴When Moses heard this, he fell on his face. ⁵“In the morning the LORD will show who is His,” he told Korah and all his company, “and who is holy and whom He will have come near Him. He will have the man He chooses come near Him. ⁶You, Korah and all your followers, do this: Take censers, ⁷tomorrow put fire in them and lay incense on them before the LORD. Then the man the LORD chooses will be the holy one. You’ve gone far enough, descendants of Levi!

⁸“Listen, descendants of Levi,” Moses told Korah. ⁹“Isn’t it enough for you that the God of Israel selected you from the community of Israel to have you come near Him and do the work in the LORD’s tabernacle and stand before the community to serve them? ¹⁰He had you come near Him with all your fellow Levites, but now you demand to be priests! ¹¹And so you and all your company are banded together against the LORD. What is Aaron that you should complain against him?”

¹²Moses sent men to call Dathan

¹⁶
5 2 Tim 2:19

and Abiram, Eliab's sons. But they answered, "We won't come. ¹¹Isn't it enough that you took us out of a land flowing with milk and honey to kill us in the wilderness that you also have to lord it over us?" ¹²"You certainly didn't bring us into a land flowing with milk and honey or give us an inheritance of fields and vineyards! Will you keep on blinding these men? We won't come."

¹³Moses got very angry and told the LORD, "Don't look at their offering. I haven't taken even a donkey from them or mistreated a one of them."

¹⁴"Tomorrow," Moses told Korah, "you and all your followers, come before the LORD—you and they and Aaron. ¹⁵Let each man take his censer and lay incense on it, and let each of you bring his censer before the LORD—two hundred and fifty censers; you too and Aaron, each his censer."

¹⁶Each man took his censer, put fire in it, laid incense on it, and with Moses and Aaron stood at the entrance of the tent where God met with His people. ¹⁷Then when Korah had gathered against them all his followers at the entrance of the tent where God met with them, the LORD's glory appeared to the whole community.

¹⁸"Stand back from this crowd," the LORD told Moses and Aaron, ¹⁹"and I'll wipe them out in an instant."

²⁰But they fell on their faces and said, "O God, the God who gives breath to all flesh! One man sins, and will You be angry with the whole community?"

²¹Then the LORD said to Moses, ²²"Tell the community: Come away from around the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram."

²³Moses got up and went to Dathan and Abiram, and the elders of Israel followed him. ²⁴"Come away from the tents of these wicked men," he told the community, "and don't touch anything that is theirs, or you'll be swept away with them for all their sins." ²⁵So they withdrew from around the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, but Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the doors of their tents with their wives and sons and little ones.

²⁶Moses said: "This will show you the LORD sent me to do all these things and it wasn't my idea: ²⁷If these die a natural death like anybody else and God treats them like everybody else, then the LORD didn't send me. ²⁸But if the LORD does something new and wonderful and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them and everything that belongs to them and they go down alive to their grave, then you'll know these men have spurned the LORD."

²⁹He had hardly finished saying all this when the ground split open under them, ³⁰the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them, their families and everyone with Korah, and all their property. ³¹They went down alive to their grave with everything that belonged to them, the ground covered them, and so they perished in the middle of the congregation.

³²All the people of Israel around them, hearing their shrieks, ran away because they thought, "The ground may swallow us too." ³³And a fire came from the LORD and burned up the 250 men offering incense.

³⁴Then the LORD said to Moses ³⁵"Tell Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, to pick up the censers out of the ashes and scatter the fire far

and wide, because the censers have become holy. ¹⁸The censers of these men who lost their lives for their sins are holy because they were brought before the LORD. Hammer them into plates to cover the altar and to warn the Israelites."

"So Eleazar the priest took the copper censers used for incense by those who died in the fire, and men hammered them into plates for the altar. ¹⁹As the LORD through Moses ordered him, to remind Israel that no stranger, anyone who wasn't a descendant of Aaron, should come near to burn incense before the LORD, in order that nothing like what happened to Korah and his company would happen to him.

"The next day the whole community of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron: "You have killed the LORD's people." ²⁰But when the community banded together against Moses and Aaron and they turned toward the tent where God met with them, they saw the cloud cover it and the LORD's glory appear.

"Then Moses and Aaron went in front of the tent where God met with them. ²¹The LORD said to Moses, "Get away from this community, and let Me wipe them out in an instant."

They went down on their faces, and Moses told Aaron, "Take the censer, put fire from the altar in it, lay incense on it, and run quickly into the community and atone for them, because the LORD is showing His anger—the plague has started."

"Aaron took it, as Moses told him, and ran into the middle of the congregation, where the plague had started among the people. And he put incense on the censer to atone

for the people. ²²He stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped. ²³It killed 14,700, not counting those who died on account of Korah. ²⁴But now the plague was stopped; and Aaron came back to Moses to the entrance of the tent where God met with them.

Aaron's Rod

17 The LORD said to Moses: ¹"Speak to the Israelites, and get from them a rod for each tribe, one each from all the leaders of their tribes—twelve rods; and write each man's name on his rod. ²Write Aaron's name on the rod for Levi, because there should be one rod for each head of their tribes. ³and lay them in front of the Word of Testimony in the tent where I meet with you. ⁴Now the rod of the man I choose will sprout; so I will rid Myself of the complaints the Israelites are making against you."

"So Moses talked to the Israelites, and all their leaders gave him a rod, one for each leader of their tribes—12 rods; and Aaron's rod was among them. ⁵Moses laid the rods before the LORD in the tent containing the Word of Testimony. ⁶The next day Moses went into the tent containing the Word of Testimony and found that Aaron's rod for the tribe of Levi had sprouted; and after it sprouted, it produced blossoms and ripening almonds. ⁷Moses took all the rods from before the LORD and brought them to all the Israelites. They looked at them, and each man took his rod.

"⁸Put back Aaron's rod in front of the Word of Testimony," the LORD told Moses, "and keep it there to warn those who like to rebel; you

must stop their complaints against Me, or they will die."

"Moses did so; he did what the LORD ordered him to do.

"Now we'll die!" the Israelites told Moses. "We'll perish! All of us will die! "Anyone who ever goes near the LORD's tabernacle will die. Should we all die?"

The Levites Help the Priests

18 The LORD told Aaron: "You, your sons, and your clan will be responsible for any sins connected with the holy place; and you and your sons will be responsible for any sins connected with your work as priests. Take with you also your relatives of the tribe of Levi, your father's tribe, and let them join you and help you and your sons serve in front of the tent containing the Word of Testimony. They should take charge of the work that needs to be done for you and the whole tent, but they must not come near the holy utensils or the altar, else they'll die and you too. They should be with you and take over the duties of the tent where I meet with you, including all the work of the tent, but no one else should come near you. And you must take over the duties of the holy place and the altar, so that I don't have to get angry with the Israelites again. See, from among the Israelites I have chosen your fellow Levites to help you. They are given to the LORD to do the menial work of the tent where I meet with you, while you and your sons are in charge of the priestly work, everything connected with the altar and inside the curtain; and so you must serve. The priestly work is a service I give you, but anyone else who comes near must die."

The Support of Priests and Levites

The LORD told Aaron: "I am putting you in charge of My portion of all the holy gifts the Israelites set aside, giving them to you and your descendants as a holy gift and legal share forever. Your share of the very holy things shall not be burned; of all their gifts, food offerings, sin offerings, and guilt offerings which they return to Me, a portion of these very holy gifts shall belong to you and your sons. Eat it as something most holy; any male may eat it; it is something holy belonging to you. And this is yours too: whatever is set aside from their gifts in all the wave offerings of the Israelites; I am giving it to you, your sons, and your daughters as your legal share forever; any clean person in your family may eat it. I am giving you the first part of all the best oil, wine, and grain they give the LORD. The first products of everything on their land that they bring the LORD is yours; any clean person in your family may eat it. Anything specially set aside for Me in Israel is yours. Every firstborn of any man or animal they bring the LORD is yours; only let them buy back the firstborn of man and the firstborn of any unclean animal. When a boy is a month old, let them buy him back at the regular price of five shekels of silver as the shekel is weighed at the holy place, which is twenty gerahs. But don't let them buy back the firstborn of a cow, sheep, or goat; they are holy. Sprinkle their blood against the altar, but burn their fat for a fragrance pleasing the LORD. But their meat is yours, like the breast that is waved and the

right thigh. ¹⁹I am giving you, your sons, and daughters as your legal share forever all the holy things the Israelites set apart to give to the LORD; it is an everlasting covenant of salt before the LORD for you and your descendants."

²⁰The LORD told Aaron: "You will have no inheritance in their land or have any share among them—I am your Share and your Inheritance among the Israelites. ²¹I am giving Levi's descendants every tenth part in Israel as their share for the work they do in the tent where I meet with you. ²²The other Israelites should never again come near the tent where I meet with you, else they'll be guilty of sin and die. ²³Only the Levites should do the work of the tent where I meet with you, and they'll be responsible for any failure on their part. This is a law forever for your descendants. They should inherit no property among the Israelites. ²⁴because I am giving the Levites as their share the tenth the Israelites bring the LORD; this is why I tell them they will own no property among the Israelites."

²⁵The LORD said to Moses: ²⁶"Speak to the Levites and tell them: When you take from the Israelites the tenth I'm giving you from them as your share, you should set aside a tenth of the tenth as the LORD's share. ²⁷Your gift will be credited to you as if it were grain from the threshing floor or wine flowing from the press. ²⁸Thus you will set aside a portion as the LORD's share from all the tenth parts you get from the Israelites, and the LORD's share of it you will give to Aaron the priest. ²⁹Of all the gifts given you, set aside the best part as a holy portion that goes to the LORD. ³⁰Tell them also: After

you set aside the best part of a gift, the rest should be considered the property of you Levites as if it were the produce from the threshing floor or winepress. ³¹and so you may eat it anywhere with your families, because it's your reward for your work at the tent where I meet with you. ³²When you have given the best part, you will not become guilty of sin because of it, nor will you be treating as unholy the holy things given by the Israelites; so you will not die."

Cleansing the Unclean

19 The LORD told Moses and Aaron: ¹"This is the regulation of the law the LORD has ordered: Tell the Israelites to get a perfect red cow, without a fault, that has never had a yoke on it. ²Give it to Eleazar the priest to take outside the camp, and they should butcher it in his presence. ³Eleazar the priest should take some of its blood with his finger and sprinkle it seven times toward the front of the tent where I meet with you. ⁴The cow should be burned while he watches; its hide, meat, and blood and the contents of the intestines should be burned. ⁵The priest should take cedar wood, hyssop, and a scarlet string and throw them on the burning cow. ⁶Then the priest should wash his clothes, bathe his body in water, and after that he may go into the camp, but the priest is still unclean till evening. ⁷The one who burns it should also wash his clothes in water, bathe his body in water, and be unclean till evening. ⁸A clean person should gather the ashes of the cow and put them in a clean place outside the camp to be used by the community of the Israelites in

¹⁹
9-10 Heb
9-13

the water that takes away ritual uncleanness. "The one who gathers the ashes of the cow should wash his clothes and be unclean till evening. This should be a law forever for the Israelites and for the stranger who lives among them.

"If you touch anyone's dead body, you will be unclean for seven days. "Cleanse yourself with the water on the third day and the seventh day, then you will be clean; but if you don't cleanse yourself on the third and the seventh day, you will not be clean. "Everyone who touches a dead person, the body of anyone who dies, and doesn't cleanse himself has made the LORD's tabernacle unclean; that person must be cut off from Israel—the water for uncleanness wasn't poured on him; he's unclean; his uncleanness is still on him.

"This is the law when anyone dies in a tent: Everyone who goes into the tent and everyone who is in the tent is unclean for seven days. "Every open container, one without a cover fastened on it, is unclean. "Everyone who in the open field touches someone who was killed by a sword or died naturally, or a human bone, or a grave, is unclean for seven days. "For such unclean persons take some ashes left by burning the sin offering, and pour fresh water on them in a container. "A clean person should take hyssop, dip it in the water, and sprinkle the tent, all the furnishings, all the persons who were there, anyone who touched the bone, the person who was killed or died naturally, or the grave. "The clean person should sprinkle the unclean on the third day and the seventh day, so cleansing him from sin by the seventh day. He should

wash his clothes, bathe in water, and in the evening he will be clean. "But anyone who becomes unclean and doesn't cleanse himself, that person must be cut off from the congregation because he has made the LORD's holy place unclean—the water for uncleanness wasn't poured on him; he's unclean. "This should be a law for them forever. The one who sprinkles the water for uncleanness should wash his clothes, while he who touches the water for uncleanness is unclean till evening. "Everything the unclean person touches is unclean, and the person who touches him is unclean till evening."

Water from the Rock

20 The whole community of Israel came into the wilderness of Zin in the first month, and the people stayed at Kadesh. Here Miriam died and was buried.

"The community was without water, and they gathered against Moses and Aaron. "and the people quarreled with Moses. "We wish we had died," they said, "when the other Israelites died before the LORD. "Why did you bring the LORD's congregation into this wilderness for us and our cattle to die here? "Why did you make us leave Egypt and bring us into this miserable place? It has no grain, figs, grapes, or pomegranates, and there's no water to drink."

"Moses and Aaron left the assembly and went to the entrance of the tent where God would meet with them. They went down on their faces, and the LORD's glory appeared to them.

"The LORD told Moses: "'You and your brother Aaron, take the rod, gather the community, and

while they watch you, tell the rock to give its water. From the rock you will produce water for them and let the community and their cattle drink."

"Moses took the rod from before the LORD as he was ordered. "Then Moses and Aaron had the congregation meet in front of the rock. "Listen, you rebels," he said to them: "must we get water for you out of this rock?" "Then Moses raised his hand and with the rod struck the rock twice, and lots of water gushed out, and the community and their cattle drank.

"But the LORD told Moses and Aaron: "Because you didn't trust Me enough to show the Israelites, before their very eyes, how holy I am, you will not take this congregation into the country I give them."

"This is the Water of Quarreling, where the Israelites quarreled with the LORD and He showed them He is holy.

Edom: "Don't Go Through My Country"

"From Kadesh Moses sent messengers to tell the king of Edom: "Your brother Israel says: You know all the hardships we've endured. "how our fathers went down to Egypt and we lived in Egypt a long time. The Egyptians mistreated us and our fathers. "We cried to the LORD, and He heard us and sent an angel who took us out of Egypt. Now we're here in Kadesh, a town on the edge of your territory. "Please let us go through your country. We'll not go through fields or vineyards or drink water from a well. We'll go on the king's road and not turn right or left till we've passed through your territory."

"But Edom answered them:

"Don't go through my country, or I'll come out against you with a sword."

"We'll go on the highway," the Israelites told him. "and if we or our cattle drink any of your water, we'll pay for it. There'll be no trouble; only let me walk through on foot."

"Don't come through," Edom said and he came out against them with a large, well-armed force. "When the Edomites refused to let Israel go through their territory, Israel turned away from them.

Aaron Dies

"The whole community of Israel left Kadesh and came to Mount Hor. "At Mount Hor on the border of Edom the LORD told Moses and Aaron: "Let Aaron be taken to rest with his people, since he will not go into the country I've given to Israel, because you rebelled against My order at the Water of Quarreling. "Take Aaron and his son Eleazar, and take them up Mount Hor. "Strip Aaron of his priestly clothes, and put them on his son Eleazar. Then Aaron will be taken and will die there."

"Moses did as the Lord ordered. While the whole community was watching, they went up Mount Hor. "Moses stripped Aaron of his priestly clothes and put them on his son Eleazar, and Aaron died there on top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain. "The whole community saw Aaron had died, and all the people of Israel mourned for Aaron 30 days.

Defeat of the Canaanites

21 When the Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negeb, heard Israel was coming

by way of Atharim, he fought with Israel and took some of them prisoners. Then Israel vowed to the LORD: "If You will put these people in our hands, we'll completely destroy their cities." The LORD listened to Israel and delivered the Canaanites to them, and Israel destroyed them and their cities, and so they called the place Destruction.

The Bronze Snake

Then they moved from Mount Hor on the Red Sea road to get around the country of Edom, but the people, feeling discouraged about the way, spoke against God and Moses: "Why did you make us leave Egypt to die in the desert? There is no bread or water, and we're sick of this miserable food!"

So the LORD sent poisonous snakes among the people. They bit the people, and many in Israel died. The people came to Moses. "We've sinned," they said, "by talking against the LORD and against you. Pray to the LORD to take the snakes away from us."

Moses prayed for the people.

"Make a snake," the LORD told Moses, "and put it on a pole. When anyone who is bitten looks at it, he will live."

Moses made a bronze snake and put it on a pole. When a snake bit a man, he looked at the bronze snake and stayed alive.

Israel Moves

The Israelites moved and camped at Oboth. "Leaving Oboth, they camped at Iye-abarim in the wilderness on the border of Moab, toward the east. From there they moved and camped in the Zered

valley. From there they moved and camped on the other side of the Arnon, that is, in the wilderness extending into the border of the Amorites; Arnon is Moab's border between Moab and the Amorites. This is why it says in the scroll of the LORD's battles: "... Waheb in Suphah and the valleys, the Arnon and the slopes of the valleys that extend to the site of Ar and touch the border of Moab."

From there they went to Well. This was the well about which the LORD said to Moses: "Gather the people, and I will give them water."

Then Israel sang this song:

"Fill up, O well!

Sing to the well,

the well the princes sunk,

which the nobles of the people dug

with their scepters and their staffs,

a gift from the wilderness."

From the well they moved to Nahaliel, from Nahaliel to Bamoth, and from Bamoth to the valley in the plain of Moab, below the heights of Pisgah overlooking the wilderness.

Sihon and Og

Then Israel sent messengers to tell Sihon, king of the Amorites: "Let me go through your country. We will not turn into a field or vineyard or drink water from a well. We will go along the king's road till we've passed through your country."

But Sihon didn't let Israel go through his country. Sihon gathered his whole army and went out into the wilderness against Israel, and coming to Jahaz, he fought against

⁵The omitted first part of the sentence may have been: The Lord took . . .

Israel. ²⁴But Israel cut him down with the sword and took his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as the Ammonites, the Ammonite border being strong. ²⁵Israel took all those towns and lived in all the towns of the Amorites, especially in Heshbon and all its suburbs. ²⁶Heshbon was the city of Sihon, the Amorite king. (He had fought against the former king of Moab and had taken from him all his territory up to the Arnon.)

²⁷This is why the poets say:

“Come! Let Heshbon be rebuilt!
Let Sihon’s city be restored,

²⁸because fire came out of Heshbon,
a flame from Sihon’s city;
it burned up Ar of Moab,
the lords of the high places of Arnon.

²⁹Woe to you, Moab!

You people have perished whose god is Chemosh—
he made his sons fugitives
and his daughters captives of Sihon, king of the Amorites.

³⁰But we threw them down—
Heshbon perished as far as Dibon.
We laid waste till fire spread to Medeba.”

³¹Israel occupied the country of the Amorites. ³²After Moses sent men to spy out Jazer, they captured its suburbs and drove out the Amorites who were there. ³³Then they turned and went up the road to Bashan, when Og, king of Bashan, with his whole army came out against them at Edrei and fought with them.

³⁴“Don’t be afraid of him,” the LORD told Moses: “I’m putting him, all his people, and his country in your hands. Do to him what you did to Sihon, the Amorite king, who lived

in Heshbon.” ³⁵They struck down him, his sons, and all his people, so that not one of them escaped, and they took his country.

Balaam Refuses to Come to Moab

22 Then the Israelites moved and camped on the plains of Moab, east of the Jordan, opposite Jericho.

²Balak, Zippor’s son, saw everything Israel did to the Amorites, ³and Moab was very much afraid of the people because there were so many of them. Moab dreaded the Israelites. ⁴And Moab told the elders of Midian, “Now this mass of people will lick up everything around us like an ox licking up the grass in the field.”

At that time Balak, Zippor’s son, was king of Moab. ⁵He sent messengers to Balaam, Beor’s son, at Pethor, in his people’s country near the Euphrates, to call him, saying: “There is a people that came out of Egypt. They have spread out all over the country and are settling right in front of me. ⁶Please come now and curse this people for me, because they are too strong for me. Then perhaps I can defeat them and drive them out of the country, because I know he whom you bless is blessed and he whom you curse is cursed.”

⁷The elders of Moab and the elders of Midian left, and with money for his magic in their hands they came to Balaam and told him what Balak said.

“Stay here tonight,” he told them, “and I will report to you what the LORD tells me.” So the princes of Moab stayed with Balaam.

⁸Coming to Balaam, God asked, “Who are these men with you?”

⁹Balaam answered God. “Balak,

Zippor's son, king of Moab, sent them to tell me: "Look, this people came from Egypt, and they are spreading out all over the country. Come now and curse them for me. Perhaps I can fight them and drive them away."

¹²"Don't go with them," God told Balaam, "and don't curse the people, because they are blessed."

¹³When Balaam got up in the morning, he told Balak's princes, "Go home to your country, because the LORD has refused to let me go with you."

¹⁴The princes of Moab left and came to Balak. "Balaam refuses to come with us," they said.

Balaam's Donkey

¹⁵Balak again sent men, this time more in number and of higher rank than the others. ¹⁶When they came to Balaam, they told him, "Balak, Zippor's son, says, 'Don't let anything keep you from coming to me, 'because I will very richly reward you and do anything you ask me, but please come and curse these people for me.'"

¹⁸"If Balak gives me his palace full of silver and gold," Balaam answered Balak's servants, "I couldn't go against the directions of the LORD my God to do anything, little or great. ¹⁹But now you too stay here tonight, and I'll find out what else the LORD may tell me."

²⁰That night God came to Balaam and told him, "If the men came to call for you, leave and go with them, but do only what I tell you."

²¹When Balaam got up in the morning, he saddled his donkey and left with the princes of Moab.

²²But God became very angry with him for going, and the LORD's angel stood on the road to oppose him as

he rode his donkey, and his two servants were with him. ²³When the donkey saw the LORD's angel standing on the road with his drawn sword in his hand, the donkey turned off the road and went into the field, but Balaam hit the donkey to get her back on the road. ²⁴Then the LORD's angel stood on a narrow path between vineyards where there was a wall on each side. ²⁵Seeing the LORD's angel, the donkey pressed against the wall and squeezed Balaam's foot against the wall, and he hit her again. ²⁶Then the LORD's angel moved on and stood in a narrow place where there was no room to turn right or left. ²⁷When the donkey saw the LORD's angel, she lay down under Balaam, and Balaam became very angry and hit the donkey with his stick.

²⁸Then the LORD gave the donkey the ability to speak, and she asked Balaam, "What did I do to you that you should hit me three times?"

²⁹"You made a fool of me!" Balaam told the donkey. "If I only had a sword in my hand, I'd kill you now."

³⁰"Am I not your donkey," the donkey asked Balaam, "that you've always ridden till today? Have I been in the habit of doing this to you?"

"No," he answered.

³¹Then the LORD opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the LORD's angel standing on the road with his drawn sword in his hand. He bowed down with his face on the ground and worshiped.

³²"Why did you strike your donkey these three times?" the LORD's angel asked him. "You see, I came out to oppose you because you're going headlong against me. ³³The donkey saw me and turned away

from me these three times. If she had not turned away from me, I would have killed you by now and kept her alive."

"I have sinned," Balaam told the LORD's angel. "I didn't know you were standing on the road opposing me. And now, if you don't like this, I'll go back."

"Go with the men," the LORD's angel told Balaam, "but say only what I tell you." So Balaam went with Balak's princes.

Balaam Disappoints the King of Moab

"When Balak heard Balaam had come, he went out to meet him at Ar of Moab, near the Arnon, at the end of the border. "Didn't I send men to you to call for you?" Balak asked Balaam. "Why didn't you come to me? Am I really not able to reward you?"

"You see I have come to you now," Balaam told Balak. "But can I really say anything? I can say only what God puts in my mouth."

"Balaam went with Balak, and when they came to Kiriath-huzoth, Balak sacrificed cattle and sheep and sent some of them to Balaam and the princes who were with him.

"The next morning Balak took Balaam and brought him up to High Places of Baal,^b and from there he could see the nearest part of the people.

23 "Build me seven altars here," Balaam told Balak, "and get seven bulls and seven rams ready for me here." Balak did what Balaam told him, and Balak

and Balaam sacrificed a bull and a ram on each altar.

"Stand beside your burnt offering," Balaam told Balak, "while I'm gone. Perhaps the LORD will come to meet me, and whatever He shows me I will tell you." Then he went to a bare high place.¹

"God met Balaam, who said to Him, "I have prepared the seven altars and sacrificed a bull and a ram on each altar."

"The LORD put a message into Balaam's mouth. "Go back to Balak," He said, "and tell him as follows—"

"He went back to him and found him and all Moab's princes standing by his burnt offering. Then Balaam spoke his message:

"Balak got me from Aram,
Moab's king from the eastern hills:
'Come and curse Jacob for me;
come and make God angry with Israel.'

"How can I curse whom God hasn't cursed?

And how can I bring His anger on those with whom the LORD isn't angry?

"I see them from the top of cliffs,
I look at them from the hills.
They are a people living by themselves,
who do not count themselves among the nations.

"Who can count Jacob—they're like dust;
or number Israel—they're like sand?

May I die like the righteous;
may my end be like theirs."

"What did you do to me?" Balak asked Balaam. "I got you here to

^bHeb Bamoth-baal

¹Heb uncertain; Gk he went to ask God

curse my enemies, and look, you blessed them."

¹²"Must I not faithfully tell what the LORD puts in my mouth?" he answered him.

Balaam Blesses Israel Again

¹³"Please come with me to another place," Balak told him, "where you can see them. You will see only a part, and not all of them. From there curse them for me."

¹⁴He took him to the Field of Watchers on top of Pisgah, where he built seven altars and sacrificed a bull and a ram on each altar.

¹⁵Then Balaam told Balak, "Stand here by your sacrifice while I go to meet Him over there."

¹⁶The LORD met Balaam and gave him a message to tell, and He added, "Go back to Balak and tell him this."

¹⁷He came to him and found him standing by his sacrifice, and Moab's princes with him. "What did the LORD say?" Balak asked him.

¹⁸Then he spoke his message:

"Come, Balak, and listen;
Hear me, Zippor's son.

¹⁹God is not a man who lies
Or a mortal who changes His mind.

When He says something, will
He not do it?

When He promises, will He not
keep it?

²⁰You see, I was told to bless—
He has blessed, and I can't
change it.

²¹No sorrow is in store for Jacob:
He sees no misery for Israel.
The LORD their God is with
them,
and His royal majesty is among
them.

²²When God took them out of
Egypt,

they had the strength of a wild
bull.

²³There can be no omen against
Jacob
nor incantation against Israel.
Now it is said of Jacob and of
Israel:

'What has God done!'

²⁴'What a people! They stand like a
mature lion
and have the bearing of a lion
that doesn't lie down till it eats
the prey
and drinks the blood of the
slain.'

²⁵Balak told Balaam, "If you won't
curse them, then don't bless them!"

²⁶"Didn't I tell you," Balaam
answered Balak, "I must do every-
thing the LORD says?"

²⁷"Come," Balak told Balaam, "I'll
take you to another place; perhaps
God will think it's right if from there
you curse them for me."

²⁸So Balak took Balaam to the top
of Peor, which overlooks the
wasteland.

²⁹"Build me seven altars here,"
Balaam told Balak, "and get seven
bulls and seven rams ready for me
here."

³⁰Balak did what Balaam told him,
and he sacrificed a bull and a ram
on each altar.

24 When Balaam saw that the
LORD wanted to bless
Israel, he didn't look for omens as he
had done before but turned toward
the desert.

Balaam looked and saw Israel
camping tribe by tribe, and God's
Spirit came on him, 'and he spoke
his message:

"Balaam, Beor's son, is speak-
ing,
the man with opened eyes is
speaking,

‘he who hears God’s words is speaking;

he who has a vision from the Almighty
falls down, and his eyes are opened:

¹⁴How beautiful are your tents,
Jacob,

and your dwelling places, Israel,

¹⁵like valleys spread out,

like gardens by a river,

like aloes the LORD planted,

like cedars by the water.

¹⁶He irrigates with his buckets,

and his seed has plenty of water.

His king will rise higher than
Agag,

and his kingdom will be raised
high.

¹⁷When God led him out of Egypt,
he had the strength of a wild
bull.

He will devour nations who are
his enemies,

crushing their bones

and piercing them with his
arrows.

¹⁸He crouches and lies down like a
lion

and like a mature lion—who will
rouse him?

Blessed is he who blesses you,

and cursed is he who curses
you!”

Balaam’s Prophecies

¹⁹Balak got very angry with
Balaam, and he clapped his hands.

“I called you to curse my enemies.”

Balak told Balaam, “and here you
have blessed them three times.

²⁰So hurry on back home. I intended to
reward you richly, but you see, the
LORD has kept you from being
rewarded.”

²¹Balaam answered Balak:

“Didn’t I already tell the mes-
sengers you sent me: ²²‘If Balak

gives me his palace full of silver and
gold, I can’t go against the LORD’s
instructions and of myself do
anything good or bad; I must say
what the LORD tells me?’ “And
now look, I’m going back to my
people. Come, let me tell you what
these people will do to your people in
the future.” ²³Then he spoke his
message:

“Balaam, Beor’s son, is speak-
ing,

the man with clear eyes is
speaking,

²⁴he who hears God’s words is
speaking;

he knows what the Most High
knows.

He has a vision from the Al-
mighty

and falls down, and his eyes are
opened:

²⁵I see Him who is not here now;
I behold Him who will come
later.

A Star will come from Jacob,

a Scepter will rise from Israel;

He will smash Moab’s head

and destroy all the sons of Sheth.

²⁶Edom will be occupied,

Seir will be dispossessed by its
enemies,

and so Israel will show its
power.

²⁷He will rule from Jacob
and destroy those who escape
from Ar.”

²⁸Then he looked at Amalek and
spoke his message:

“Amalek was first among the
nations,

but in the end he will perish.”

²⁹Then he looked at the Kenites
and spoke his message:

“Your home endures,

your nest is a rock,

³⁰but it will be burned, O Kenite,

when Asshur takes you away as a prisoner."

²¹Again he spoke his message:

"A people will gather from the north;ⁱ

²²ships will come from the coast of Cyprus;

they will make Asshur suffer,
and they will make Eber suffer,
but they too will perish."

²³Then Balaam left to go back home, and Balak also went his way.

Israel Worships Baal

25 While Israel was staying at Shittim, the people started sinning sexually with Moab's women. ¹Who invited the people to the sacrifices to their gods, where the people ate as they worshiped their gods.

²As the Israelites paired off for the worship of the Baal at Peor, the LORD got very angry with Israel. ³"Take all the leaders of the people," the LORD told Moses, "and hang them up in the light of the sun for the LORD, to turn the LORD's fierce anger away from Israel."

⁴So Moses told the judges of Israel, "Each of you, kill those of your men who have paired themselves off for the Baal at Peor."

⁵Just then one of the Israelites came and brought to his kinsmen a Midianite woman in plain view of Moses and the whole community of Israel as they were weeping at the entrance of the tent where God met with them.

⁶When Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he left the congregation and, taking a spear in his hand, ⁷went after the Israelite into the bedroom and drove the spear through both of

them, through the man and the woman's belly; and so the plague against the Israelites was stopped. ⁸But there were 24,000 who died in the plague.

⁹Then the LORD told Moses: ¹⁰"Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, turned My anger away from Israel when he showed zeal for me among them, so that in My jealous anger I didn't completely destroy Israel. ¹¹And so announce: I'm making a covenant with him that all may go well with him: ¹²He and his descendants after him will by this covenant be priests forever because he was zealous for his God and atoned for Israel."

¹³The name of the slain Israelite the one killed with the Midianite woman, was Zimri, the son of Salu a leader of a clan of Simeon. ¹⁴The name of the Midianite woman who was killed was Cozbi, the daughter of Zur, who was the head of the people of a Midianite clan.

¹⁵The LORD told Moses ¹⁶"Attack the Midianites and defeat them ¹⁷because they attacked you with their vicious scheming by which they tricked you in the affair of Peor and in the matter of Cozbi the daughter of the prince of Midian, one of the women killed on the day of the plague after the Peor affair."

The Second Census

26 When the plague was over the LORD told Moses and Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest: ¹"Take a census of the whole community of Israel, of those who are twenty years old and up according to their clans, everyone in

ⁱHeb difficult; or "Woe! Who will live since God has appointed it?"

Israel who can serve as a soldier."

"Moses and Eleazar the priest told them on the plains of Moab near the Jordan opposite Jericho: "'Those twenty years old and up.'" as the LORD had ordered Moses and the Israelites when they came from Egypt.

"Reuben was Israel's firstborn. Reuben's descendants: from Hanoch the family of the Hanochites; from Pallu the family of the Palluites; "from Hezron the family of the Hezronites; from Carmi the family of the Carmites. "These were Reuben's families, totaling 43,730.

"Pallu's son was Eliab, "and Eliab's sons were Nemuel, Dathan and Abiram. Dathan and Abiram were the men whom the community called and who quarreled with Moses and Aaron and were in Korah's group when they quarreled with the LORD: "and the ground opened its mouth and swallowed them with Korah when his group died as the fire consumed 250 men. And they were a warning. "But Korah's sons didn't die.

"Simeon's descendants by their families: from Nemuel the family of the Nemuelites; from Jamin the family of the Jaminites; "from Jachin the family of the Jachinites; "from Zerah the family of the Zerahites; from Shaul the family of the Shaulites. "These were Simeon's families, totaling 22,200.

"Gad's descendants by their families: from Zephon the family of the Zephonites; from Haggi the family of the Haggites; from Shuni the family of the Shunites; "from Ozni the family of the Oznites; from Eri the family of the Erites; "from Arod the family of the Arodites; from Areli the family of the

Arelites. "These were the families of Gad's sons, totaling 40,500.

"Judah's sons were Er and Onan; but Er and Onan died in Canaan. "Judah's descendants by their families: from Shelah the family of the Shelanites; from Perez the family of the Perezites; from Zerah the family of the Zerahites; "the descendants of Perez: from Hezron the family of the Hezronites; from Hamul the family of the Hamulites. "These were Judah's families, totaling 76,500.

"Issachar's descendants by their families: from Tola the family of the Tolaites; from Puah the family of the Punites; "from Jashub the family of the Jashubites; from Shimron the family of the Shimronites. "These were Issachar's families, totaling 64,300.

"Zebulun's descendants by their families: from Sered the family of the Sardites; from Elon the family of the Elonites; from Jahleel the family of the Jahleelites. "These were Zebulun's families, totaling 60,500.

"Joseph's sons by their tribes: Manasseh and Ephraim. "Manasseh's descendants: from Machir the family of the Machirites, and Machir was also the father of Gilead; from Gilead the family of the Gileadites. "Gilead's descendants: from Iezer the family of the Iezerites; from Helek the family of the Helekites; "from Asriel the family of the Asrielites; from Shechem the family of the Shechemites; "from Shemida the family of the Shemidaites; from Hephher the family of the Hephherites. "Hephher's son Zelophehad had no sons but only daughters, and the names of Zelophehad's daughters were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

³⁴These were Manasseh's families, totaling 52,700.

³⁵Ephraim's descendants by their families: from Shuthelah the family of the Shuthalites; from Becher the family of the Bachrites; from Tahan the family of the Tahanites.

³⁶Shuthelah's descendants: from Eran the family of the Eranites.

³⁷These were Ephraim's families, totaling 32,500. These were Joseph's descendants by their families.

³⁸Benjamin's descendants by their families: from Bela the family of the Belaites; from Ashbel the family of the Ashbelites; from Ahiram the family of the Ahiramites; ³⁹from Shupham the family of the Shuphamites; from Hupham the family of the Huphamites. ⁴⁰Bela's descendants were Ard and Naaman; from Ard the family of the Ardites and from Naaman the family of the Naamanites. ⁴¹These were Benjamin's descendants by their families, totaling 45,600.

⁴²Dan's descendants by their families: from Shuham the family of the Shuhamites. These were Dan's families by their families. ⁴³All the families of the Shuhamites totaled 64,400.

⁴⁴Asher's descendants by their families: from Imnah the family of the Imnites; from Ishvi the family of the Ishvites; from Beriah the family of the Beriites. ⁴⁵Beriah's descendants: from Heber the family of the Heberites; from Malchiel the family of the Malchielites. ⁴⁶The name of Asher's daughter was Serah. ⁴⁷These were Asher's families, totaling 53,400.

⁴⁸Naphtali's descendants by their families: from Jahzeel the family of the Jahzeelites; from Guni the family of the Gunites; ⁴⁹from Jezer the family of the Jezerites; from Shillem

the family of the Shillemites. ⁵⁰These were Naphtali's families by their families, totaling 45,400.

⁵¹The total number of Israelites was 601,730.

⁵²Then the LORD told Moses: ⁵³"The land should be divided as an inherited possession among these according to the number of persons.

⁵⁴"Give a large part to a large tribe and a small part to a small one. The number of people in a tribe should determine how much each gets.

⁵⁵But the land should be divided by lot, and the people should get it according to the names in their fathers' tribes. ⁵⁶The lot should decide what part the large and the small tribe should get."

⁵⁷The total of the Levites by their families was as follows: from Gershon the family of the Gershonites; from Kohath the family of the Kohathites; from Merari the family of the Merarites. ⁵⁸Levi's families were the family of the Libnites, the family of the Hebronites, the family of the Mahlites, the family of the Mushites, the family of the Korahites. Kohath was the father of Amram. ⁵⁹The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, Levi's daughter, who was born to Levi in Egypt. She and Amram were the parents of Aaron, Moses, and their sister Miriam. ⁶⁰Aaron was the father of Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. ⁶¹but Nadab and Abihu died when they offered strange fire before the LORD ⁶²Their total was 23,000, counting all males a month old and up. They were not counted with the other Israelites, because they were given no share of the property among the other Israelites.

⁶³These were the people whom Moses and Eleazar the priest

counted when they counted the Israelites in the plains of Moab near the Jordan opposite Jericho. "Among these there wasn't a single one Moses and Aaron the priest had counted when they counted the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai. "because the LORD had told them: "They must die in the wilderness." So not one of them was left except Caleb, Jephunneh's son, and Joshua, Nun's son.

Daughters Get Their Father's Property

27 Then came forward the daughters of Zelophehad son of Hopher, son of Gilead, son of Machir, son of Manasseh, members of the families of Manasseh, Joseph's son. His daughters' names were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. ²They stepped before Moses, Eleazar the priest, the leaders, and the whole community at the entrance of the tent where God met with them. ³"Our father died in the wilderness," they said. "He was not in the crowd that banded together against the LORD in Korah's company, but he died for his own sin. He had no sons. ⁴Why should our father's name be removed from his family just because he had no son? Give us property among our father's relatives."

⁵Moses brought their case before the LORD. ⁶The LORD told Moses: ⁷"What Zelophehad's daughters say is right. By all means give them an inherited property among their father's relatives, and have their father's property go to them. ⁸And tell the Israelites: If a man dies and has no son, you should have his property go to his daughter. ⁹And if he has no

daughter, give his property to his brothers. ¹⁰And if he has no brothers, give his property to his father's brothers. ¹¹If his father has no brothers, give his property to his closest blood relative in his family, and he should take it. This should be the legal custom for Israel, as the LORD ordered Moses."

Joshua Will Succeed Moses

¹²The LORD told Moses: "Go up a mountain in the Abarim range, and see the country I give Israel. ¹³When you have seen it, you too will be taken to your people as your brother Aaron was. ¹⁴because you went against My command in the wilderness of Zin and before the very eyes of the quarreling community failed to show them at the water how holy I am." This was the Water of Quarreling at Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.

¹⁵Moses answered the LORD: ¹⁶"May the LORD, the God from whom come the spirits of all beings, appoint someone over the community ¹⁷to come and go before them and lead them out and bring them in, so that the LORD's community will not be like sheep without a shepherd."

¹⁸"Take Joshua, Nun's son," the LORD told Moses, "a man who has the Spirit, and lay your hand on him. ¹⁹Have him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole community, and while they're watching, commission him. ²⁰Give him some of your authority, so that the whole community of Israel will listen to him. ²¹He should stand before Eleazar the priest, who will use the Urim before the LORD to decide what is right, so that by His direction he and all Israel, the whole

²⁷
¹⁷ Mt 9:36
^{Mk 6:34}

community, should come and go."

²²Moses did as the LORD ordered him. He took Joshua and had him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole community. ²³He laid his hands on him and commissioned him as the LORD had said through Moses.

The Regular Sacrifices

28 The LORD told Moses: "Order the Israelites and tell them: See to it that you bring Me My food offerings, with a pleasing fragrance made by fire, at the appointed times. ²Tell them to bring the LORD these offerings made by fire: two flawless yearling kids or lambs as a regular daily burnt offering. ³Offer one in the morning and the other in the twilight of the evening ⁴with a food offering of a tenth of an ephah of flour mixed with a quarter hin of olive oil; ⁵this was the regular burnt offering made on Mount Sinai, a sacrifice by fire with a fragrance pleasing the LORD. ⁶With it there should be a drink offering of a quarter hin for each animal; pour it out in the holy place, an offering of wine for the LORD. ⁷Offer the second animal in the twilight, with the same food and drink offering as in the morning, as a sacrifice made by fire with a fragrance pleasing the LORD.

⁸"On the sabbath day two flawless yearlings and two tenths of an ephah of flour mixed with olive oil as a food offering and its drink offering; ⁹this burnt offering is for every sabbath day in addition to the regular burnt offering with its drink offering.

¹⁰"On the first of every month bring the LORD a burnt offering of two young bulls, one ram, seven

flawless yearling kids or lambs ¹²with each bull a food offering of three tenths of a measure of flour mixed with olive oil; with each ram a food offering of two tenths of a measure of flour mixed with olive oil; ¹³and with each yearling a food offering of a tenth of a measure of flour mixed with olive oil—a burnt offering with a pleasant fragrance a sacrifice by fire for the LORD ¹⁴also drink offerings of half a hin of wine with each bull, a third of a hin with each ram, and a fourth of a hin with each yearling. This is the burnt offering for every first of the month throughout the year. ¹⁵In addition to the regular burnt offering and its drink offering, sacrifice one he-goat to the LORD to take away sin.

¹⁶"On the fourteenth day of the first month is the LORD's Passover ¹⁷and on the fifteenth of this month there shall be the festival when for seven days bread without yeast is eaten. ¹⁸On the first day have a holy meeting, and don't do any regular work on it. ¹⁹but bring the LORD a burnt offering, a sacrifice by fire: two young bulls, one ram and seven yearlings—make sure they're all flawless. ²⁰With them bring food offerings of fine flour mixed with oil: three tenths of a measure with each bull, two tenths with each ram, ²¹and one tenth with each of the seven yearlings ²²and one he-goat to take away sin to atone for you. ²³Offer these in addition to the morning burnt offering, which is the regular burnt offering. ²⁴Offer these each of the seven days as a food offering, a sacrifice by fire with a fragrance pleasing the LORD, in addition to the regular burnt offering and its drink offering. ²⁵On the seventh day

have a holy meeting, and don't do any regular work on it.

²⁶“On the day of the firstfruits, your Festival of Weeks, when you offer the LORD your new grain, have a holy meeting, and don't do any regular work on it. ²⁷As a burnt offering with a fragrance pleasing the LORD bring two young bulls, one ram, and seven yearlings, ²⁸with their food offering of flour mixed with olive oil: three tenths of a measure with each bull, two tenths with each ram, ²⁹and one tenth with each of the seven yearlings; ³⁰and one he-goat to atone for you. ³¹Bring them—be sure they're flawless—with their drink offerings, in addition to the regular burnt offering with its food offering.

29 “On the first day of the seventh month have a holy meeting, and don't do any regular work on it, but blow the trumpet that day. ¹As a burnt offering with a fragrance pleasing the LORD bring one young bull, one ram, seven flawless yearlings, ²with their food offerings of flour mixed with olive oil: three tenths of a measure with the bull, two tenths with the ram, ³and one tenth with each of the seven yearlings. ⁴and also one he-goat as a sacrifice to take away sins and atone for you. ⁵in addition to the burnt offering on the first of the month with its food offering, and the regular burnt offering with its food offerings and their drink offerings as they are prescribed, as a pleasant fragrance, a sacrifice by fire for the LORD.

⁶“On the tenth day of this seventh month have a holy meeting; don't eat anything, and don't do any work. ⁷As a burnt offering with a pleasant

fragrance bring the LORD one young bull, one ram, seven yearlings—be sure they're flawless— ⁸with their food offerings of flour mixed with olive oil: three tenths of a measure with the bull, two tenths with the ram, ⁹and one tenth with each of the seven yearlings, ¹⁰and one he-goat as a sacrifice for sin, in addition to the sacrifice that takes away sin and atones for it, and the regular burnt offering with its food offerings and their drink offerings.

¹¹“On the fifteenth day of the seventh month have a holy meeting; don't do any regular work, but for seven days celebrate a festival for the LORD. ¹²As a burnt offering, a sacrifice by fire with a fragrance pleasing the LORD, bring thirteen young bulls, two rams, and fourteen yearlings—they must be flawless—¹³with their food offerings of flour mixed with olive oil: three tenths of a measure with each of the thirteen bulls, two tenths with each of the two rams, ¹⁴one tenth with each of the fourteen yearlings; ¹⁵and one he-goat as a sacrifice for sin in addition to the regular burnt offering with its food offering and drink offering.

¹⁶“On the second day twelve young bulls, two rams, fourteen flawless yearlings, ¹⁷and their food offering and drink offerings with the bulls, rams, and yearlings in the prescribed quantity; ¹⁸and one he-goat as a sacrifice for sin in addition to the regular burnt offering with its food offering and drink offerings.

¹⁹“On the third day eleven young bulls, two rams, fourteen flawless yearlings, ²⁰and their food offering and drink offerings with the bulls, rams, and yearlings in the prescribed quantity; ²¹and one he-goat as a sacrifice for sin in addition to

the regular burnt offering with its food offering and drink offering.

²¹“On the fourth day ten young bulls, two rams, fourteen flawless yearlings, ²²and their food offering and drink offerings with the bulls, rams, and yearlings in the prescribed quantity; ²³and one he-goat as a sacrifice for sin in addition to the regular burnt offering with its food offering and drink offering.

²⁴“On the fifth day nine young bulls, two rams, fourteen flawless yearlings, ²⁵and their food offering and drink offerings with the bulls, rams, and yearlings in the prescribed quantity; ²⁶and one he-goat as a sacrifice for sin in addition to the regular burnt offering with its food offering and drink offering.

²⁷“On the sixth day eight young bulls, two rams, fourteen flawless yearlings, ²⁸and their food offering and drink offerings with the bulls, rams, and yearlings in the prescribed quantity; ²⁹and one he-goat as a sacrifice for sin in addition to the regular burnt offering with its food offering and drink offering.

³⁰“On the seventh day seven young bulls, two rams, fourteen flawless yearlings, ³¹and their food offering and drink offerings with the bulls, rams, and yearlings in the prescribed quantity; ³²and one he-goat as a sacrifice for sin in addition to the regular burnt offering with its food offering and drink offering.

³³“On the eighth day have a festival gathering, and don't do any regular work. ³⁴As a burnt offering, a sacrifice by fire with a pleasant fragrance, bring the LORD one young bull, one ram, seven flawless yearlings, ³⁵and their food offering and drink offerings with the bull, the ram, and the yearlings in the prescribed quantity; ³⁶and one

he-goat as a sacrifice for sin in addition to the regular burnt offering and its food offering and drink offering.

³⁷“Offer these to the LORD on your appointed festivals in addition to what you vow or bring voluntarily as your burnt offerings, food offerings, drink offerings, and peace offerings.”

³⁸“Moses spoke to the Israelites just as the LORD ordered him.

Vows

30 Moses told the leaders of the tribes of Israel: “This is what the LORD has ordered: ¹When a man makes a vow to the LORD or swears to deny himself, he must not break his word but do just as he promised.

²When a woman makes a vow to the LORD or promises to deny herself, while she is a young girl in her father's home, ³and her father hears about her vow or her promise to deny herself but he says nothing to her, all her vows and every promise to deny herself must be kept. ⁴But if the day he hears of it her father tells her she cannot keep such promises, none of her vows or promises to deny herself must be kept, and the LORD will forgive her because her father forbade her. ⁵If she gets married while she is bound by her vows or a rash promise to deny herself, ⁶and her husband hears of it but doesn't say anything to her the day he hears of it, her vows and her promise to deny herself must be kept. ⁷But if the day her husband hears of it he tells his wife she cannot keep what she promised, he cancels the vows that are on her and her rash promise to deny herself, and the LORD will forgive her. ⁸But a widow or a

divorced woman must keep her vow and any promise to deny herself. "If in her husband's home a woman makes a vow or promise with an oath to deny herself "and her husband hears of it but is silent and doesn't forbid her to keep them, she must keep all her vows and all her promises to deny herself. "But if the day he hears of them her husband cancels them, she doesn't have to keep anything she said in her vows or her promises to deny herself—her husband has canceled them, and the LORD will forgive her. "In regard to any vow or oath to deny herself her husband decides whether she keeps it or not. "But if her husband says nothing at all to her from day to day, he makes all her vows and promises to deny herself binding; he confirms them by saying nothing to her the day he hears of them. "But if after hearing of them he cancels them, he is responsible for any wrong she has done."

"These are the laws the LORD gave Moses to decide matters between a man and his wife, between a father and his daughter while she's a girl in her father's home.

Israel Punishes Midian

31 The LORD told Moses: "Take vengeance on the Midianites for the Israelites, and after that you will be taken away to be with your ancestors."

"Moses told the people: "Arm part of your men to serve as soldiers, and attack Midian and take the LORD's vengeance on Midian. "From every tribe of Israel send a thousand men into the fighting."

"From the thousands of Israel a thousand men were taken from each

tribe—12,000 men armed for war. "Then Moses sent them—a thousand from each tribe—into battle with Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the priest, holding in his hands the holy instruments and the trumpets for the alarm. "They fought against Midian, as the LORD ordered Moses, and killed all their men; "with the rest who were slain they killed the kings of Midian, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba—the five kings of Midian. They also killed Balaam, Beor's son, with the sword. "The Israelites captured the women and children of the Midianites, took all their animals, herds, and wealth as spoils, "and burned all the cities where they lived and all their camps. "They took all the spoils and all the people and animals they had captured "and brought the captives, the animals they had captured, and the spoils to Moses, Eleazar, and the community of Israel at the camp on the plains of Moab beside the Jordan opposite Jericho.

"Moses, Eleazar the priest, and all the leaders of the community went outside the camp to meet them. "And Moses got angry with the officers of the army, the captains of thousands and of hundreds, who were coming from the fighting. "Did you keep all the women alive?" Moses asked them. "Why, they were the ones who at Balaam's advice got the Israelites to be unfaithful to the LORD in the affair of Peor so that a plague came on the LORD's community. "Now then, kill every boy among the children and every woman who has had sex relations with a man. "but keep alive for yourselves every girl who hasn't had sex relations. "Every one of you who killed anyone

and everyone who touched a dead person must camp outside the camp seven days: you and your captives must cleanse yourselves on the third and the seventh day. ²⁰Also cleanse all clothes, everything made of leather, goats' hair, or wood."

²¹Eleazar the priest told the soldiers who came from the battle: "This is the rule of the law the LORD gave as an order to Moses: ²²The gold, silver, copper, iron, tin, and lead, ²³everything that can stand fire, put through fire to make it clean. Otherwise cleansing must be done by the water used for impurity; everything that can't stand fire put through the water. ²⁴On the seventh day wash your clothes and be clean; then you may come into the camp."

²⁵The LORD told Moses: ²⁶"You and Eleazar the priest and the leaders of the families of the community, find out how many people and animals you captured, ²⁷and divide what you took between the soldiers who fought and all the rest of the community. ²⁸From what belongs to the soldiers who fought, set aside for the LORD one out of every five hundred of the persons, cattle, donkeys, and flocks. ²⁹Take it from their half, and give it to Eleazar the priest as a gift to the LORD. ³⁰From Israel's half take one out of every fifty persons, cattle, donkeys, flocks, and all other animals, and give them to the Levites who do the work of the LORD's tabernacle."

³¹Moses and Eleazar the priest did just as the LORD ordered Moses. ³²All that was still there of the spoils the soldiers had taken totaled 675,000 sheep and goats, ³³72,000 cattle, ³⁴61,000 donkeys, ³⁵and 32,000 girls who hadn't had sex

relations. ³⁶The half share of the men who fought amounted to 337,500 sheep and goats, ³⁷and the LORD's share of these was 67 ³⁸36,000 cattle, of which the LORD share was 72; ³⁹30,500 donkeys, of which the LORD's share was 6 ⁴⁰and 16,000 persons, of which the LORD's share was 32 persons. ⁴¹Moses gave the LORD's share to Eleazar the priest as the LORD ordered Moses.

⁴²From Israel's half share the Moses separated from that of the soldiers, ⁴³that is, the community half, which was 337,500 sheep and goats, ⁴⁴36,000 cattle, ⁴⁵30,500 donkeys, ⁴⁶and 16,000 persons. ⁴⁷Moses took away one out of every 50 of the persons and of the animals and gave them to the Levites who did the work of the LORD's tabernacle, as the LORD ordered Moses.

⁴⁸The regimental officers, the captains of thousands and hundreds, came to Moses. ⁴⁹"Your servants have counted all the soldiers under our command," the told Moses, "and not one of us is missing." ⁵⁰So we brought the LORD gifts of what each one found in articles of gold: armlets, bracelets, seal rings, earrings, and necklaces, to atone for us before the LORD."

⁵¹Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold from them, all kinds of specially made articles. ⁵²All the gold the captains of thousands and hundreds gave the LORD weighed 16,750 shekels. ⁵³Every one of the soldiers had taken spoils for himself. ⁵⁴Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold from the captains of thousands and hundreds and brought it to the tent where God met with them, to remind the LORD of Israel.

2½ Tribes

32 The Tribes of Reuben and Gad had many cows and sheep, and when they saw that the land of Jazer and Gilead was a good place for livestock, ¹the tribes of Gad and Reuben came and said to Moses and Eleazar the priest and the other leaders of the community: ²"Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon, ³the land the LORD conquered for the community of Israel, is a good place for cows and sheep, and we, your servants, have livestock. ⁴If you are kind to us," they added, ⁵"let your servants be given this land as their own. Don't move us across the Jordan."

⁶"While the other Israelites go to war," Moses asked the tribes of Gad and Reuben, ⁷"are you going to stay here? ⁸Why should you discourage the other Israelites from going into the land the LORD gave them? ⁹This is what your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to look at the land. ¹⁰After they went up to Cluster Valley and saw the land, they discouraged Israel from going into the land the LORD gave them. ¹¹That day the LORD got very angry and said with an oath: ¹²"None of the men who came from Egypt, twenty years old and up, will see the land I promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob with an oath, because they didn't follow Me fully." ¹³Except Caleb, Jephunneh's son, the Kenizzite, and Joshua, Nun's son, because they followed the LORD fully. ¹⁴The LORD was very angry with Israel and for forty years made them wander in the wilderness till all the people of that age who had done wrong before the LORD were gone. ¹⁵Now you have

grown up to take your fathers' place, a brood of sinners to make the LORD angry with Israel again. ¹⁶If you turn away from Him, He will leave you again in the wilderness, and you will destroy all these people."

¹⁷"They came up to him and suggested: ¹⁸"We'll build stone fences for our flocks and cattle here and towns for our families. ¹⁹But we'll be quick to go armed ahead of the other Israelites till we have brought them to their home, while our families live in fortified towns out of reach of other people living in the land. ²⁰We will not come back home till every Israelite has gotten his inheritance. ²¹We will not have our heritage with them on the other side of the Jordan and beyond if we get ours here east of the Jordan."

²²"If you do that," Moses told them, ²³"if you arm yourselves before the LORD for war ²⁴and all your armed men cross the Jordan before the LORD till He drives out His enemies ²⁵and the country is conquered before the LORD, then you can come back, and the LORD and Israel will ask no more from you, and this land will be your own before the LORD. ²⁶But if you don't do that, you will sin against the LORD; and be sure your sin will catch up with you. ²⁷Build towns for your families and stone fences for your flocks, but do what you promised."

²⁸"We, your servants, will do as you, our lord, order," the tribes of Gad and Reuben told Moses. ²⁹"Our children, wives, stock, and all our cattle will stay in the towns of Gilead ³⁰while we, your servants, all cross over as armed soldiers into the war before the LORD as you, our lord, say."

²⁸So Moses gave orders to Eleazar the priest, Joshua, Nun's son, and the family heads of the tribes of Israel in regard to them: ²⁹"If the tribes of Gad and Reuben, armed for war, cross over with you before the LORD," Moses told them, "and the country is conquered for you, then give them the land of Gilead as their own. ³⁰But if they don't cross over armed with you, then they must get property with you in the land of Canaan."

³¹"We will do just as the LORD has told us, your servants," the tribes of Gad and Reuben answered. ³²"We will cross as armed troops before the LORD into the land of Canaan, but the inheritance we get is here east of the Jordan."

³³So Moses gave the tribes of Gad and Reuben and half the tribe of Manasseh (Joseph's son) the countries once ruled by Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, the towns with their territories in the surrounding country.

³⁴The tribe of Gad built Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer, ³⁵Atroth-shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah, ³⁶Beth-nimrah, and Beth-haran as fortified towns, as well as stone fences for flocks.

³⁷The tribe of Reuben built Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim, ³⁸Nebo, Baal-meon—changing their names—and Sibmah, and gave new names to the towns they rebuilt.

³⁹The descendants of Machir, Manasseh's son, went to Gilead and captured it, driving out the Amorites who were there. ⁴⁰So Moses gave Gilead to Machir, Manasseh's son, and he lived there. ⁴¹Then Jair, Manasseh's son, went and captured the tent-villages of Ham and called them Jair's Tent-villages. ⁴²And Nobah went and captured Kenath

and the villages around it, calling by his own name Nobah.

How Israel Moved

33 This is how Israel moved after Moses and Aaron led their divisions out of Egypt. ²Moses wrote down the places from which they moved as the LORD directed them, and this is how they moved from place to place.

³They moved from Rameses on the 15th day of the first month, the day after the Passover. With a high hand the Israelites left while all the Egyptians were watching them. ⁴The Egyptians were burying a their firstborn, whom the LORD had killed as a judgment on their gods.

⁵Israel moved from Rameses and camped at Succoth. ⁶They moved from Succoth and camped at Elhar at the edge of the desert. ⁷They moved from Elhar and camped at Etham and turned back to Pi-hahiroth, opposite Baalzephon, and camped east of Migdol. ⁸Starting from Pi-hahiroth, they went through the sea into the wilderness, and after moving for three days in the wilderness from Etham, they camped at Marah. ⁹They moved from Marah and camped at Elim, where there were 12 springs of water and 70 palm trees, so they camped there. ¹⁰They moved from Elim and camped by the Red Sea. ¹¹They moved from the Red Sea and camped in the wilderness of Sin. ¹²They moved from the wilderness of Sin and camped at Dophkah. ¹³They moved from Dophkah and camped at Alush. ¹⁴They moved from Alush and camped at Rephidim, where there was no water for the people to drink. ¹⁵They moved from Rephidim and camped in the Sinai desert. ¹⁶They moved from the

Sinai desert and camped at Kibroth-hattaavah. ¹⁷They moved from Kibroth-hattaavah and camped at Hazeroth. ¹⁸They moved from Hazeroth and camped at Rithmah. ¹⁹They moved from Rithmah and camped at Rimmon-perez. ²⁰They moved from Rimmon-perez and camped at Libnah. ²¹They moved from Libnah and camped at Rissah. ²²They moved from Rissah and camped at Kehelathah. ²³They moved from Kehelathah and camped at Mount Shepher. ²⁴They moved from Mount Shepher and camped at Haradah. ²⁵They moved from Haradah and camped at Makheloth. ²⁶They moved from Makheloth and camped at Tahath. ²⁷They moved from Tahath and camped at Terah. ²⁸They moved from Terah and camped at Mithkah. ²⁹They moved from Mithkah and camped at Hashmonah. ³⁰They moved from Hashmonah and camped at Mose-roth. ³¹They moved from Moseroth and camped at Bene-jaakan. ³²They moved from Bene-jaakan and camped at Hor-haggidgad. ³³They moved from Hor-haggidgad and camped at Jotbathah. ³⁴They moved from Jotbathah and camped at Abronah. ³⁵They moved from Abronah and camped at Ezion-geber. ³⁶They moved from Ezion-geber and camped in the wilderness of Zin, where Kadesh is. ³⁷They moved from Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor at the border of Edom.

³⁸By the LORD's order Aaron the priest went up on Mount Hor and died there on the first day of the fifth month in the 40th year after Israel left Egypt. ³⁹Aaron was 123 when he died on Mount Hor.

⁴⁰The Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negeb in the land of Canaan, heard Israel was coming.

⁴¹They moved from Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah. ⁴²They moved from Zalmonah and camped at Punon. ⁴³They moved from Punon and camped at Oboth. ⁴⁴They moved from Oboth and camped at Iye-abarim in Moabite territory. ⁴⁵They moved from Iye-abarim and camped at Dibon-gad. ⁴⁶They moved from Dibon-gad and camped at Almon-diblathaim. ⁴⁷They moved from Almon-diblathaim and camped in the Abarim range east of Nebo. ⁴⁸They moved from the Abarim range and camped on the Moabite plains by the Jordan opposite Jericho. ⁴⁹They camped along the Jordan from Beth-jeshimoth to Abel-shittim Meadow on the Moabite plains.

What to Do with Canaan

⁵⁰The LORD told Moses on the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho: ⁵¹"Speak to the Israelites and tell them: When you cross the Jordan into Canaan, ⁵²drive out of your way, all who live in the country, smash all their carved idols, destroy all their metal images, and tear down all their high shrines; ⁵³take the land and live there, because I have given you the land to be your own. ⁵⁴Divide the land by lot among your clans, giving more territory to large clans and less to small ones; the land shall belong to him to whom the lot gives it, but divide your heritage according to the tribes of your fathers. ⁵⁵But if you do not drive out of your way those who live in the land, then those whom you leave in the land will be thorns in your eyes and barbs in your sides and will trouble you about the land you live in. ⁵⁶And I will do to you what I meant to do to them."

34 The LORD told Moses: "Order the Israelites and tell them: When you come into the land of Canaan, this is the land you get as your inheritance, the land of Canaan within these borders: 'Your southern border goes from the wilderness of Zin along the border of Edom—your southern border starts in the east from the lower tip of the Salt Sea. 'Then your border turns south to the Slope of Scorpions, goes over to Zin, and its southern limit is at Kadesh-barnea. Then it goes to Hazar-addar and continues to Azmon. 'At Azmon it turns to the river of Egypt and ends at the sea.

"Your western border is the Mediterranean Sea; this is your western border.

"And this is your northern border: Draw a line from the Mediterranean Sea to Mount Hor. 'From Mount Hor the line shall go to the pass at Hamath and continue till it reaches Zedad. 'From there the border goes to Ziphron and ends at Hazar-enan. This is your northern border.

"For your eastern border draw a line from Hazar-enan to Shepham. 'From Shepham the border goes down to Riblah, east of Ain. Then the border goes down and reaches the hills rising on the eastern shore of the lake of Chinnerath.^k 'The border goes down the Jordan and ends at the Salt Sea. This is your land within the borders going around it."

"Moses ordered the Israelites: "Divide this land by lot among yourselves as your heritage that the LORD has ordered to be given to the nine and a half tribes. "The clans

of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh have received their heritage; 'thos two and a half tribes have received their heritage along the eastern side of the Jordan of Jericho, where the sun rises."

"The LORD told Moses: "These are the names of the men who will divide the land for you: Eleazar the priest and Joshua, Nun's son. "To divide the land, take also one leader from each tribe. "The names of the men are: from the tribe of Judah, Caleb, Jephunneh's son; 'from the tribe of Simeon, Samuel, Ammihud's son; 'from the tribe of Benjamin, Elidai, Chislon's son; 'from the tribe of Dan the leader, Bukki, Jogli's son; 'from Joseph: from the tribe of Manasseh the leader, Hanni, Ephod's son, 'and from the tribe of Ephraim the leader, Kemue, Shiphthan's son; 'from the tribe of Zebulun the leader, Elizaphan, Parnach's son; 'from the tribe of Issachar the leader, Paltiel, Azzan's son; 'from the tribe of Asher the leader, Ahihud, Shelomi's son; 'and from the tribe of Naphtali the leader, Pedahel, Ammihud's son. "These were the men ordered by the LORD to divide the land of Canaan for the Israelites to inherit.

Towns for the Levites

35 The LORD spoke to Moses on the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho: "Order the Israelites from their heritage to give the Levites towns to live in and also to give the Levite pastures around the towns. 'The towns should be for their homes and the pastures for the cattle and flocks they own and all their

^kGalilee

beasts. ⁴The pastures of the towns you give the Levites should extend outward from a town's wall a thousand cubits on all sides. ⁵Outside the town measure off two thousand cubits on the east side, two thousand on the south, two thousand on the west, and two thousand on the north, with the town in the center. This will be their pasture land for the towns.

⁶"The towns you give the Levites will be the six towns of refuge to which you are to let a man flee when he has killed someone, and to these you will add forty-two towns. ⁷The total of the towns you give the Levites with their pastures will be forty-eight. ⁸When you select the towns of the other Israelites to give them to the Levites, take more from a larger tribe and less from a smaller tribe; each should give the Levites towns in proportion to the size of the land it received."

Towns of Refuge

⁹The LORD told Moses: ¹⁰"Speak to the Israelites and tell them: When you go over the Jordan into the land of Canaan, ¹¹select towns to serve as places where anyone who has accidentally killed someone may flee for refuge. ¹²These towns will be places where you can escape the avenging relative if you have killed someone, so that you will not have to die before you have stood before the community to be tried. ¹³There should be six towns appointed for refuge. ¹⁴Three on the east side of the Jordan and three in the land of Canaan, to serve as towns of refuge. ¹⁵These six towns should be places where Israelites, strangers, and aliens among you, anyone who has accidentally killed a person, may flee and escape.

¹⁶"If someone strikes another with an iron weapon, so that he dies, he's a murderer, and the murderer must be killed. ¹⁷If anyone strikes another with a stone in his hand that would cause death and so the other dies, he's a murderer, and the murderer must be killed. ¹⁸Or if he strikes him with a wooden weapon in his hand that would cause death and so the other dies, he's a murderer, and the murderer must be killed. ¹⁹The avenging relative must kill the murderer; when he catches up with him, he must kill him. ²⁰If in hatred a person pushes another or throws something at him to kill him, so that he dies, ²¹or if in enmity he strikes him with his fist, so that he dies, the one who struck him must be killed; he's a murderer; the avenging relative must kill the murderer when he catches up with him.

²²"But if he pushes him accidentally, not as an enemy, or throws something at him without meaning to kill him, ²³or without seeing him lets any kind of stone that could cause death fall on him so that he dies, but he wasn't his enemy and didn't try to harm him, ²⁴the community should decide according to these regulations whether the man who struck the blow or the avenging relative is right. ²⁵And the community should rescue the man who did the killing from the avenging relative and bring him back to the town of refuge where he fled, and he should live there till the high priest, anointed with the holy oil, dies. ²⁶But if the killer goes out of the limits of the town of refuge he fled to ²⁷and the avenging relative finds him outside the limits of the town of refuge and the avenging relative kills him, then he's not a

murderer. ²⁸because the man should stay in the town of refuge till the high priest dies; but after the high priest is dead, the killer may go back to his own home.

²⁹"This shall be the legal custom for you and your descendants wherever you live.

³⁰"If anyone kills a person, he should be killed only on the testimony of witnesses, but the testimony of one witness against anyone isn't enough in order to kill him. ³¹"Don't accept payment for the life of a murderer who is guilty and deserves to die; he must be killed. ³²"Don't accept payment from a man who has fled to his town of refuge to let him go back to live at home before the high priest dies. ³³You must not make the land you live in unclean, because it is blood that makes the land unclean, and a land can't be cleansed of the blood poured out on it except by the blood of him who poured it out. ³⁴"Don't make the land you live in unclean, because I too am living in it; I, the LORD, am living among the Israelites."

Keep the Property of Heiresses in Their Tribe

36 The clan leaders of the families of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh—of the families of Joseph's descendants—came before Moses and the leaders of the other clans of Israel. ²"The LORD ordered you, my lord," they said, "to give the land by lot to the Israelites as a heritage, and the LORD ordered you, my lord, to give the heritage of one of our tribesmen, Zelophehad, to his daughters. ³Now if they marry

men from the other tribes of Israel their property will be separated from that of our fathers and added to the heritage of the tribe they marry into and be lost to the heritage allotted to us. 'Even when Israel has its year of jubilee, their share will be added to that of the tribe they married into and be lost to the heritage of our fathers' tribe.'

⁴Moses instructed the Israelite as the LORD told him: "The tribe of Joseph is right. ⁵This is what the LORD orders in regard to Zelophehad's daughters: They may marry anyone they like, only they must marry men of a family of their father's tribe: 'in this way no property of the Israelites will pass from one tribe to another, for each Israelite must keep the property he inherits in the tribe of his father: ⁶Any girl who inherits property in any of the tribes of Israel must marry someone of the family of her father's tribe, so that each Israelite keeps the property inherited from his fathers. ⁷No property should pass from one tribe to another, for each tribe of Israel should cling to the property it inherits."

⁸Zelophehad's daughters did just as the LORD ordered Moses: "Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah and Noah, Zelophehad's daughters, married sons of their father's brothers 'in families of the descendants of Manasseh, Joseph's son, and so their property stayed in the tribe of their father's family.

⁹These are the orders and regulations the LORD gave the Israelites through Moses on the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho.

DEUTERONOMY

1 This is what Moses said to all Israel east of the Jordan, in the wilderness, in the Jordan valley, in front of Suph, between Paran, Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Dizahab.

¹[It takes 11 days to go from Horeb^a by way of the mountains of Seir to Kadesh-barnea.]

²In the 40th year, on the first day of the 11th month, Moses told Israel everything the LORD ordered him to tell them— ³‘after defeating Sihon, king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon, and Og, king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth and Edrei. ⁴There in the country of Moab east of the Jordan Moses undertook to state clearly the following instructions:

Israel Should Take Canaan

⁵“At Horeb the LORD our God told us: You have stayed at this mountain long enough. ⁶Turn and move on, go into the hills of the Amorites and all the neighboring places in the Jordan valley, the hills, the lowlands, the Negeb, and the sea-coast—the land of the Canaanites and the Lebanon range as far as the great river, the river Euphrates. ⁷You see, I lay the land before you. Go and take the land the LORD promised with an oath to your fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to give to them and their descendants after them.”

Moses Appointed Judges

⁸“At that time I told you I can’t do

^aSinai

all the work for you alone. ⁹“The LORD your God has made you grow so much you are now as many as the stars in the sky. ¹⁰“The LORD, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times greater than you are and bless you as He promised you. ¹¹“How can I alone bear your troubles, burdens, and quarrels? ¹²“From each of your tribes bring me men who are wise, understanding, and experienced, and I’ll put them over you.

¹³“‘It is good for us to do what you say,’ you answered me. ¹⁴“So I took the leaders of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and put them over you as overseers of a thousand, of a hundred, of fifty, and of ten, and as officials in each of your tribes. ¹⁵“At that time I gave orders to your judges: Hear the cases of the people of Israel, and judge fairly between one man and another, even if he’s not an Israelite. ¹⁶“When you judge, don’t show any favor to anyone, but listen to low and high alike, being afraid of nobody, seeing it is God who is judging the people. Any case that is too hard for you bring to me, and I will hear it. ¹⁷“At that time I gave you orders about everything you were to do.”

The Spies

¹⁸“When we left Horeb, we went through all that great and terrible desert you saw on the way to the hills of the Amorites, as the LORD our God had ordered, and so we came to Kadesh-barnea. ¹⁹“There I

told you, you have come to the hills of the Amorites that the LORD our God is giving us. ²¹The LORD your God gives you the land you see before you. Go up and take it as the LORD, the God of your fathers, told you. Don't be afraid or terrified.

²²"Then all of you came to me. 'Let us send men ahead of us,' you said, 'to explore the land for us and report to us about the way we should go up and the cities we'll come to.'

²³"I liked the idea, and so I chose twelve of your men, one for each tribe. ²⁴They left, went up into the hills, and got as far as Cluster Valley, exploring it. ²⁵Some of the products of the country they had taken they brought down to us and reported to us: 'It is a good land the LORD our God is giving us.'

²⁶"But you refused to go up and rebelled against the order of the LORD your God. ²⁷You grumbled in your tents: 'The LORD hates us,' you said; 'that's why He brought us out of Egypt just to hand us over to the Amorites to destroy us. ²⁸What kind of place are we going up to? Our own men of Israel have discouraged us by saying, "We saw there a people stronger and taller than we are, big cities with walls sky-high, and giants!"'

²⁹"Then I told you, Don't let them terrify or frighten you. ³⁰The LORD your God, who leads you, will fight for you just as you saw Him do it for you in Egypt ³¹and in the desert, where you saw how the LORD your God carried you, like a man carrying his son, all the way you traveled till you came to this place.

³²"In spite of that you wouldn't trust the LORD your God, ³³who, to find a place for you to camp, led you on the way in a fire at night and in a

cloud during the day to show you the way to go.

³⁴"When the LORD heard what you said, He got angry and made this oath: ³⁵'None of these men, these wicked people of this age, will ever see this fine land I swore to give your fathers, ³⁶except Caleb, Jephunneh's son. He will see it, and to him and his descendants I will give the land he walked on, because he followed the LORD fully.'

³⁷"On account of you the LORD also was angry with me. 'You also will not go there,' He said. ³⁸'Joshua, Nun's son, who serves you, will go there. Encourage him, because he will distribute the land to Israel. ³⁹But your babies, who you said would be carried off by the enemies, your children, who now can't tell what is good or bad, will go there. I will give it to them, and they will take it. ⁴⁰But you must turn back and move into the desert on the road to the Red Sea.'

Israel Defeated

⁴¹"Then you answered me, 'We have sinned against the LORD. We'll go up and fight just as the LORD our God ordered us to do,' and each of you fastened on his weapons for fighting, and you thought you could easily go up into the hills.

⁴²"But the LORD told me, 'Tell them, Don't go up and fight, because I'm not among you. Otherwise your enemies will defeat you.'

⁴³"So I talked to you, but you wouldn't listen. You rebelled against the LORD's order and were brazen enough to go up into the hills. ⁴⁴The Amorites living in those hills came out against you and like bees chased you and struck you down in Seir till you came to Hormah. ⁴⁵When you came back,

you wept before the LORD, but the LORD didn't listen to you or hear you. "So you stayed in Kadesh a long time."

Don't Fight Esau, Moab, Ammon

2 "We turned back and moved into the desert in the direction of the Red Sea as the LORD had told me, and for a long time we went around the mountains of Seir.

²"Then the LORD told me: "You've gone around these mountains long enough; now turn north. 'Instruct the people to do as follows: You are going to pass through the territory of your relatives, Esau's descendants who live in Seir. They are afraid of you. But be very careful ³not to start fighting with them, because I'm not giving you any of their land, not even enough to set your foot on, since I have given the mountains of Seir to Esau as his possession. ⁴Buy from them food to eat, and also pay them for water you get from them to drink. ⁵The LORD your God has blessed you in everything you did and has looked after you as you traveled in this great desert. For forty years now the LORD your God has been with you, and you didn't lack a thing.'

⁶"So we moved away from our relatives, Esau's descendants, who lived in Seir, by the Arabah road by Elath and Ezion-geber, and we turned to move in the direction of the wilderness of Moab.

⁷"'Don't cause Moab any trouble,' the LORD told me, 'or start a war with them, because I'm not giving you any of their land. I gave Ar to Lot's descendants as their possession.'

⁸"The Emites used to live there, a mighty people, as many and as tall as the giants. "Like the other

giants they also were known as Rephaites, but the Moabites called them Emites. ⁹The Horites used to live in Seir, but Esau's descendants took their land, wiped them out, and settled in their place, just as Israel did to the land they took, that the LORD gave them.

¹⁰"'Now start out and cross the valley Zered.' And we crossed the valley Zered. ¹¹'It took us thirty-eight years to go from Kadesh-barnea till we crossed the valley Zered—and all the people of that age, the men able to fight, were destroyed and no more in the camp, as the LORD had sworn to them. ¹²Yes, the LORD's hand opposed them and rid the camp of them till they were gone.

¹³"'When all these able to fight had died and were no more among the people, ¹⁴the LORD told me: ¹⁵'Now you are going to pass Ar along the border of Moab. ¹⁶When you come close to the Ammonites, don't trouble them or start fighting them, because I'm not giving you any of their land; I have given it to Lot's descendants as their possession.'

¹⁷It used to be considered the land of the Rephaites who lived there, but the Ammonites called them Zamzummites. ¹⁸a mighty people, as many and as tall as the giants, but the LORD wiped them out as Lot's descendants came in, took their land away, and settled in their place. ¹⁹just as He did for Esau's descendants living in Seir when He wiped out the Horites as Esau's descendants came in, took their land, and lived in their place as they still do today. ²⁰Also the Avvites who were living in villages as far as Gaza: the Caphtorites came from Caphtor, wiped them out, and settled in their place."

Sihon and Og

24“ ‘Start to move on and cross the valley of Arnon. You see, I have put Sihon, king of Heshbon, the Amorite, and his country in your hands. Go ahead and take it and fight with them. 25Today I will start making all the people in the world feel afraid of you and terrified. When they hear about you, they will tremble and live in dread of you.’

26“Then I sent messengers from the wilderness of Kedemoth to Sihon, king of Heshbon, with an offer of peace, saying: 27I want to go through your country, staying on the road, not turning right or left. 28Sell me food to eat and water to drink; just let me walk through— 29as Esau's descendants living in Seir did for me, and also the Moabites who live in Ar—till I have gone over the Jordan into the land the LORD our God is giving us.

30“But Sihon, king of Heshbon, would not let us pass through. The LORD your God made him stubborn and defiant to put him in our hands as he now has done. 31“You see,” the LORD told me, ‘I have begun to give you Sihon and his country. Go ahead and take his land.’

32“Sihon and all his men came out to fight with us at Jahaz. 33The LORD our God put him in our hands, and we struck him down with his sons and his men. 34At that time we took all his towns and completely destroyed every town—all men, women, and children, letting nobody escape. 35Only the cattle we kept as spoils for ourselves, also the goods in the towns we captured. 36From Aroer on the edge of the Arnon valley and the towns down in the valley as far as Gilead there was no town too strong for us; the LORD

our God gave them to us. 37But you didn't go near the land of the Ammonites, all that is along the valley of the Jabbok, the towns in the hills, or anything the LORD our God had forbidden.

3 “When we turned and were on the way up to Bashan, Og, king of Bashan, and all his men came to fight against us at Edrei.

32“ ‘Don't be afraid of him,’ the LORD told me, ‘I'm putting him, all his men, and his land in your hands. Do to him what you did to Sihon, king of the Amorites, who lived at Heshbon.’ 33The LORD our God also put Og, king of Bashan, and all his men in our hands. We defeated him so completely nobody escaped. 34At that time we took all his towns (there wasn't a town we didn't take from them), sixty towns, the whole Argob territory, Og's kingdom in Bashan 35(all these towns were fortified with high walls, gates, and bars), besides very many of the Perizzite unwalled villages. 36We completely wiped out every town—all men, women, and children, as we did to Sihon, king of Heshbon, 37but all the cattle and the goods in the towns we kept as our spoil.

38“And so at that time we took the land from the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, from the Arnon valley to Mount Hermon 39(the Sidonians call Hermon Sirion, and the Amorites call it Senir), 40all the towns of the tableland, all Gilead and all Bashan as far as Salcah and Edrei, towns of Og's kingdom in Bashan. 41Og in Bashan was the last of the Rephaites. His bed was made of iron (isn't it still in Rabbah, the city of the Ammonites?), fourteen feet long by six feet wide according to the common cubit.

"So we took this land at that time."

2½ Tribes

"I gave Reuben and Gad the land from Aroer along the Arnon valley with part of the hills of Gilead and its towns. ¹³And I gave half of the tribe of Manasseh the rest of Gilead and all of Bashan, Og's kingdom, the whole Argob territory. All this Bashan is called the land of the Rephaites. ¹⁴Jair, Manasseh's descendant, took the whole Argob territory as far as the border of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and he called the places of Bashan by his own name Jair's Tent-villages, as they're still called today. ¹⁵I gave Gilead to Machir. ¹⁶I gave Reuben and Gad the land of Gilead to the Arnon valley, the middle of the stream being the border, up to the valley of the Jabbok, the border of the Ammonites; ¹⁷the Arabah, the Jordan being the border, from Chinnereth to the lake of the Arabah, the Salt Lake, at the foot of the slopes of Pisgah.

¹⁸"At that time I gave these orders: The LORD your God gave you this land and wanted you to take it. Have all your warriors go armed ahead of your fellow Israelites, ¹⁹letting your wives, children, and cattle—I know you have much cattle—stay here in your towns that I gave you ²⁰till the LORD gives the other Israelites a home as He did to you, and they too have taken the land the LORD your God gives them on the other side of the Jordan. Then every one of you will come back to his own land that I gave you.

²¹"At that time I gave Joshua these orders: You have seen with your own eyes everything the LORD your God did to those two kings. The

LORD will do the same to all the kingdoms on the other side where you're going. ²²Don't be afraid of them, because the LORD your God is fighting for you."

Moses Will Not Get into Canaan

²³"At that time I pleaded with the LORD: ²⁴Lord GOD, You have begun to show Your servant how great and mighty You are. What God is there in heaven or on earth who can do the deeds and the mighty acts You have done? ²⁵Please let me go over and see the fine land on the other side of the Jordan, those good hills and Lebanon.

²⁶"But on account of you the LORD was angry with me and didn't listen to me. 'Enough of that!' He said. 'Don't talk to Me again about this. ²⁷Go up to the top of Pisgah, and look west, north, south, and east. See it with your own eyes, but you will not cross this Jordan. ²⁸Give Joshua instructions, encourage and strengthen him, because he will lead these people and give them the land you see as their possession.'

²⁹"So we stayed in the valley near Beth-peor."

How You Should Live

4 "And now, Israel, listen to the laws and regulations I teach you to keep so that you will live, go in, and take the land the LORD, the God of your fathers, gives you. ²Don't add anything to what I order you to do or take anything away from it, but keep the commandments of the LORD your God that I order you to keep.

³"With your own eyes you saw what the LORD did at Baal-peor, how the LORD your God destroyed everyone who went after Baal at Peor and He rid you of them. 'But

you who were loyal to the LORD your God are all alive today. ⁵See, as the LORD my God ordered, I teach you laws and regulations so that you will live that way in the land you're about to enter and take over. ⁶Keep and do these things; then people will see how wise and understanding you are when they hear about all these laws, and they will say, 'Surely that's a great nation of wise and understanding people!' ⁷To which great nation does God come so near as the LORD our God does whenever we call on Him? ⁸Or what great nation has laws and regulations as righteous as all this teaching I give you today?"

Our God and Others

⁹"Only be on your guard and watch yourselves carefully, so that as long as you live you don't forget or fail to keep in mind, but tell your children and grandchildren, what you saw ¹⁰when you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb. The LORD had told me: 'Gather the people before Me, and I will let them hear what I say so they can learn to fear Me as long as they live on the earth and so teach their children.' ¹¹And you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain while from the burning mountain, dark, cloudy, and gloomy, the flames shot up into the middle of heaven. ¹²Out of the fire the LORD talked to you. You heard Him speak words but saw no form; there was only a voice. ¹³He announced to you His covenant He ordered you to keep, the Ten Commandments, and wrote them on two stone tablets. ¹⁴At that time the LORD ordered me to teach you laws and regulations that you are to keep in the land you're about to cross into and take over. ¹⁵Watch

yourselves very carefully, because you didn't see any form when the LORD talked to you out of the fire at Horeb. ¹⁶that you don't get corrupt and carve for yourselves any kind of idol, whether in the form of a man or a woman, ¹⁷of any animal on earth, any bird flying in the air, ¹⁸any animal that creeps on the ground, any fish in the water below ground level. ¹⁹Or when you look up to the sky and see the sun, moon, and stars, the whole array of lights in the sky, don't be misled to worship and serve them; the LORD has given them to every people in the whole world. ²⁰But the LORD took you and brought you out of the iron furnace of Egypt to make you His own people as you are today.

²¹"But on account of you the LORD was angry with me and swore I shouldn't go over the Jordan into the good land the LORD your God is giving you to be your own. ²²I will die in this country and not go over the Jordan, but you will cross over and take that fine land.

²³"Be careful that you don't forget the covenant the LORD your God made with you by carving yourselves an idol or an image of anything the LORD your God has forbidden. ²⁴The LORD your God is a devouring fire, a zealous God. ²⁵When you have children and grandchildren and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly and carve an idol, an image of anything, doing what the LORD your God considers wrong and you vex Him, ²⁶today I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that you will quickly perish from the land you're crossing the Jordan to take over. You will not live long in it but will be completely wiped out. ²⁷The LORD your God will scatter you among the

11-12 Heb 12
18-19
16-18 Ro 1:23
20 2 Co 5:16
Titus 2:14
1 Pt 2:9
Re 21:3,7
24 Heb 12:29

nations, and only a few of you will be left among the nations where the LORD drives you. ²⁸and there you will serve gods that human hands have made of wood and stone, that can't see, hear, eat, or smell.

²⁹“There, when you search for the LORD your God, you will find Him if you search for Him with all your mind and heart. ³⁰When you're in trouble and all these things happen to you in later years, you will come back to the LORD your God and listen to Him. ³¹The LORD your God is a merciful God; He will not abandon you or destroy you or forget the covenant He made by an oath with your fathers.

³²“Ask about the early days, before your time, from the time God made man on the earth, and ask from one end of the world to the other: Did anything as grand as this ever happen or anyone hear anything like it? ³³Did any people ever hear God talk out of a fire as you heard Him and you stayed alive? ³⁴Or has a God tried to go and get a people for Himself from the middle of another people by testings, miracles, wonders, and war by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, by awful terrors as you saw the LORD your God do for you in Egypt? ³⁵You were shown these things to learn that the LORD is God and there is no other. ³⁶He let you hear His voice from heaven to correct you, showing you His great fire on earth while you heard Him talk out of the fire. ³⁷And because He loved your fathers and chose their descendants and personally by His great power took you out of Egypt, ³⁸driving out before you nations greater and mightier than you are, to take you in and give you their land as is now

happening— ³⁹know and take to heart today that the LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth below; there is no other. ⁴⁰Keep His laws and commandments that I give you today, so that it will be well with you and your descendants and you will live long on the land the LORD your God is giving you forever.”

Cities of Refuge

“Then Moses selected three cities on the east side of the Jordan, ⁴¹to which a man could flee who had unintentionally killed a person without having been his enemy before. If he fled to one of these cities, he would stay alive. ⁴²He chose Bezer on the wilderness plateau for Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead for Gad, and Golan in Bashan for Manasseh.

³⁵ ⁴ ^{12:32}
³⁹ ^{12:32}

Introduction to the Commandments

“And here is the teaching Moses put before Israel. ⁴³These are the solemn statements, laws, and regulations Moses spoke to Israel after they had left Egypt. ⁴⁴east of the Jordan in the valley near Bethpeor, in the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon, whom Moses and Israel defeated after they had left Egypt. ⁴⁵They took his land and the land of Og, king of Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites on the east side of the Jordan. ⁴⁶from Aroer, which is on the edge of the Arnon valley, till Mount Sirion, which is Hermon, ⁴⁷and all the Jordan valley east of the river as far as the lake in the valley at the foot of the slopes of Pisgah.

The Ten Commandments

5 Moses called to all Israel and told them: “Israel, lis-

ten to the laws and regulations I'm telling you today. Learn them and be careful to do them.

²²“The LORD our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. ²³He didn't make this covenant with our fathers but with us, the living, every one of us who is here today. ²⁴The LORD talked to you face to face out of the fire on the mountain. ²⁵At that time I stood between the LORD and you to tell you what the LORD was saying, because you were afraid of the fire and didn't go up on the mountain.

²⁶“I the LORD am your God,” He said, “who took you out of Egypt, where you were slaves. ²⁷Do not have any other gods besides Me. ²⁸Do not make an idol for yourself or any likeness of anything in heaven above, on the earth below, or in the water below ground level. ²⁹Do not worship them or serve them, because I the LORD your God am a jealous God: for their fathers' sins I punish children, if they hate Me too, to the third and fourth generation. ³⁰but if they love me and do what I order, I am kind to them to the thousandth generation.

³¹“Do not use the name of the LORD your God in vain, because the LORD will not let anyone who misuses His name go unpunished.

³²“Be careful to keep the rest day^b holy as the LORD your God ordered. ³³Six days you should labor and do all your work. ³⁴but on the seventh, the rest day of the LORD your God, do not do any work, you, your son, your daughter, your male or female servant, your ox, donkey, or any of your animals, or your foreigner who is within your gates, so that your male and female

servant will rest as well as you. ³⁵Remember you were a slave in Egypt, and the LORD your God took you out of it with a strong hand and an outstretched arm: this is why the LORD your God has ordered you to keep the day of rest.

³⁶“Honor your father and your mother as the LORD your God has ordered you, so that you will live long and prosper on the earth the LORD your God is giving you.

³⁷“Do not murder.

³⁸“Do not commit adultery.

³⁹“Do not steal.

⁴⁰“Do not lie concerning your neighbor.

⁴¹“Do not covet your neighbor's wife or wish you had his home, his field, his male or female servant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that belongs to him.”

⁴²“With a loud voice the LORD said this to all of you who were assembled at the mountain: He said this and no more out of the fire and dark cloud, then wrote them on two stone tablets and gave them to me.

⁴³“But when you heard the voice coming out of the darkness while the mountain was blazing, all the leaders and elders of your tribes came to me. ⁴⁴The LORD our God has let us see how wonderful and great He is,” you said, “and we heard Him speak out of the fire. We have seen today that God can talk to a man and he still can stay alive. ⁴⁵But why should we die now? This great fire will consume us. If we hear the LORD our God speaking any longer, we'll die. ⁴⁶What human being ever heard the living God speak out of the fire as we did and stayed alive? ⁴⁷You go near and listen to everything the LORD

5
16-21 Mt 5:21
27, 15-4
19 18-19
Mt 7:10
10:19
Lk 18:20
Ro 7:7
13 9 Ep 6
2-3 Jn 2:11

^bOr Sabbath

our God says, and then tell us everything the LORD our God tells you. We'll listen and do it.'

¹⁸“The LORD heard what you told me. ‘I heard what these people said to you,’ the LORD told me. ‘They are right in everything they say. ¹⁹I wish they always had a heart to fear Me and do everything I order, so that they and their children would always prosper. ²⁰Go and tell them: Go back to your tents. ²¹But you stay here with Me, and I will tell you all the commandments, the laws and regulations, you should teach them to do in the land I’m giving them to be their own.’ ²²Be careful to do just as the LORD your God orders you without turning right or left. ²³In every way do as the LORD your God orders, so that you may live and all may be well with you and you will live long in the land you’re taking.”

Love Your God

6 “These are the commandments, the laws and regulations, the LORD your God ordered me to teach you, so that you will do them in the land you’re about to cross into and take over. ²If you, your children, and your grandchildren will fear the LORD your God enough to keep as long as you live all His laws and commandments that I’m ordering you to keep, you will have a long life. ³Listen, Israel, and be careful to do them that you may prosper and grow to be very many, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.

⁴“Listen, Israel, the LORD is our God, the LORD alone. ⁵Love the LORD your God with all your mind,

all your heart, and all your strength. ⁶The instructions I give you today write in your mind; ⁷impress their meaning on your children; talk about them when you sit at home, walk along the road, lie down, and get up. ⁸Bind them on your arm to remind you; wear them as bands on your forehead; ⁹write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

¹⁰“And when the LORD your God brings you into the land He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you—large and fine cities you didn’t build, ¹¹homes filled with all kinds of good things but not by you, cisterns that were dug but not by you, vineyards and olive trees you didn’t plant—after you have eaten all you want, ¹²be careful not to forget the LORD, who took you out of Egypt, where you were slaves. ¹³Fear the LORD your God, serve Him, and swear by His name. ¹⁴Don’t run after other gods, some of the gods of the people around you, ¹⁵or the LORD your God will get very angry with you and wipe you off the earth—the LORD your God is a zealous God among you.

¹⁶“Don’t test the LORD your God as you did at Massah.^c ¹⁷Be sure to keep the commandments of the LORD your God and His solemn decrees and the laws He ordered. ¹⁸Do what the LORD considers right and good, so that you may prosper and go in and take the good land which the LORD by an oath promised your fathers, ¹⁹to drive out your enemies ahead of you as the LORD said.

²⁰“In the future, when your son asks you, ‘What do you mean by

5
4 Jb 2:19
4:5; Mt 22:37
Mk 12:29
30; 32-33
Lk 10:27
13 Mt 4:10
Lk 4:8
16 Mt 4:7
Lk 4:12

^c“Testing Place”

these solemn statements, laws, and decrees the LORD our God ordered?' ²¹'tell your son, 'We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt, and the LORD with a mighty hand took us out of Egypt. ²²'We saw the LORD do miracles and great destructive wonders to Egypt, Pharaoh, and his whole house. ²³'He took us away from there to bring us in and give us the land He promised our fathers with an oath. ²⁴'The LORD ordered us to keep all these laws and to fear the LORD our God, so that we might always prosper and be kept alive as we are today. ²⁵'This is what it means for us to be righteous, to carefully do before the LORD our God every commandment just as He ordered.' "

Wipe Out Idolatry

7 "When the LORD your God ^{1 Act 13:19} brings you to the land you're about to enter and take over and clears out of your way many nations—the Hittites, Gergashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, seven nations greater and stronger than you—²when the LORD your God gives them to you and you defeat them, then destroy them completely, and don't make a treaty with them or begin favoring them. ³Don't intermarry with them: don't let your daughter marry his son or your son marry his daughter. ⁴'because they will turn your sons away from Me to serve other gods. Then the LORD will get very angry with you and quickly destroy you.

⁵"But this is how you should treat them: Tear down their altars, smash their pillars, cut down their sacred

Asherah^d posts, and burn their idols."

God's Own People

⁶"As a holy people you belong to the LORD your God. Of all the people on earth the LORD your God chose you to be His own people. ⁷'The LORD set His heart on you and chose you, not because you were the greatest of all the nations—you were the smallest of all the nations—⁸but because the LORD loved you and wanted to keep the oath He made with your fathers, the LORD took you out with a mighty hand and rescued you from the place where you were slaves, from Pharaoh, king of Egypt. ⁹'So you know the LORD your God is God, the God you can trust, who keeps His covenant of love to a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments. ¹⁰'but of those who hate Him He punishes each one individually and destroys them and isn't slow to punish each one who hates Him.

¹¹"Be careful to do the commandments, the laws and regulations, I give you today. ¹²If you listen to these regulations and carefully do what they tell you, the LORD your God will keep His covenant and love for you as He swore to your fathers. ¹³'He will love you and bless you and make you grow to be many. He will bless your children and what your soil produces, your fresh grain, wine, and oil, the young of your cattle, the lambs and kids of your flocks, in the land the LORD swore to your fathers to give you. ¹⁴'You will be more blessed than any other people. No one will be barren, male or female.

^dThe name of a Canaanite fertility goddess

among you or your cattle. ¹⁵The LORD will keep away from you every kind of sickness and put on you none of the ravaging Egyptian diseases you know but will inflict them on those who hate you. ¹⁶And you will consume all the people the LORD your God gives you; don't look kindly on them, and don't serve their gods, because they're a trap to you.

¹⁷"You may think: 'These nations are greater than I. How can I drive them out?' ¹⁸"Don't be afraid of them. Remember what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and all the Egyptians. ¹⁹the terrible testings you saw with your own eyes, the miracles and wonders, the strong hand and outstretched arm by which the LORD your God brought you out. This is what the LORD your God will do to all the people you're afraid of. ²⁰The LORD your God will even put them in panic^e till those who are left and hiding perish before you. ²¹Don't tremble before them, because the LORD your God, a great and terrible God, is among you. ²²The LORD your God will only gradually clear these people out of your way; you won't be able to wipe them out quickly; otherwise too many wild animals will trouble you. ²³The LORD your God will put them at your mercy and throw them into panic till they're destroyed. ²⁴He will put their kings in your hands, and you will wipe their name off the earth. Everybody will have to yield to you till you have destroyed them. ²⁵Burn the images of their gods without hankering for the silver and gold on them or taking it for yourself, or it will trap you, because it is abominable to the LORD your God. ²⁶Don't take

anything abominable into your home and so, like it, be cursed. Detest it and loathe it, because it is cursed."

Remember

8 "Be careful to do everything I today order you to do, so that you will live, grow to be many, and take the land the LORD promised with an oath to your fathers.

²"And remember all the way the LORD your God led you in the wilderness these forty years to humble you and test you, to see what is in your hearts, whether you do what He orders or not. ³He made you suffer and go hungry and then fed you with manna that neither you nor your fathers knew, to show you *man doesn't live by bread alone but by everything the LORD says*. ⁴Your clothes didn't wear out on you, and your feet didn't swell these forty years. ⁵In your hearts learn this, that the LORD your God is training you like a man trains his son. ⁶Do what the LORD your God orders, walk in His ways, and fear Him. ⁷The LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land with brooks of water, springs and streams flowing from valleys and hills, ⁸a land of wheat and barley, grapevines, fig trees, and pomegranates, a land of olives producing oil, and honey. ⁹a land where food is not doled out, where you lack nothing, a land whose rocks are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper. ¹⁰You will eat all you want and praise the LORD your God for the good land He gave you.

¹¹"Be careful not to forget the LORD your God by failing to keep His commandments, regulations, and laws that I'm now telling you to

⁸
3 Mt 4.4
Lk 4.4

^eHeb send hornet against them; used figuratively

keep. "Otherwise there's danger that when you've eaten all you want, built fine homes to live in, your herds and flocks are growing larger, you're getting more and more silver and gold, and everything you have is increasing, "then you'll get proud, and you'll forget the LORD your God, who took you out of Egypt, where you were slaves, "and led you through the great and terrible desert with venomous snakes and scorpions, a thirsty ground without water; who got water for you out of the flinty rock "and fed you in the desert with manna your fathers never knew, to humble you and test you, only to do you good in the end. "When you think: My power and my strong arm have produced this wealth for me, "remember it's the LORD your God who gives you the power to get wealth, fulfilling His covenant He made by an oath with your fathers, as it is today.

"But if you do forget the LORD your God and run after other gods, serve and worship them, I warn you today that you will certainly perish. "Like the nations the LORD is destroying ahead of you, you will perish because you didn't listen to the LORD your God."

You Get Canaan Not Because You're Good

9 "Listen, Israel, you're now going over the Jordan to enter and take the land of people greater and stronger than you and great cities with walls reaching to the skies. "You know about the Anakites, a great and tall people, about whom you heard it said, 'Who can stand before the people of Anak?' "Know now that the LORD your God is going ahead of you as a consuming fire and will destroy

them. When He makes them surrender to you, you will take their land and quickly destroy them as the LORD told you.

"When the LORD your God drives them out ahead of you, *don't think*, 'Because I'm righteous, the LORD brought me in to take this land.' No, it is because these nations are wicked that the LORD is driving them out ahead of you. "Not because you're righteous or your heart is right are you going in to take their land, but because those people are wicked, the LORD your God is driving them out ahead of you, and because the LORD wants to keep His promise He made by an oath to your fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. "Know then, it isn't because you're righteous that the LORD your God is giving you this good land to take—you're a stubborn people. "Remember and don't forget how you made the LORD your God angry in the desert. From the day you left Egypt till you came here you've rebelled against the LORD. "Even at Horeb you made the LORD angry, and He got angry enough with you to destroy you. "When I went up the mountain to get the stone tablets on which was the covenant the LORD made with you, I stayed on the mountain forty days without eating or drinking. "Then the LORD gave me two stone tablets on which God had written with His finger. On them was everything the LORD said to you out of the fire on the mountain on the day of the assembly. "After forty days the LORD gave me the two stone tablets of the covenant. "And the LORD told me, 'Hurry down from here. Your people whom you took out of Egypt have become corrupt and quick to leave the way I told them to go, by making

⁹
4 Ro 10:6

themselves a metal idol! 'I have seen these people,' the LORD said to me, 'it's a stubborn people. 'Let Me alone, and I'll destroy them and wipe their name off the earth and make you a nation mightier and stronger than they.'

¹⁵''So I turned and went down the mountain, which was flaming with fire, and the two tablets of the covenant were in my hands. ¹⁶Then I saw how you sinned against the LORD your God. You made yourselves a metal calf. You had quickly turned from the way the LORD ordered you to go. ¹⁷Gripping the two tablets, I flung them out of my hands and smashed them while you were watching.

¹⁸''As I had done the first time, I threw myself down before the LORD: for forty days I didn't eat or drink on account of all your sinning in doing what was wrong before the LORD and making Him angry. ¹⁹I dreaded the hot anger of the LORD, who was furious with you and ready to destroy you, but once more the LORD listened to me.

²⁰''The LORD got very angry with Aaron and wanted to destroy him too, and at that time I pleaded also for Aaron.

²¹''Taking the wicked thing you made, the calf, I burned it in fire, beat it in pieces, and ground it thoroughly till it was a fine dust; then I threw this dust into the stream flowing down the mountain.

²²''At the Place of Burning, the Place of Testing, and the Graves of Greed^f you kept on making the LORD angry. ²³When the LORD sent you away from Kadesh-barnea, saying, 'Go up and take the land I give you,' you rebelled against the

order of the LORD your God and refused to trust Him or obey Him. ²⁴You've rebelled against the LORD ever since I knew you. ²⁵When I lay down on my face before the LORD for forty days, I did it because the LORD said He would destroy you. ²⁶and so I pleaded with the LORD: 'Lord GOD,' I said, 'don't destroy Your people. Your very own whom You rescued by Your great power and took out of Egypt by a strong hand. ²⁷Remember Your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Don't look at the stubbornness of these people, their wickedness and sin. ²⁸Or the country they left will say, ''The LORD couldn't bring them to the land He promised them, and He hated them: that's why He brought them out to kill them in the desert.''' ²⁹They are Your people, Your very own that You brought out by Your great might and outstretched arm.'''

Two New Tablets

10 ''At that time the LORD told me: 'Cut two stone tablets like the first, and come up to Me on the mountain. Also make an ark out of wood. ²Then I will write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, that you smashed, and you will put them in the ark.'

³''I made an ark of acacia wood, cut two stone tablets like the first, and went up the mountain with the two tablets in my hands. ⁴He wrote on the tablets the same as on the first, the Ten Statements the LORD spoke to you out of the fire on the mountain that day of the assembly, and the LORD gave them to me. ⁵I turned and came down the mountain and put the tablets in the ark I

^fHeb Taberah, Massah, and Kibrath-hattaavak

every living thing that went with them—⁷no, with your own eyes you've seen all the great work the LORD has done.

⁸Keep all the commandments I'm now ordering you to do so that you will be strong, go in, and take the land you're about to cross into and take over. ⁹and you will live long in the land the LORD swore to your fathers to give them and their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey.

¹⁰The land you're about to enter and take over isn't like Egypt, that you left, where you used to sow your seed and then water it with your foot like a vegetable garden. ¹¹The land you're crossing into to take over is a land of hills and valleys, watered only as the rain falls from the sky. ¹²a land the LORD your God is looking after and His eyes are always watching, from the beginning to the end of the year. ¹³If you listen to My commandments that I today order you to keep, if you love the LORD your God and serve Him with all your mind and all your heart, ¹⁴then I will let rain fall on your land at the right time, the fall and *spring rains*, and you will gather your fresh grain, wine, and oil. ¹⁵I will give your animals grass in the field, and you will eat all you want.

¹⁶Be careful or you will be deceived and turn and serve other gods and worship them. ¹⁷Then the LORD will get very angry with you and shut up the sky so there will be no rain, and the ground will not produce anything, and you will quickly perish from the good land the LORD is giving you.

¹⁸Put these words of Mine in your minds and hearts, tie them on your hands to remind you, and let them

be bands on your foreheads; ¹⁹teach them to your children; talk of them when you sit at home, walk along the road, lie down, and get up. ²⁰And write them on the doorposts of your home and on your gates ²¹so that as long as the sky is over the earth you and your children will live in the land the LORD swore to your fathers to give them. ²²If you keep all these commandments I order you to keep, love the LORD your God, walk in all His ways, and are loyal to Him, ²³the LORD will drive out all these people ahead of you, and you will take the land of people greater and mightier than you. ²⁴Every place you set your foot on will be your own, whether in the desert or on Lebanon, from the Euphrates river to the western sea. ²⁵Everyone will have to yield to you. The LORD your God will make everybody in the land where you're going terrified and afraid of you as He promised you."

¹⁴ ²⁵ ²⁷

Blessing or Curse?

²⁶You see, today I'm laying before you a blessing and a curse: ²⁷a blessing if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God I now order you to keep; ²⁸a curse if you refuse to listen to them and turn from the way I now lay before you and run after other gods you don't know. ²⁹When the LORD your God brings you into the land you're about to enter and take over, place the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal. ³⁰Aren't they on the other side of the Jordan and on the road that goes west, in the country of the Canaanites who live in the Jordan valley, opposite Gilgal, by the terebinths of Moreh? ³¹You're going to cross the Jordan to go in and take the land the LORD your God is giving you, and

you will take it and live there. ²But be careful to do everything you're told in the laws and regulations I'm giving you today."

One Place to Worship

12 "These are the laws and regulations you must carefully keep in the land the LORD God of your fathers gives you to take as your own as long as you live in the land.

¹"Completely destroy all the places where the people you're driving out serve their gods: on the high mountains, on the hills, and under every green tree. ²Tear down their altars, smash their pillars, burn their sacred Asherah posts, cut down the images of their gods, and wipe out their names from their places.

³"Don't do what they do when you worship the LORD your God. ⁴The LORD your God will choose a place in all your tribes and put His name there. Turn for help only to the place where He will be, go there, ⁵and there bring your burnt offerings, sacrifices, tenth parts, the offerings you give by vow or by free choice, and the firstborn animals of your herds and flocks. ⁶Eat there in the presence of the LORD your God, and be happy with your families in everything you do, because the LORD your God has blessed you.

⁷"Don't in any way do what we're now doing here, where each one does what he thinks is right, ⁸because you haven't yet come to your place of rest, the heritage the LORD your God is giving you. ⁹But you will cross over the Jordan and live in the land the LORD your God is giving you as your own, and He will give you rest from all your enemies around you so that you will live

safely. ¹⁰Then to the place the LORD your God chooses as the place to put His name, there you must bring everything I demand of you: burnt offerings, sacrifices, the tenth parts, the gifts you bring, and every choice offering you vow to the LORD. ¹¹Be glad before the LORD your God with your sons, daughters, male and female servants, and the Levite who lives in your town because he has no property assigned to him as you have. ¹²Be careful not to bring burnt offerings in any place you happen to see: ¹³no, bring your burnt offerings to the place the LORD chooses in one of your tribes, and there do everything I demand of you. ¹⁴In any town butcher and eat all the meat you want as the LORD your God has blessed you; an unclean person or a clean one may eat it as if it were a gazelle or a deer. ¹⁵But don't eat the blood. Pour it on the ground like water. ¹⁶You are not to eat in your towns the tenth of your fresh grain, olive oil, or wine, the firstborn of your herds or flocks, or anything you vow or give by choice or any gift you bring. ¹⁷You must eat these before the LORD your God in the place the LORD your God chooses, you, your son and daughter, male and female servant, and the Levite in your town, and be glad before the LORD your God over everything you're doing. ¹⁸But be sure not to neglect the Levite as long as you live in your land. ¹⁹When the LORD your God gives you a large territory as He promised you and you say, 'I want to eat meat,' because you're hungry for meat, then eat all the meat you want. ²⁰If the place the LORD your God chooses to put His name is too far away, butcher any of your herd or flock that the LORD gives you as

He has instructed you, and eat all you want in your town. ²²Eat it as you would eat a gazelle or a deer: the unclean as well as the clean may eat it. ²³Strictly refuse to eat blood, because the blood is the life. Don't eat the life with the meat. ²⁴Don't eat it, but pour it on the ground like water. ²⁵If you avoid eating it, all will be well with you and your descendants: you will be doing what the LORD considers right. ²⁶But take with you the consecrated things you have on hand and those you have vowed, and come to the place the LORD chooses. ²⁷Offer burnt offerings, the meat with the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God, but pour out the blood of your sacrifices against the altar of the LORD your God, and eat the meat. ²⁸Be careful to listen to all these things I order you, so that you and your descendants may prosper forever because you do what the LORD your God considers good and right.

²⁹"When the LORD your God cuts off the nations where you're going and drives them out ahead of you and you take their land and live there, ³⁰be careful not to let yourself be trapped into following them, even after they've been destroyed ahead of you. Be careful not to ask about their idols and say, 'How did these people serve their gods? I want to do what they did.' ³¹Don't do for the LORD your God what they do for their gods, because everything they do the LORD abhors and hates; they even burned their sons and daughters in a fire to their gods.

³²"Be careful to do everything I order without adding to it or taking anything from it."

Kill Anyone Who Wants You to Worship Idols

13 "If one of you steps up as a prophet or a man with dreams and offers you a miracle or a wonder ²and the miracle or wonder he promises you happens, but he says, 'Let us follow other gods' (that you don't know), 'and let us serve them,' ³don't listen to what that prophet or that man with his dreams says. The LORD your God is testing you to see if you really love the LORD your God with all your mind and all your heart. ⁴Follow the LORD your God, fear Him, do what He orders, listen to what He says, serve Him, and be loyal to Him. ⁵That prophet or that man with his dreams must be killed because he told you to desert the LORD your God, who took you out of Egypt and freed you from slavery; he wanted to mislead you from the way the LORD your God ordered you to go. *Get rid of such wickedness.*

⁶"If your brother, your mother's son, or your son or daughter, or your wife who is dear to you, or your friend, as dear as life to you, secretly tempts you by saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods' (that you and your fathers haven't known), ⁷some of the gods of the other people around you, near or far, anywhere from one end of the world to the other. ⁸don't yield to him or listen to him, don't pity him, spare him, or shelter him. ⁹Kill him—your hand should be the first that is laid on him to kill him and afterwards the hands of all the other people. ¹⁰Stone him to death because he tried to mislead you to leave the LORD your God, who took you out of Egypt, where you were slaves. ¹¹When all Israel hears of it, they'll be afraid and

¹³
1 Rv 22:18-
19
1:2 Mt 24:24
Mk 13:22
5:1 Co 5:13

never again do anything wicked like that among you.

¹¹"If you hear it said that in one of your towns which the LORD your God gives you to live in ¹²certain scoundrels among you are misleading the people in their town by saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods' (that you don't know), ¹³then ask, inquire, and thoroughly investigate. If you prove it to be true that such an abominable thing was done among you, ¹⁴then kill the people of the town with the sword, destroy it completely with everything in it, including its cattle. ¹⁵Gather all its goods into the middle of its square and burn everything, the town and all its goods, for the LORD your God. It should always be a heap of ruins and never be built again. ¹⁶Don't let any of what is condemned to be destroyed stick to your hands; then the LORD will stop being angry and show you mercy and in His mercy allow you to grow to be many as He swore to your fathers. ¹⁷because you obey the LORD your God, doing what He orders as I order you now and doing what the LORD your God considers right."

Eat Only Clean Animals

14 ¹"You are the children of the LORD your God. So don't cut yourselves or shave the front of your head for the dead. ²You are a holy people of the LORD your God, and the LORD chose you from all the people on the earth to be His own.

³"Don't eat anything abhorrent to the LORD. ⁴You may eat the following animals: ox, sheep, goat, ⁵deer, gazelle, roebuck, wild goat, mountain goat, antelope, mountain sheep— ⁶you may eat

any animal with a divided hoof, that has a hoof divided in two, and that chews the cud. ⁷But among the animals that chew the cud or have a completely divided hoof don't eat the following: the camel, the rabbit, the rock badger; although they chew the cud; they don't have divided hoofs; they are unclean for you. ⁸And the pig—although its hoof is divided, it doesn't chew the cud; it is unclean for you. Don't eat the meat of these or touch their dead bodies.

⁹"Of everything that lives in the water you may eat the following: You may eat anything that has fins and scales. ¹⁰but don't eat anything that has no fins and scales; it is unclean for you.

¹¹"You may eat any clean bird. ¹²But don't eat the following: vulture, the griffon, the osprey, ¹³the buzzard, any kind of kite, ¹⁴any kind of crow, ¹⁵the ostrich, the nighthawk, the seagull, or any kind of falcon, ¹⁶the horned owl, the great owl, the ibis, ¹⁷the pelican, the carrion vulture, the cormorant, ¹⁸the stork, any kind of heron, the hoopoe, and the bat: ¹⁹also any winged insects are unclean for you and shouldn't be eaten. ²⁰You may eat any clean bird.

²¹"Don't eat anything that dies by itself. You may give it to the stranger living in your town to eat or sell it to a foreigner, but you are a holy people of the LORD your God.

"Don't boil a kid in its mother's milk."

The Tenth

¹"Every year be sure you take a tenth of everything that grows from your seed and comes from your field, ²and eat it before the LORD your God at the place He chooses to put His name. Eat the tenth of your

fresh grain, wine, and olive oil and the firstborn of your herds and your flock, so that you will learn always to fear the LORD your God.

²⁴“If you are so far away you can’t take the tenth part there because the place the LORD your God chose to put His name is too far away, then, when the LORD your God blesses you, ²⁵sell the tenth part, wrap up the money, and go to the place the LORD your God chooses. ²⁶With the money buy anything you want: bulls, sheep, and goats, wine, and liquor, anything you like, and eat before the LORD your God and be happy with your family. ²⁷But don’t neglect the Levite who lives in your town; he has no property assigned to him as you have.

²⁸“At the end of every three years bring out the whole tenth part of your crop for that year, and deposit it in your towns. ²⁹Since the Levite has no property assigned to him as you have, he, the foreigner, the orphan, and the widow who are in your towns can come and eat all they want, so that the LORD your God will bless you in everything you do.”

Every Seventh Year Cancel Debts

15 “Every seventh year you should cancel debts. ²This is how you should do it: If any of you lent money to a neighbor, cancel the debt and don’t force your fellow Israelite to pay it, because the LORD’s cancellation is proclaimed. ³You may collect it from a foreigner, but cancel your claim to anything of yours another Israelite has. ⁴There should of course be no poor among you, because the LORD your God will certainly bless you in the land the LORD your God is giving

you as your own ⁵if only you obey the LORD your God and carefully do everything He says, as I’m ordering you now. ⁶The LORD your God will bless you as He promised, and you will lend to many nations but borrow nothing; you will rule over many nations and not be ruled by them.

⁷“If in any of your towns in the land the LORD your God is giving you there is a fellow Israelite who is poor, don’t harden your heart and shut your hand against another poor Israelite, ⁸but be openhanded to him, and lend him enough for anything he needs.

⁹“Be careful you don’t get any wicked idea and think, ‘The seventh year when debts are canceled is near,’ and have a mean attitude toward your poor fellow Israelite and give him nothing. He will complain to the LORD about you, and you will be guilty of sin. ¹⁰Be sure to give to him, and don’t feel bad about giving to him, because the LORD your God will bless you for this in everything you do and undertake. ¹¹Since there will always be poor people in the country, I order you: Be openhanded to poor and needy fellow Israelites in your country.

Free the Slaves

¹²“If a fellow Israelite, a Hebrew man or woman, sells himself to you, he should be your slave for six years, but in the seventh you should let him go away free. ¹³But when you free him from serving you, don’t send him away empty-handed. ¹⁴Richly provide for him from your flock, threshing floor, and winepress, in which the LORD your God has blessed you. ¹⁵Remember you were a slave in Egypt, and the LORD

your God freed you; that's why I'm ordering you to do this.

¹⁶“But if he tells you, ‘I don't want to leave you,’ because he loves you and your family and is happy with you. ¹⁷then take an awl and drive it through his ear into the door; then he will always be your slave. And do the same with your female slave. ¹⁸It shouldn't seem hard for you to send him away free, because a hired man doing the work he did for six years would have cost twice as much, and the LORD your God will bless you in everything you do.”

The Firstborn Is the Lord's

¹⁹“Every firstborn male born among you in your herd and your flock is the LORD's holy one. Don't do any work with a firstborn calf, and don't shear the firstborn of your sheep. ²⁰You and your family should eat it before the LORD your God every year in the place the LORD chooses. ²¹But if it has a blemish, if it is lame or blind, or anything else is seriously wrong with it, don't sacrifice it to the LORD your God. ²²Eat it in your town, the unclean eating it as well as the clean as you would eat a gazelle or a deer. ²³But don't eat the blood; pour it on the ground like water.”

Three Festivals

16 “Observe the month of Abib, and celebrate the Passover of the LORD your God. One night in the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt. ²Sacrifice as the Passover an animal from your flock or herd to the LORD your God at the place the LORD chooses to put His name. ³Don't eat with it any bread with yeast. So as always to remember the day you left Egypt, eat for seven days bread

without yeast, the bread of suffering because you left Egypt in a big hurry. ⁴For seven days you should see no yeast throughout your territory. And none of the meat sacrificed in the evening of the first day should be left over till morning. ⁵You're not allowed to sacrifice the Passover in any of the towns the LORD your God is giving you ‘except the place the LORD your God chooses to put His name; there butcher your animal for the Passover in the evening as the sun goes down, the hour you left Egypt. ⁶Cook it and eat it at the place the LORD your God chooses. In the morning you may go back to your tents. ⁷Eat bread without yeast for six days, but on the seventh there is to be a meeting before the LORD your God; don't do any work on it.

⁸“Count seven weeks. Start counting them from the day you first use the sickle to cut the grain. ⁹Celebrate a festival of weeks to the LORD your God with as large a voluntary offering as you can give, as the LORD your God blesses you. ¹⁰Be happy before the LORD your God with your son and daughter, your male and female slave, the Levite in your town, the foreigner, the orphan, and the widow who are with you at the place the LORD your God chooses to put His name. ¹¹Remember you were a slave in Egypt; so do carefully what these laws say.

¹²“Celebrate the festival of booths for seven days after you bring in the products from your threshing floor and winepress, ¹³and in celebrating be happy with your son and daughter, your male and female slave, the Levite, the foreigner, the orphan, and the widow who are in your town. ¹⁴For seven days

celebrate the festival of the LORD your God in the place the LORD chooses, because the LORD your God will bless you in all your crops and everything you do; so be sure to be happy.

¹⁶“Three times a year all your men should visit the LORD your God at the place He chooses, for the festival of bread without yeast, the festival of weeks, and the festival of booths, but don’t visit the LORD empty-handed. ¹⁷Everyone should give what he can according to what the LORD your God gave you in blessing you.”

Be Just

¹⁸“In all your towns that the LORD your God is giving you appoint judges and officials for your tribes to judge the people with justice. ¹⁹Don’t be unjust or show favors to certain persons. Don’t take a bribe, because a bribe blinds the eyes of wise men and twists what righteous men say. ²⁰Strive for total justice, so that you will live and take the land the LORD your God is giving you.”

Wipe Out Idolatry

²¹“Don’t set up any wooden post as a sacred pole for Asherah beside the altar of the LORD your God that you make, ²²and don’t set up any holy stone pillar: these are things the LORD your God hates.

17 “Don’t sacrifice to the LORD your God a bull or a sheep that has a defect, any serious blemish, because this is abhorrent to the LORD your God.

²“If in any of the towns the LORD your God gives you there is found among you any man or woman who is evil enough before the LORD your

God to break His covenant, ³who goes and serves other gods and worships them: the sun, the moon, or the many stars in the sky, which I have forbidden, ⁴and you are told of it, inquire thoroughly, and if it proves to be true that such a disgusting thing was done in Israel, ⁵then take that man or woman who did this wicked thing out of your gates, and stone that man or woman to death. ⁶He should be killed on the statement of two or three witnesses but not on the statement of one witness. ⁷The witnesses should be the first to raise their hands to kill him, then all the other people. And so you must get rid of such wickedness among you.”

Priest, Judge, King

⁸“If there is a case too hard for you to decide, whether it involve murder, legal rights, assault, or any matters you disagree on in your town, then go up to the place the LORD your God chooses. ⁹When you come to the priests descended from Levi and the man who is judge at that time, ask them, and they will tell you what is right. ¹⁰Be guided by the decision of those who are at the place the LORD chooses, and carefully do just as they teach you. ¹¹Do what they teach you and tell you is right, and don’t turn right or left from what they tell you. ¹²If anyone is so rebellious as not to listen to the priest who is there to serve the LORD your God, or to the judge, that man must die; *get rid of such wickedness in Israel.* ¹³When all the people hear about it, they will be afraid and not show such rebellion again.

¹⁴“When you come to the land the LORD your God gives you and you take it and live there and you say,

¹⁷
6 Mt 18:16,
2 Co 12:1,
1 Tim 5:19,
Heb 10:28
7 1 Co 5:13
12 1 Co 5:13

'I'll appoint a king over me like all the other nations around me.' ¹³be sure to appoint as your king one the LORD your God chooses. Make one of your own people king over you; you're not allowed to appoint a foreigner, who is not of your people, to rule over you.

¹⁴'Be sure he doesn't increase the number of his horses or make the people return to Egypt to get more horses, since the LORD told you, 'Never again go back that way.' ¹⁵Nor should he have many wives to turn his heart away, or get a lot of gold and silver for himself.

¹⁶'When he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he should make himself a copy of this teaching on a scroll, from the one kept by the priests descended from Levi. ¹⁷He must keep it with him and read it all his life to learn to fear the LORD his God and carefully do everything this teaching and these laws tell him: ¹⁸then he will not think he's above the rest of his people or turn away from the commandments to the right or the left; then he and his sons will continue long on the throne in Israel.'

How the Levites Get Their Living

18 'The priests, descended from Levi, like the rest of the tribe of Levi, will have no property assigned to them with the rest of Israel. They should live on the offerings made by fire to the LORD and on what belongs to the LORD. ²Levites will have no property among the other people of Israel; the LORD is their property as He promised them. ³When the people sacrifice either a bull or a sheep, the priests should get the following: the shoulder, the cheeks, and the stomach. ⁴Give him also the first

part of your fresh grain, wine, and olive oil and the first shearing of your sheep.

⁵'From all your tribes the LORD your God chose Levi and his descendants always to stand ready to serve in the LORD's name. ⁶When a Levite comes from one of your towns anywhere in Israel where he has been living and with a whole-hearted desire comes to the place the LORD chooses ⁷and serves in the name of the LORD his God like all his fellow Levites who stand there before the Lord, ⁸he should get the same share of food as they, besides what he gets from selling his family's goods.'

Fortune-Telling

⁹'When you come to the land the LORD your God gives you, don't learn to do the abominable things those nations did. ¹⁰There must not be found among you anyone who makes his son or daughter pass through fire, one who uses divination or soothsaying, one who can tell good or bad luck by signs, one who uses sorcery ¹¹or words to cast a spell, one who is a medium, one who is a wizard, or one who consults the dead. ¹²The LORD detests all who do these things, and for such abominable things the LORD your God is driving them out ahead of you. ¹³Be perfect before the LORD your God. ¹⁴These nations you are driving out listen to those who practice witchcraft and divination, but the LORD your God doesn't let you do anything like that.'

The Coming Prophet

¹⁵'The LORD your God will raise a Prophet for you, one of you, an Israelite, like me; listen to Him. ¹⁶This is what you asked the LORD

¹³ Mt 5:40
¹⁵ Acts 3:22;
23; 7:37;
Mt 9:7;
Lk 9:25

your God to give you when you were assembled at Horeb, saying: 'I must not hear the LORD my God speak again or see this great fire again, or I'll die.' ¹⁷The LORD told me: 'They're right in what they ask. ¹⁸I will raise a Prophet for them, One of their fellow Israelites, like you; I will have Him speak My Word, and He will tell them everything I order Him. ¹⁹If anyone will not listen to what He says for Me, I will punish him.

²⁰But the prophet who is so brazen as to say something for Me I didn't order him to say or who speaks for other gods, that prophet must die. ²¹Perhaps you think of asking, 'How can we tell what the LORD has not said?' ²²If a prophet speaks for the LORD, but it doesn't happen or come true, then the LORD didn't say it. The prophet has been brazen to say it. Don't be afraid of him."

¹⁸⁻¹⁹ Acts 22-23, 7:37
¹⁹
¹⁵ Mt 18:16
² Co 12:1
¹ Tim 5:19
 Heb 10:28

Cities of Refuge

19 "When the LORD your God destroys all the nations whose land the LORD gives you and you take it and live in their towns and homes, ²set aside three cities in the land the LORD your God is letting you have. ³Provide roads to them, and divide the area of your country that the LORD gives you into three parts, so that anyone who has killed another can flee to one of them.

"Take the case of a killer who flees there to stay alive, one who strikes someone unintentionally and without hating him before: ³Say he goes into the woods with his neighbor to cut wood, and his hand swings the ax to cut down a tree, and the head slips off the handle and happens to strike his neighbor

so he dies—then he should flee to one of these cities to stay alive. ⁴Otherwise the avenging relative, while he feels angry, may come after the killer, catch up with him if the place is too far away, and kill him although he doesn't deserve to die, not having hated him before this. ⁵And so I order you: Set aside three cities for yourselves.

⁶"If the LORD your God enlarges your territory as He swore to your fathers and gives you all the land He promised to give your fathers, ⁷if you carefully do everything you are told to do in these commandments I now order you to keep, and you love the LORD your God and always follow His ways, then add three other cities to these three, ⁸so that no innocent person has to die in the country the LORD your God gives you as your own, making you guilty of murder.

"But if a man hates his neighbor, lies in ambush for him, attacks him, beats him to death, then flees to one of these cities, ¹²then the elders of his town should send men to get him from there and hand him over to the avenging relative to die. ¹³Don't pity him, but rid Israel of the guilt of murder, and you will prosper.

"Don't change the boundary-stone between you and your neighbor, which those who lived there first set on the property you inherit in the land the LORD your God is letting you take."

Witnesses

¹⁵"A single witness should not get up to testify against anyone about any wickedness, sin, or wrong he may have done. *Each case should be settled on the evidence of two or three witnesses.* ¹⁶If a spiteful witness gets up to accuse anyone of

turning against God. "the two men in dispute should appear before those who are the priests and judges before the LORD at the time. "Then the judges should inquire carefully. If they find the witness is a liar who is falsely accusing his fellow Israelite. "then do to him what he planned to do to his neighbor, and so get rid of such wickedness among you. "And the rest will listen and be afraid and never again do such a wicked thing among you. "Don't pity him, but take a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, and a foot for a foot."

When There's War

20 "When you go out to fight against your enemies and see horses and chariots, a bigger army than yours, don't be afraid of them, because the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt is with you. "When there's a battle ahead of you, a priest should step forward and talk to the troops. "Listen, Israel," he should tell them, "today you're going to fight against your enemies. Don't let them make you feel timid, afraid, alarmed, or terrified. 'because the LORD your God is going with you to fight your enemies for you and give you the victory.'

"The officers should tell the troops: 'Has anyone built a new house and not dedicated it? Go back home, or you may die in battle and another man will dedicate it. 'Has anyone planted a vineyard and not started to enjoy its grapes? Go back home, or you may die in battle and someone else will start enjoying its grapes. 'Has anyone become engaged to a woman and not married her? Go back home, or you

may die in battle and someone else will marry her.'

"The officers should also tell the troops: 'Is anyone afraid and timid? Go back home, and don't make the other Israelites cowards like yourself.'

"When the officers are done talking to the troops, they should appoint commanders to lead them.

"When you come near a town to attack it, call on it not to fight. "If it submits peacefully and opens its gates to you, then all the people found there should be made your slaves and should serve you. "If it will not submit peacefully to you but fights against you, then besiege it. "When the LORD your God puts it in your hands, kill every male in it with the sword, "but the women and children, the cattle and everything else in the town, all its goods, take as your spoils, and live on your enemies' goods that the LORD your God gives you. "Do this to all the towns that are far away, towns that don't belong to these people nearby. "But in the towns of these local people that the LORD your God is giving you as your own, don't keep anyone alive, "but completely destroy them—Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites—as the LORD your God orders you, "so they will not teach you to do all the abhorrent things they have done for their gods, making you sin against the LORD your God.

"When you besiege a town a long time as you fight against it to take it, don't destroy its fruit trees, cutting them down with an ax, because you can get food from them; don't cut them down. The trees of the field are not men for you to besiege. "Destroy only the trees

¹⁹ 1 Co 5:13
²¹ Mt 5:28

you know bear fruit you cannot eat; cut them down and use them to build the siegeworks against the town that is fighting against you, till it falls."

When a Murderer Isn't Known

21 "If you find anyone lying murdered in a field in the country the LORD your God gives you to possess, but nobody knows who killed him, your elders and judges should go out and measure the distances from the dead body to the neighboring towns. Then the elders of the town nearest to the dead man should take a heifer that has never been put to work and never pulled under a yoke. The elders of that town should bring the heifer down to a ravine where a brook is always flowing but the ground isn't cultivated or sown, and there at the brook they should break the heifer's neck. Then the priests, descended from Levi, should come forward, because the LORD your God has chosen them to serve Him to bless in the LORD's name and settle cases wherever people quarrel or a blow is struck. Then all the elders of that town, because they live near the place where the dead man was found, should wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken at the brook and declare, 'Our hands didn't kill this man, and our eyes didn't see it done. LORD, forgive Your people Israel, whom You freed. Don't let innocent blood be shed among Your people Israel.' And so an atonement will be made for this bloodshed. You must get rid of the shedding of innocent blood if you are to do what the LORD considers right."

If You Marry a Prisoner

"When you go out to fight with your enemies and the LORD your God puts them in your hands and you take them prisoners and you see among the prisoners a beautiful woman with whom you fall in love, you may marry her. Take her into your home. She should shave her head, trim her nails, take off her prisoner's dress, then live in your home and mourn over her father and mother a month. Then start sex relations with her and be her husband, and she'll be your wife.

"But if then you don't like her anymore, let her go away where she pleases. Don't sell her for money or mistreat her as a slave, because you sexually humbled her."

Rights of the Firstborn

"If a man has two wives and loves the one and not the other, and both have children, but the unloved wife has the first son, when he gives what he has to his sons as their inheritance, he can't make the son of the wife he loves the firstborn, setting aside the unloved wife's son who is the firstborn, but he must recognize the unloved wife's son as the firstborn and give him a double share of everything he owns, because he is the first child of his vigor and has the right of the firstborn."

A Rebellious Son

"If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who refuses to obey his father and mother and will not listen when they correct him, his father and mother must take him and bring him to the elders of his town in the public square and say to the elders of his town, 'This

son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He refuses to obey us. He eats too much and drinks too much.' "All the men of his town should stone him to death; you must get rid of such wickedness among you. And when all Israel hears about it, they will be afraid."

Hanged Man—Cursed

"If anyone has done a wrong for which he deserves to die and is put to death and you hang him on a tree. "Don't let his body stay on the tree all night, but be sure to bury him the same day, because a hanged man is cursed by God. Don't make unclean the land the LORD your God gives you as your own."

Lost and Found

22 "When you see another Israelite's ox or sheep that's lost, don't go away without helping. Be sure to take it back to him. "If the other Israelite doesn't live near you and you don't know him, take it home with you. It should stay with you till your fellow Israelite comes to claim it; then give it back to him. "Do the same with his donkey, his clothes, or any article that he loses and you find—you must not refuse to help.

"If you see another Israelite's donkey or ox lying on the road, don't go away without helping. Be sure to help him lift it up."

Men's and Women's Clothes

"A woman shouldn't wear a man's things, and a man shouldn't wear a woman's clothes, because the LORD your God is disgusted with anyone who does these things."

Care of Birds

"If you happen to see along the

road a bird's nest in any tree or on the ground with young birds or eggs and the mother is sitting on the young or the eggs, don't take the mother with the young birds. "Be sure to let the mother go when you take the young birds, so that you will prosper and live long."

A Parapet

"When you build a new house, put up a low wall around the edge of your roof. Then you will not bring blood guilt on your home if anyone should fall from it."

No Mixing

"Don't sow in your vineyard another crop, or you will forfeit for sacred use everything that grows there, the seed you sow and the grapes of the vineyard.

"Don't plow with an ox and a donkey hitched together.

"Don't wear cloth woven of wool and linen.

"Make tassels of twisted threads on the four corners of the outer garment you use to cover yourself."

Sexual Purity

"If a man marries a woman and has intercourse with her and then hates her, "accuses her of things he's made up, and gives her a bad name by saying, 'I married this woman, but when I came to her, I found she wasn't a virgin,' "then the girl's father and mother should take the evidence of her being a virgin and bring it to the elders of the town at the gate. "The girl's father should tell the elders, 'I gave this man my daughter to be his wife, but he hates her "and now accuses her of things he's made up, saying, "I found your daughter

21
21:1 Co 5:11
21:22 Am 9:9
22:10-22
Ge 2:23

wasn't a virgin." But here is the proof that my daughter was a virgin"—and they should spread out the garment before the elders of the town. ¹⁸Then the elders of that town should take the man and punish him ¹⁹and fine him a hundred shekels of silver, giving it to the girl's father, because the husband gave a virgin in Israel a bad name. She will be his wife, and he can't divorce her as long as he lives.

²⁰"But if the claim is true and there was no proof the girl was a virgin, ²¹take the girl to the door of her father's home, and the men of her town should stone her to death because she has done a disgraceful thing in Israel by sinning sexually in her father's home. And so you must get rid of such wickedness among you.

²²"If a man is caught having intercourse with a married woman, both of them, the man who lay with the woman and the woman, must die, and so you must get rid of such wickedness in Israel.

²³"If in a town a man finds a young virgin who is engaged to another man and he lies with her, ²⁴take them both to the gate of that town and stone them to death, the girl because she didn't cry out, being in the town, and the man because he sexually violated another man's wife; and so you must get rid of such wickedness among you.

²⁵"But if the man finds the engaged girl in the country and the man rapes her, then only the man who lay with her must die. ²⁶Don't do anything to the girl; there's no sin for which the girl deserves to die; she is like one whom someone

attacks and kills. ²⁷He found her in the country; the engaged girl cried out, but there was nobody to save her.

²⁸"If a man finds a young virgin who isn't engaged and forces her to lie with him and they are caught, ²⁹the man who lay with her should give the girl's father fifty shekels of silver, and she should be his wife, because he sexually violated her. He can't divorce her as long as he lives.

³⁰"A man shouldn't marry his father's wife; he shouldn't have intercourse with her who belongs to his father."^b

Excluded Persons

23 "If anyone's testicles are crushed or his sex organ is cut off, he should not come into the LORD's congregation.

²¹⁻²² ²² ^{1 Co 5:5}
¹³
²⁴ ^{1 Co 5:13}
²³"No offspring from a forbidden marriage should come into the LORD's congregation; no descendant of his to the tenth generation should come into the LORD's congregation.

²⁴"No Ammonite or Moabite should come into the LORD's congregation; and no descendant of theirs to the tenth generation should ever come into the Lord's congregation, 'because they didn't meet you with food and water on the way after you left Egypt and because they hired Balaam, Beor's son from Pethor in Mesopotamia, to curse you. ²⁵But the LORD your God refused to listen to Balaam, and the LORD your God changed the curse into a blessing because the LORD your God loves you. ²⁶Never as long as you live should you try to make them happy or prosperous.

²⁷"Don't abhor the Edomite—he's

^bHeb remove the hem of his father's garment; see 27:20; Ruth 3:9; Ezek. 16:8

your relative; or the Egyptian—you were a foreigner in his country. ⁹Children born to them may come into the LORD's congregation in the third generation."

Keeping Clean

⁸"When you're out in a camp going against your enemies, keep yourselves from anything foul. ¹⁰If there's anyone among you who gets unclean by an emission at night, he should go outside the camp and not come into the camp. ¹¹When evening comes, he should wash, and when the sun goes down, he may come into the camp.

¹²"You should have a special place outside the camp where you can go. ¹³Carry a spade with your tools, and when you're going to sit down out there, dig a hole with it, sit down, and then cover what you leave. ¹⁴The LORD your God moves around in your camp to save you and put your enemies at your mercy, and so your camp should be holy that He may see nothing indecent among you and turn away from you."

Protect a Slave

¹⁵"When a slave flees to you from his master, don't hand him back to his master. ¹⁶Let him live with you, among your people, anywhere he chooses in one of your towns that seems best to him. Don't mistreat him."

Prostitutes

¹⁷"No woman in Israel should become a temple prostitute, and no man in Israel should become a temple prostitute. ¹⁸The money paid to a female prostitute or a male prostitute should not be brought into the house of the LORD your God to

keep a vow, because the LORD your God abhors both of them."

Interest

¹⁸"Don't charge your fellow Israelite any interest on money, food, or anything else that could be lent on interest. ²⁰You may have a foreigner pay interest but not a fellow Israelite, so that the LORD your God will bless you in everything you do in the land you're about to enter and take over."

Vows

²¹"When you make a vow to the LORD your God, don't put off paying it, because the LORD your God certainly demands it from you; it would be a sin. ²²If you don't make any vow, you're not sinning. ²³Be careful to do what you promised, since by your own choice you vowed to the LORD your God what you yourself promised."

Your Neighbor's Grapes and Grain

²⁴"When you go into your neighbor's vineyard, you may eat as many grapes as you like till you have enough, but don't put any in your container. ²⁵When you go into your neighbor's grainfield, you may pick the heads of grain with your hand, but don't use a sickle to cut your neighbor's grain."

Divorce

24 "Suppose a man marries a woman and goes to bed with her but doesn't like her because he finds something offensive about her, and he writes out a divorce paper for her, hands it to her, and sends her away from his home; ²then she leaves his home, goes away, and marries another man; ³if this last

²³
²¹ Mt 5:32
²⁴
¹ Mt 5:31;
¹⁹;
Mk 10:4

husband is also displeased with her, *writes out a divorce paper* for her, *hands it to her*, and sends her away from his home, or this last man who married her dies. ⁴in such case her first husband who divorced her is not allowed to marry her again, seeing that she was made unclean. The LORD would abhor that. Don't bring guilt on the land the LORD your God is giving you as your own."

Newlyweds

⁵"When a man is just married, he shouldn't go out with the army or get any special duty. For one year he should be free at home to make the woman he married happy."

Mercy to Debtors

⁶"Don't take a handmill or an upper millstone to guarantee paying a debt, because you would be taking life as your security."

3 Mt 5:31.
19:7.
Mk 10:4
7 1 Co 5:13

Kidnapping

⁷"If anyone is caught kidnapping another Israelite, treating him tyrannically or selling him, the kidnapper must die, and so you must get rid of such wickedness among you."

Leprosy

⁸"When there is an attack of leprosy, be very careful to do exactly as the priests descended from Levi instruct you; be careful to do as I ordered them. ⁹Remember what the LORD your God did to Miriam on the way after you left Egypt."

Lending Money

¹⁰"When you lend your neighbor anything, don't go into his house to get from him something to guarantee payment. ¹¹Wait outside till the

man you're lending to brings something out to you to guarantee payment. ¹²If the man is poor, don't sleep in the garment he gives you as security. ¹³Be sure to bring it back to him when the sun goes down. He will lie down in his garment and bless you, and it will be considered a righteous deed for you in the sight of the LORD your God."

Your Hired Man

¹⁴"Don't hold back the wages of a man who is poor and needy, whether he's another Israelite or a foreigner living in your country and your town. ¹⁵Pay him on the same day before the sun goes down, because he, being poor, has set his heart on it; otherwise he will accuse you before the LORD, and you will be guilty of sin."

Individual Responsibility

¹⁶"Fathers should not be killed for their children or children for their fathers. Only for his own crime should anyone be killed."

For Widows and Orphans

¹⁷"Don't violate the rights of strangers and orphans, and don't take a widow's dress to guarantee payment. ¹⁸Remember you were a slave in Egypt, and the LORD your God freed you from there; this is why I order you to do this.

¹⁹"When you're harvesting your field and forget a bundle in the field, don't go back to get it. The stranger, the orphan, and the widow should have it, so that the LORD your God will bless you in everything you do.

²⁰"When you have knocked the olives from your trees, don't go over the branches again. The stranger, the orphan, and the widow should have the rest.

²¹“When you pick the grapes of your vineyard, don’t pick it clean. The stranger, the orphan, and the widow should have the rest. ²²Remember you were a slave in Egypt; that’s why I order you to do this.”

Only 40 Blows

25 “When men disagree and go to court to have judges decide for them, to declare the innocent innocent and the guilty guilty, ²if the guilty one deserves to be beaten, the judge should make him lie down and have him beaten before him as many times as he deserves for his wrong. ³He may be struck forty times but no more. Otherwise if you strike him more times than this, your fellow Israelite will be disgraced too much.”

Let the Ox Eat

“Don’t muzzle an ox when it’s treading out grain.”

A Widow and Her Husband’s Brother

¹“When brothers live together and one of them *dies without a child*, his widow should not go outside the family and marry a stranger. *Her husband’s brother should marry her, have sex relations with her, and so do his duty as her husband’s brother.* ²Then the first son she has should count as the dead brother’s son, so that his name isn’t lost in Israel.

³“But if the man doesn’t want to marry his brother’s wife, she should go before the elders at the gate and say, ‘My husband’s brother refuses to give his brother an heir in Israel. He doesn’t want to do for me his duty as my husband’s brother.’ ⁴Then the elders of his town should call him and talk to him, and if he

persists and says, ‘I don’t want to marry her,’ ⁵his brother’s widow should go up to him while the elders are watching, take his shoe off his foot, spit in his face, and declare, ‘That’s what is done to a man who doesn’t build his brother’s family.’ ⁶His family in Israel should be called ‘the family of the man without a shoe.’ ”

Fight Fair

¹“If one man is fighting with another Israelite and the wife of one comes to rescue her husband from the other who is striking him and she reaches out and takes hold of his sex organs, ²cut off her hand without any pity.”

Honest Business

¹“Don’t have unequal weights in your bag, a heavy and a light one. ²Don’t have in your home unequal measures, a big ephah and a little one. ³Have a full and honest weight and a full and honest measure, so that you will live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you. ⁴The LORD abhors anyone who does evil things like this.”

Wipe Out Amalek

¹“Remember what the Amalekites did to you on the way after you left Egypt, ²how they met you on the way when you were exhausted and weary and cut off all who lagged behind because they were worn out. They didn’t fear God; ³so when the LORD your God gives you rest from all the enemies around you in the land the LORD your God is giving you as your own, wipe the memory of Amalek off the earth. Don’t forget!”

25
4:1 Co 9:9;
1 Tim 5:18
5:6 Mt 23:24;
Mk 12:19;
Lk 20:28

Firstfruits and Tenths

26 "When you come into the land the LORD your God is giving you as your own and you take it and settle there, ²take some of the first of everything the soil produces that you gather from the land the LORD your God is giving you and put it in a basket, then go to the place where the LORD your God chooses to put His name. ³Go to the man who is the priest at that time, and tell him, 'I declare today to the LORD God that I have come into the land the LORD swore to our fathers to give us.' ⁴Then the priest should take the basket from your hand and set it down in front of the altar of the LORD your God. ⁵And you should declare before the LORD your God: 'My father was a wandering Aramean. He went down to Egypt, being only a few, and stayed there as a foreigner. But there he became a great nation, mighty and large. ⁶But the Egyptians mistreated us, made us suffer and work hard for them. ⁷We cried to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard us: He saw how we were suffering, toiling, and being oppressed, ⁸and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terrors, with miracles and wonders. ⁹He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰And now I bring the firstfruits of the ground You gave me, LORD.' Set it down before the LORD your God, and worship the LORD your God. ¹¹Then you, your family, the Levite, and the foreigner living among you should feast on all the good things the LORD your God has given you.

¹²"When you have finished taking

all the tenth parts of your products in the third year, the year when the tenth is taken, and have given them to the Levite, the foreigner, the orphan, and the widow to eat in your towns—all they want— ¹³then say in the presence of the LORD your God: 'I have cleared these holy offerings out of my home and given them to the Levite, the foreigner, the orphan, and the widow just as You ordered me, without breaking or forgetting any of Your commandments. ¹⁴I ate none of it while I was mourning, got rid of none of it because of uncleanness, and gave none of it for the dead. I listened to the LORD my God; I did just as You ordered me. ¹⁵Look down from Your holy dwelling, from heaven, and bless Your people Israel and the land You gave us as You swore to our fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey.'

¹⁶"Today the LORD your God orders you to do what these laws and regulations say. And be careful to do it with all your mind and all your heart. ¹⁷You have declared today that the LORD is your God and that you will live in His ways, keep His laws, commandments, and regulations, and listen to Him. ¹⁸And the LORD has declared today that you are *His own people* as He told you, but you must do everything He orders you. ¹⁹He will then place you high above all the other nations He made, in honor, renown, and glory, and you will be a holy people to the LORD your God as He promised."

Write the Law on Stones

27 Moses with the elders of Israel gave orders to the people: "Do everything I today order you to do.

²⁶
¹⁸ 2 Co 6:16;
 Titus 2:14;
 1 Pt 2:9;
 Rev 21:3,7

"And the day you go over the Jordan to the land the LORD your God is giving you, set up large stones, and whitewash them with lime. ³Write on them all the words of this law after you have crossed over to enter the land the LORD your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, promised you. 'After you have crossed the Jordan, set up these stones, about which I'm giving you instructions today, on Mount Ebal, and whitewash them with lime. ⁴Build an altar there to the LORD your God, an altar of stones on which you use no iron tool. ⁵Build the altar of the LORD your God with uncut stones. Sacrifice burnt offerings on it to the LORD your God. ⁶Make peace offerings and eat them there and be happy before the LORD your God. ⁷And on the stones write very clearly all the words of this law."

"Then Moses and the priests descended from Levi said to all Israel: "Be silent and listen, Israel. You have now become a people of the LORD your God. ¹⁰Listen to the LORD your God, do what He orders and prescribes as I order you today."

Curses

"That day Moses gave the people orders: ¹²"After you have crossed the Jordan, the following tribes should stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, Benjamin. ¹³And the following should stand on Mount Ebal for the cursing: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali.

"Then the Levites should

declare with a loud voice to everyone in Israel:

¹⁴" 'A curse on anyone who makes a carved or cast idol, abhorred by the LORD, the work of a skilled workman, and sets it up in a secret place.' And all the people should answer, 'Yes, so be it!'

¹⁵" 'A curse on anyone who despises his father and his mother.' And all the people should say, 'Yes, so be it!'

¹⁶" 'A curse on anyone who moves the borderline between him and his neighbor.' And all the people should say, 'Yes, so be it!'

¹⁷" 'A curse on anyone who on the road leads a blind man astray.' And all the people should say, 'Yes, so be it!'

¹⁸" 'A curse on anyone who violates the rights of a foreigner, an orphan, or a widow.' And all the people should say, 'Yes, so be it!'

¹⁹" 'A curse on anyone who lies with his father's wife, because he has a shameful relation with her who belongs to his father.' And all the people should say, 'Yes, so be it!'

²⁰" 'A curse on anyone who lies with any animal.' And all the people should say, 'Yes, so be it!'

²¹" 'A curse on anyone who lies with his sister, his father's daughter or his mother's daughter.' And all the people should say, 'Yes, so be it!'

²²" 'A curse on anyone who lies with his mother-in-law.' And all the people should say, 'Yes, so be it!'

²³" 'A curse on anyone who secretly strikes another man.' And all the people should say, 'Yes, so be it!'

²⁴" 'A curse on anyone who takes a bribe to murder an innocent

¹See note on 22:30

person.' And all the people should say, 'Yes, so be it!'

²⁶... 'A curse on him who doesn't carry out what this law says by doing it.' And all the people should say, 'Yes, so be it!'

The LORD Will Bless You

28 'If you will really listen to the LORD your God and carefully do everything He tells you in His commandments that I now order you to keep, the LORD your God will place you high above all the other nations in the world. ²and all the following blessings will come to you and overtake you because you listened to the LORD your God. ³You will be blessed in the town and blessed in the country. ⁴Your children will be blessed, and what your ground produces, the young of your animals, the calves of your cattle, and the lambs of your flocks. ⁵Your basket will be blessed and your dough pan. ⁶You will be blessed when you come and blessed when you go. ⁷When your enemies attack you, the LORD will lay them beaten before you. They will come against you one way and run away from you seven ways. ⁸The LORD will order you to be blessed in your barns and in everything you're doing, and so He will bless you in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

⁹...The LORD will make you His holy people as He swore to you if you do what the LORD your God orders and live in His ways. ¹⁰Then all the people in the world will see you live under the LORD's name, and they will be afraid of you.

¹¹...The LORD will give you plenty of good things: Your wives will have children, your stock will have young, and your ground will give you its

crops in the land the LORD swore to your fathers to give you. ¹²The LORD will open for you His rich storehouse in heaven, in its season let rain fall on your land, and bless everything you do. Then you will lend to many nations and borrow from none. ¹³The LORD will make you the head, not the tail, and you will always be on top, never at the bottom, if you obey what the LORD your God orders that I now order you carefully to do. ¹⁴From the things I order now don't turn right or left to run after other gods and worship them."

The LORD Will Punish You

¹⁵...But if you will not obey the LORD your God and will not carefully do everything He says in His commandments and laws that I now order you to keep, all the following curses will come on you and overtake you. ¹⁶You will be cursed in the town and cursed in the country. ¹⁷Your basket will be cursed and your dough pan. ¹⁸Your children will be cursed and what your soil produces, the calves of your cattle, and the lambs of your flocks. ¹⁹You will be cursed when you come and cursed when you go.

²⁰...The LORD will send you curses, panic, and threats of destruction in everything you do till you're wiped out and you perish quickly for the evil you do in forsaking Me. ²¹The LORD will make the plague cling to you till He wipes you off the land you're about to enter and take over. ²²The LORD will strike you with disease, fever, inflammation, burning heat, drought, a scorching wind, and mildew, and they will pursue you till you perish. ²³The sky over your head will be copper, and the ground under you iron.

²⁷
²⁶ ^{GI 3:10}

24“The LORD will make the rain on your ground powder and dust falling on you from the sky till you’re destroyed. **25**The LORD will have you defeated before your enemies. You will go against them one way and run away from them seven ways. To all the kingdoms in the world you will become a horror. **26**Your dead bodies will be food for all the birds in the sky and the animals on the ground, and nobody will scare them away.

27“The LORD will strike you with Egyptian boils, with tumors, scabs, and itch that can’t be cured. **28**The LORD will make you mad, blind, and confused, so that you will be groping at noon like a blind man groping in the dark. **29**And you will not succeed in what you do, being only oppressed and robbed all the time with nobody to rescue you. **30**You will be engaged to a woman, and someone else will violate her; you will build a home and not live in it. You will plant a vineyard and not eat its grapes. **31**You will see your bull butchered and not eat of it. Your donkey will be snatched away right under your eyes and will not come back to you. Your flock will be given to your enemies, and nobody will rescue them for you. **32**Your sons and daughters will be given to another people, and your eyes will be weary with longing all day watching for them, but there’ll be nothing you can do.

33“A people you don’t know will eat what your soil and your work produces, and you will always be only oppressed and crushed. **34**What your eyes see will drive you mad. **35**The LORD will strike you with bad boils that can’t be cured, on your knees and legs, from the sole of your feet to the crown of your head.

36“The LORD will bring you and the man you make your king to a nation you and your fathers didn’t know, and there you will serve other gods, made of wood and stone. **37**And among all the peoples where the LORD will drive you, you will be a thing of horror, a byword and an object of scorn.

38“You will sow much seed in your fields and get little because the grasshopper will eat it. **39**You will plant vineyards and take care of them, but you will drink no wine nor gather grapes, because the worms will eat them. **40**You will have olive trees everywhere in your country but no oil to anoint yourself, because your olives will drop off. **41**You will have sons and daughters and then be without them because they will go away into captivity. **42**The grasshopper will take all your trees and crops on your ground. **43**The foreigner who lives among you will rise higher and higher above you, while you will sink lower and lower. **44**He will lend to you, and you will not lend to him. He will be the head and you the tail.

45“All these curses will come on you, pursue you, and overtake you till you’re wiped out, because you didn’t obey the LORD your God or do what He ordered you to do in His commandments and laws. **46**They will be a sign and wonder to warn you and your descendants forever.

47“Since you didn’t serve the LORD your God with joy and a happy heart when you had so much of everything, **48**you will serve your enemies, whom the LORD will send against you, and be hungry, thirsty, naked, and lacking everything. And He will put an iron yoke on your neck till He wipes you out.

49“The LORD will bring against

28
29 **30** **31** **32**

you a nation from far away, from the most distant part of the world, swooping down on you like a vulture, a nation whose language you can't understand. ⁵⁰a people with a hard face, with no respect for the old and no kindness for the young. ⁵¹They'll eat the young of your cattle and the crops on your ground till you're wiped out, leaving you no fresh grain, wine, or olive oil, no calves of your cattle or lambs of your flocks till they've destroyed you. ⁵²They'll besiege you in all your towns till your highest and strongest walls you trust in crumble everywhere in your country; they'll besiege you in all the towns the Lord your God gave you. ⁵³so that when your enemies besiege and oppress you, you will eat your own children, the flesh of your sons and daughters, whom the LORD your God gave you. ⁵⁴Even the most tender and well-bred man among you will become mean to his brother, the wife he loved, and the children he still has left. ⁵⁵He will give none of them any flesh of his children whom he eats, because he will have nothing left, so besieged and oppressed will you be by your enemies everywhere in your towns. ⁵⁶The most tender and well-bred lady among you, so well-bred and tender she doesn't dare to set her foot on the ground, will become mean to the husband she loved, to her son and daughter. ⁵⁷She will not share with them the afterbirth coming from her body and the children she bears but will secretly eat them for lack of everything, so besieged and oppressed will you be by your enemies in your towns.

⁵⁸"If you are not careful to do everything in this law, everything written in this book, and to fear this wonderful and awesome name THE

LORD YOUR GOD, ⁵⁹the LORD will bring extraordinary plagues on you and your descendants, great and continual plagues and severe diseases lasting a long time. ⁶⁰He will bring back on you every disease of the Egyptians that you dread, and they will cling to you. ⁶¹The Lord will bring on you also every kind of sickness and plague not written in this book of the law till you're wiped out. ⁶²There will be only a few left where once you were as many as the stars in the sky, because you didn't obey the LORD your God. ⁶³Just as the LORD once delighted in making you a happy and large people, so the LORD will delight in destroying and wiping you out, and you will be torn from the land you're about to enter and take over. ⁶⁴And the LORD will scatter you among all the people from one end of the world to the other, and there you will serve other gods, made of wood and stone, that you and your fathers didn't know. ⁶⁵Among those nations you will find no peace, no place for your foot to rest. There the LORD will make your heart tremble, your eyes pine away with longing, and your life waste away. ⁶⁶Your life will always be in doubt, you will live in terror day and night, and you'll never feel sure of your life. ⁶⁷In the morning you'll say, 'If only it were evening,' and in the evening you'll say, 'If only it were morning,' because of the things your heart will dread and your eyes will see.

⁶⁸"The LORD will bring you in sorrow back to Egypt on the very road I told you you wouldn't see again, and you men and women will try to sell yourselves to your enemies as slaves, but nobody will buy you."

Don't Break the Covenant

29 These are the words of the covenant the LORD ordered Moses to make with Israel in the land of Moab besides the covenant He made with them at Horeb.

¹Moses called to all Israel and told them: "You saw everything the LORD did before your eyes in Egypt to Pharaoh, all his servants and his whole country. ²the great testings you saw with your eyes, the miracles, and those great wonders, ³and yet till this day the LORD hasn't given you a mind to understand, eyes to see, or ears to listen. ⁴For forty years I led you in the wilderness: Your clothes didn't wear out on you, your shoes didn't wear out on your feet. ⁵You had no bread to eat and no wine or liquor to drink, to show you I the LORD am your God. ⁶When you came to this place, Sihon, king of Heshbon, and Og, king of Bashan, came out to fight with us, but we defeated them. ⁷We took their land and gave it to Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh as their inheritance. ⁸Carefully do what this covenant tells you, so that you will succeed in everything you do.

⁹"You stand today, all of you, before the LORD your God—your leaders, your tribes, your elders, and your officers, all the men of Israel. ¹⁰your children, your wives, and the strangers in your camp from the man who cuts your wood to the one who draws your water— ¹¹to enter into the covenant of the LORD your God and the sworn agreement the LORD your God is making with you today, ¹²to make you today His people and He will be your God as He promised you and swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and

Jacob. "I make this covenant and this sworn agreement not only with you ¹³but with those who are with us here standing before the LORD our God and with those who are not here with us today. ¹⁴You know those we lived among in Egypt and the nations we passed through. ¹⁵and you saw their abominable things and their idols of wood, stone, silver, and gold that they had. ¹⁶There should be no man, woman, family, or tribe whose heart is now turning away from the LORD our God to go and serve the gods of those nations; there should be among you no root sprouting poison and worm-wood; ¹⁷a man that hears the statements of this sworn agreement and congratulates himself, saying, 'I'll get along well even if I go my stubborn way'—in such a case the well-watered ground will be snatched away with the dry. ¹⁸The LORD isn't willing to forgive him, because the LORD's anger and jealousy burns against such a man, and every curse written in this book will settle on him, and the LORD will blot out his name in the world. ¹⁹And the LORD will single him out from all the tribes of Israel for disaster according to all the curses of the covenant written in this book of the law.

²⁰"Then the people of a later age, your children, who will come after you, and the foreigner coming from a distant country will look and see the plagues of this country and the diseases the LORD inflicted on it, ²¹all its soil being sulfur and salt, a burnt-out place where nothing is sown, nothing sprouts, and no grass grows, like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zebaiim, which the LORD destroyed in His

²⁰
4 Ro 11:8
13 2 Co 6:16,
Titus 2:14;
1 Pt 2:9;
Nu 21:2,7
18 Acts 8:23;
Heb 12:15

fierce anger. ²⁴Then all people will ask, 'Why did the LORD do that to this country? Why did His terrible anger blaze like this?' ²⁵And the answer will be, 'Because they left the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers, that He made with them when He took them out of Egypt; ²⁶they went and served other gods and worshipped them, gods they didn't know and He hadn't assigned to them. ²⁷Then the LORD's anger blazed against this country, bringing on it every curse written in this book. ²⁸In His blazing anger and great fury the LORD plucked them out of their country and hurled them into another country where they are today.'

²⁹'What is still hidden is in the hands of the LORD our God, but what is revealed is for us and our children forever that we should do everything this law says.'

30
4 Mt 24:31,
4 Mk 13:27
12 Ro 10:6
14 Ro 10:8

I Will Bring You Back

30 "When all these things happen to you, the blessings and the curses I put before you, and you again take them to heart wherever among all the nations the LORD your God has driven you, ²if you and your children return to the LORD your God and obey Him with all your mind and all your heart every way I'm now ordering you, ³then the LORD your God will restore you: He will have mercy on you and gather you again from all the people where the LORD your God scattered you. ⁴Even if you are driven to the end of the world, the LORD your God will gather you and snatch you away from there. ⁵The LORD your God will bring you to the land your fathers owned, and you will take it, and He will make you a happier and

larger people than your fathers. ⁶The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your mind and all your heart and will live. ⁷Then the LORD your God will put all these curses on your enemies, those who hated you and pursued you. ⁸And you will again obey the LORD and do everything He says in His commandments I'm now giving you. ⁹The LORD your God will give you plenty of good things in everything you do: the children of your body, the young of your cattle, the crops on your land. The LORD will again delight in making you happy as He delighted in your fathers ¹⁰when you obey the LORD your God and do what He says in His commandments and laws written in this book of the law, when you return to the LORD your God with all your mind and heart.

¹¹'What I order you now isn't too hard for you or far away from you. ¹²It is not in heaven that you should ask, 'Who will go up to heaven for us and get it for us and tell us about it so we may do it?' ¹³Nor is it beyond the sea that you should ask, 'Who will go over the sea and get it for us and tell us about it so we may do it?' ¹⁴No, this word is very close to you, in your mouth and in your mind so you will do it.'

Life or Death

¹⁵'You see, today I put before you life and happiness, death and misery ¹⁶as I order you today to love the LORD your God, follow in His ways, and do what He says in His commandments, laws, and regulations. Then you will live and grow in number, and the LORD your

God will bless you in the land you're about to enter and take over. ¹⁷But if your hearts turn away and you won't listen but are misled to worship other gods and serve them. ¹⁸I tell you today you'll certainly perish and not live long in the land you're crossing the Jordan to take over. ¹⁹I call on heaven and earth as witnesses against you today that I have put life and death before you, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, so that you and your descendants will live, ²⁰by loving the LORD your God, obeying Him, and being loyal to Him, because that means life to you, a long life in the land the LORD swore to give your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

Joshua Will Lead Israel

31 Moses went and spoke the following to all Israel. ²¹"I'm a hundred and twenty years old now," he told them, "and no longer able to come and go. The LORD has told me, 'You shall not go over this Jordan.' ²²The LORD your God Himself will lead you over it. He will wipe out these nations ahead of you, and you will take their land. Joshua will lead you over the Jordan as the LORD told you. ²³The LORD will do to them what He did to Sihon and Og, kings of the Amorites, and their cities when He wiped them out. ²⁴When the LORD hands them over to you, do to them just as I ordered you. ²⁵Be strong and courageous, don't be afraid or tremble before them, because the LORD your God is going with you and *will not leave you or forsake you.*"

²⁶Then Moses called Joshua and told him before all Israel: "Be strong and courageous, because you will go

with these people into the land the LORD swore to their fathers to give them, and you will divide the land among them. ²⁷The LORD is leading you. He will be with you and *not leave you or forsake you*. Don't be afraid or terrified."

²⁸Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests descended from Levi, who carried the ark of the LORD's covenant, and to all the elders of Israel. ²⁹Moses gave them the following instructions: "Every seventh year, at the time of the year when debts are canceled, at the festival of booths, ³⁰when all Israel comes to visit the LORD your God at the place He chooses, read this law to Israel and let them hear it. ³¹Gather the people, men, women, and children, and the foreigner who is in your towns, have them listen and learn to fear the LORD your God and carefully do everything this law says. ³²and have their children, who don't know it, hear and learn to fear the LORD your God as long as you live in the land you're going across the Jordan to take over."

³³The LORD told Moses: "Now the time has come for you to die. Call Joshua, stand at the tent where I meet with you, and I will give him his orders."

Moses and Joshua went and stood at the tent where God met with them. ³⁴Then the LORD appeared at the tent in a pillar of cloud, and the pillar of cloud stood at the entrance of the tent.

Write a Song to Warn Them

³⁵The LORD told Moses: "Now you will be resting with your fathers, and these people will start to run like a prostitute after the strange gods of the land where they're going,

²¹
8 Heb 12:5
8 Heb 12:5

to live among them, and they will forsake Me and break the covenant I made with them. "Then I will be very angry with them, leave them, and hide My face from them. They will be ready to be devoured, and many disasters and distresses will come on them, and they will ask, 'Haven't these disasters come on us because our God isn't among us?' "Then I will certainly hide My face because of all the wrong they've done in turning to other gods. "And now write this song, teach it to the Israelites, and have them repeat it so that this song will be a witness for Me against the Israelites. "When I bring them to the land I swore to give their fathers, flowing with milk and honey, they will eat all they want and be fat and turn to other gods and serve them, despising Me and breaking My covenant. "When many disasters and distresses come on them, this song will be a witness against them because their descendants will repeat it and not forget it. I know what they're thinking of doing, even now before I bring them into the land I swore to give them."

"At that time Moses wrote the following song and taught it to the Israelites.

"The LORD ordered Joshua, Nun's son: "Be strong and courageous." He said, "because you will bring the Israelites into the land I swore to give them, and I will be with you."

"When Moses had completely finished writing this whole law in a scroll, "he gave instructions to the Levites who carried the ark of the LORD's covenant and told them: "Take this scroll of the law, and put it beside the ark of the covenant

of the LORD your God, and there it will be a witness against you, "because I know how rebellious and stubborn you are. If even now, while I'm still living with you, you continue to rebel against the LORD, how much worse will it be after I'm dead? "Gather all the elders of your tribes and your officers before me, and as they listen I will tell them these things and call heaven and earth as witnesses against them. "I know after I'm dead you will become corrupt and turn from the way I ordered you to go, and later disaster will come on you because you will provoke the LORD by the wrong you do in His presence."

Moses' Song

"Then, as the whole congregation of Israel listened, Moses recited this song till it was finished:

32
4 Rv 15:3
5 Phil 2:15

32 "Hear, heavens, and I will speak.

Listen, earth, to what I say.

"May my teaching come down like rain,

my words like drops of dew,
like raindrops on young grass,
like showers on green plants.

"I will tell about the LORD's name.

Praise our God for His greatness!

"The Rock! What He does is perfect:

yes, all His ways are right.

A faithful God, without any wrong,

just and right is He.

"Those who are not His children have become corrupt toward Him;

they are a twisted and crooked people.

⁶Is this how you repay the LORD,
you foolish and senseless
people?

Isn't He your Father who bought
you,
made you, and established you?

⁷Remember the days long ago,
think of ages past;
ask your father to inform you,
your elders to tell you.

⁸When the Most High God gave
nations their land,
when He divided mankind,
He set boundaries for different
people
according to the number of the
sons of Israel.ⁱ

⁹But the LORD's portion was His
people;

Jacob was the heritage He
measured out for Himself.

¹⁰He found him in a wilderness,
in a wasteland where animals
howl.

He surrounded him, watched
over him,
and guarded him like the pupil of
His eye.

¹¹Like an eagle that stirs up his
nestlings,
then hovers over his young;
spreading his wings, he catches
them
and carries them on his
feathers;

¹²so the LORD alone leads him,
and there's no strange god with
Him.

¹³He makes him ride on the
mountain heights
and feeds him on the harvest.
He lets him suck honey from
craggs,
olive oil from flinty rocks.

¹⁴cheese from the cows,
and milk from the flock,
also the best of lambs
and rams grown in Bashan,
he-goats and the finest of wheat,
the blood of grapes to drink as
foaming wine.

¹⁵Jacob ate and was filled,^k
Jeshurun got fat and kicked.
(You got fat and plump and
gorged.)

They left the God who made
them
and treated as a fool the Rock
who saved them.

¹⁶They made Him jealous of
strange gods
and angered Him with their
abominations.

¹⁷They sacrificed to demons that
are no gods.

to gods they didn't even know,
new ones, recently coming in,
whom your fathers didn't know.

¹⁸You forget the Rock who bore
you^l

and no longer think of the God
who gave you birth.

¹⁹When the LORD sees His sons
and daughters,

He scorns them because they
make Him angry.

²⁰I'm hiding My face from them.^l
He says,

'and will see how they end.

because they are a crooked
people.

children who can't be trusted.

²¹They make Me jealous by the
things that are no gods
and angry by their empty
idolatry.

*I too will make them jealous with
those who are not a people*

⁸ Acts 17:26
¹⁷ 1 Co 10:20
²¹ Ro 10:19
11:11,18
1 Co 10:22

ⁱGk "sons of God," i.e., angels

^kGk: Heb lacks this line ^lOr Maker who bore you

- and anger them with a foolish nation.
- ²²because a fire is lit by My anger that will blaze to the lowest hell; it will devour the land and what it produces and scorch the bases of the mountains.
- ²³I will heap disasters on them and shoot all My arrows into them
- ²⁴while they waste away with hunger, are consumed by the fever of a plague and a deadly pestilence. I will send beasts to devour them and poisonous creatures crawling in the dust.
- ²⁵The sword will take their children in the streets and indoors there will be terror on boys and girls, on babies at the breast and gray-haired men.
- ²⁶I think I would have cut them in pieces and kept anyone from remembering them
- ²⁷if I didn't dread being taunted by their enemies; their oppressors would misinterpret and say, "Our hand has triumphed; it wasn't the LORD who did all this."
- ²⁸They are a people who have lost their good sense and have no understanding.
- ²⁹If they were wise, they would understand this and foresee what will happen to them.
- ³⁰How else could one chase a thousand or two make ten thousand flee if their Rock hadn't sold them
- and the LORD hadn't given them up?
- ³¹Our Rock isn't like their rock—our enemies testify to this.
- ³²Their vine comes from the vines of Sodom and from the vineyards of Gomorrah. Their grapes are poison and their clusters bitter.
- ³³The poison of serpents is their wine, the fierce venom of snakes.
- ³⁴Isn't it stored up with Me, sealed in My storehouses?
- ³⁵I will avenge and pay back at a time when their foot slips, because their disaster is near, what is waiting for them will happen quickly.
- ³⁶The LORD will do justice for His people and feel sorry for His servants when He sees their strength is gone and only the imprisoned and forsaken are left.
- ³⁷Then He will ask, "Where are their gods, the rock they went to for refuge, who ate the fat of their sacrifices and drank the wine poured out as an offering? They should come to help you and be a shelter over you.
- ³⁸See now, I, I am the One, and there is no god besides Me. I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal, and nobody can rescue from My hand.
- ³⁹I raise My hand to heaven and declare, "As surely as I live forever.
- ⁴⁰When I sharpen My flashing sword

³⁵ Lk 21:22;
³⁶ Ro 12:19;
 Heb 10:30
⁴⁰ Rv 10:5-6

and My hand takes hold of justice,
I will take vengeance on My enemies
and pay back those who hate Me.

⁴²I will make My arrows drunk with blood,
My sword will devour their flesh—
the blood of the slain and the captives,
the heads of the enemy princes.”

⁴³Rejoice, you heavens, with Him;^m
let all the angels of God worship Him;^m
shout, you nations, with His people:

let all the sons of God be strengthened in Him;^m
for those who killed His servants will be punished;
He will inflict vengeance on His enemies,
pay back those who hate Him.^m

and take away the sins of His land and His people.”

⁴⁴Moses went with Joshua, Nun's son, and recited this whole song to the people as they listened. ⁴⁵When Moses had finished reciting all these things to Israel, ⁴⁶he told them: “Take to heart everything I'm warning you about today, so that you will order your children to carefully do everything this law tells them. ⁴⁷This isn't empty talk for you; no, it means your life and will enable you to live long in the land you're crossing the Jordan to take over.”

^mGk; Heb lacked these lines until the Dead Sea Scroll discovery

ⁿGk; Heb there was

Moses Sees Canaan

⁴⁸That day the LORD also said to Moses: ⁴⁹“Go up Mount Nebo, in the Abarim range in Moab opposite Jericho, and see the land of Canaan that I'm giving the Israelites as their own. ⁵⁰And die on the mountain on which you're going, and be taken to your people, as your brother Aaron died and was taken to be with his people. ⁵¹because you both were disloyal to Me among the Israelites at the Water of Quarreling at Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin and didn't honor Me among the Israelites as the Holy One. ⁵²You will see the land from a distance but not go into the land I'm giving the Israelites.”

Moses Blesses Israel

33 This is the blessing Moses, the man of God, gave the Israelites before he died. ²He said:

“The Lord appeared at Sinai and arose for His people at Seir. He showed Himself at the mountains of Paran, coming with ten thousand holy ones. His right hand creating havoc for them.

³Yes, He purifies the nations. All His holy ones are in His hand. They lie down at His feet and receive His promises.

⁴the law Moses gave us as the possession of Jacob's congregation.

⁵And there will beⁿ a king in Jeshurun when their leaders are gathered and the tribes of Israel are united.

⁶May R e u b e n live and not die though his men be few.”

⁷About J u d a h he said:

“Hear Judah calling, LORD, and

⁴³ Ro 15:10
³³
²⁻⁴ Acts 20
³² Ep 1:8
⁴ Jn 1:17

bring him to his people. With his hands he will defend himself, and You will help him against his enemies."

⁸About **L e v i** he said:

"Your Right and Light^o be with You loved one whom You tested at the Testing Place,^p with whom You strove at the Water of Quarreling.

⁹He said of his father and mother, 'I have not seen them'; he disregarded his brothers and ignored his children—they did what You told them and kept Your covenant.

¹⁰They teach Jacob Your regulations and Israel Your law. They send the fragrance of incense to Your nostrils and make whole burnt offerings on Your altars.

¹¹LORD, bless his ability, and be delighted with the work he does. Crush the bodies of those who attack him and of those who hate him, so they will not attack again."

¹²About **B e n j a m i n** he said:

"The LORD loves him; he will live in safety beside Him. The Most High will shelter him every day, living between the shoulders of his hillsides."

¹³About **J o s e p h** he said:

"The LORD bless his land with the best from heaven, with dew and with waters lying deep below. "with precious things grown under the sun and the best produce of each month,

¹⁴with the finest fruits from the ancient mountains and the best from the aged hills.

¹⁵with the finest of the earth and

its abundance, with the kindly gifts of Him who lived in the bush.^q May this come on Joseph's head, on the brow of the prince among his brothers.

¹⁷He will be splendid like his firstborn bull and have horns like the horns of a wild ox; with them he will toss the nations and drive them to the ends of the world. Such will be the ten thousands of Ephraim, and such the thousands of Manasseh."

¹⁸About **Z e b u l u n** he said:

"Be glad to go out, Zebulun, and rejoice, I s s a c h a r, to stay in your tents.

¹⁹They will invite nations to their mountain, and there they will bring righteous sacrifices. They will draw up wealth from the seas and treasures hidden on the shore."

²⁰About **G a d** he said:

"Blessed is He who gives Gad a large territory. Like a lion he crouches, then tears an arm or even a head.

²¹He chose the best land for himself because there a ruler's share was kept. He came to the leaders of the people and with the rest of Israel did what the LORD considers right and just."

²²About **D a n** he said:

"Dan is a lion's whelp that jumps up from Bashan."

²³About **N a p h t a l i** he said:

"Naphtali will be satisfied with kindly gifts and filled with the LORD's blessings. The lake and the land south of it will be his."

²⁴About **A s h e r** he said:

"May Asher be the most blessed

^oHeb Thummim and Urim—meaning uncertain ^pHeb Massah ^qSee Ex 3:2

of the sons, a favorite among his brothers, bathing his feet in olive oil. ²³May your doorbolts be iron and copper. May your strength last as long as your days.

²⁴O Jeshurun, there's no one like God, who rides the heavens to help you and in His majesty rides the clouds.

²⁵The eternal God is a home, and underneath are the everlasting arms. He drives the enemy out of your way and tells you, 'Destroy!'

²⁶So Israel lives in safety; Jacob's spring is by itself in a land of grain and wine. Yes, his skies will be dropping dew.

²⁷Happy Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD, who is a shield to help you and a sword to win you glory? Your enemies will come cringing to you, and you will trample on their backs."

Moses Dies

34 From the plain of Moab Moses went up Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, opposite Jericho, and the LORD showed him the whole country—Gilead as far as Dan, ²all Naphtali, the territory of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the territory of Judah as far as the Mediterranean Sea, ³including the Negeb, the Jordan basin in the valley

of Jericho (the city of palms) as far as Zoar.

⁴The LORD told him: "This is the land I promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob with an oath, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have let you see it with your own eyes, but you will not go over there."

⁵And there Moses, the LORD's servant, died in the land of Moab by the LORD's order. ⁶And He buried him in the valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor, and to this day nobody knows the spot where he's buried.

⁷When he died, Moses was 120 years old. His eyesight didn't get poor, and he didn't lose his fresh vigor. ⁸The Israelites wept for Moses in the plain of Moab for 30 days, till the days of weeping in mourning for Moses were over.

⁹Joshua, Nun's son, was filled with a wise Spirit, because Moses had laid his hands on him, and the Israelites listened to him and did as the LORD had ordered Moses.

¹⁰Never has there been another prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face. ¹¹who did all the miracles and wonders the LORD sent him to do in Egypt to Pharaoh, all his servants, and his whole country. ¹²and all the mighty things, great and terrible, that Moses did and were seen by all Israel.

JOSHUA

The LORD Encourages Joshua

1 After Moses, the LORD's servant, died, the LORD said to Joshua, Nun's son. Moses' servant: "My servant Moses is dead. Now you and all this people, go on and cross this Jordan and enter the land I'm giving the Israelites. I have given you every place you will come to, as I promised Moses. 'Your country will be from the wilderness and this Lebanon to the great river Euphrates, all the country of the Hittites as far as the great sea, where the sun goes down. 'Nobody will be able to oppose you as long as you live. I will be with you as I was with Moses. I will not leave you or forsake you. 'Be strong and bold, because you will give this people the land I promised with an oath to their fathers to give them. 'Only be strong and very bold to be careful and do everything in this Law that Moses, My servant, ordered you to do. Don't turn right or left from it; then you will succeed everywhere you go. 'Don't stop reading this book of the Law, but day and night think of what it says, so you can be careful to do everything written in it; then you will prosper and succeed. 'Haven't I ordered you: 'Be strong and bold; don't tremble or be terrified, because the LORD your God is with you everywhere you go?'"

Joshua Gives Orders

"Joshua gave an order to the officers of the people, saying: "'Go through the camp, and give the

people the following order: 'Prepare food for yourselves, because within three days you will cross this Jordan to go and take the country the LORD your God is giving you to conquer.' "

¹²But to Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh Joshua said: ¹³"Remember the instructions Moses, the LORD's servant, gave you when he said: 'The LORD your God is giving you a home and has given you this country. ¹⁴Your wives, children, and cattle will stay in the land Moses gave you on this side of the Jordan, but all your warriors will go over armed ahead of your fellow Israelites and help them ¹⁵till the LORD gives them a home as He gave you and they also have taken the country the LORD your God is giving them. Then you will come back to your own country and occupy it.' Moses, the LORD's servant, gave it to you on the east side of the Jordan."

¹⁶"We will do everything you order us to do," the people answered Joshua, "and go wherever you send us. ¹⁷We'll obey you just as we obeyed Moses. Only may the LORD your God be with you as He was with Moses. ¹⁸Anyone who rebels against you and will not obey you in whatever you order him to do must be killed. Just be strong and bold!"

Two Spies

2 From Shittim Joshua, Nun's son, secretly sent two spies, telling them, "Go, look at the land, especially at Jericho."

¹
⁴ *Rv 9:14*
^{16:17}
⁵ *Act 18:10*
Heb 13:5

¹The two young men went to Jericho and came^a into the home of a prostitute by the name of Rahab and lay down to sleep there.

²The king of Jericho was told, "There are men who have come here from Israel tonight to explore the country." ³The king of Jericho sent men to Rahab to say, "Bring out the men who came to you and entered your home, because they have come to explore the whole country."

⁴The woman took the two men and hid them. Then she said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I didn't know where they were from. ⁵When it was dark and the gate had to be closed, the men left. I don't know where the men went. Hurry and chase after them. You'll catch up with them." ⁶She had taken them on the roof and covered them with the stalks of flax she had heaped up on the roof.

⁷The men pursued them on the road leading to the crossing places of the Jordan, and as soon as those who pursued them had left, the gate was shut.

⁸Before the spies went to sleep, she came up to them on the roof. ⁹"I know that the LORD has given you the country," she told the men: "you terrify us, and all the people in the land are trembling before you. ¹⁰because we heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you left Egypt and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you destroyed. ¹¹When we heard it, we gave up hope, and there was no courage left in anyone on account of you, because the LORD your God is

God in heaven above and on the earth below. ¹²And now that I've been kind to you, please swear to me by the LORD that you also will be kind to my father's family. Give me a pledge I can trust ¹³that you will keep alive my father, mother, brothers, sisters, and everything they have and save us from death."

¹⁴The men promised her: "We pledge our lives for yours, if you don't tell what we're doing here. And when the LORD gives us this country, we will treat you kindly and honestly."

¹⁵She let them down by a rope through the window, because her house was against the wall of the city and she lived by the wall. ¹⁶"Go into the hills," she told them "so the pursuers will not find you and hide there three days till the pursuers come back. Then go your way."

¹⁷"This oath you made us swear binds us only on this condition," the men told her: ¹⁸"When we come into the country, tie this cord of scarlet thread in the window through which you let us down. And bring your father, mother, brothers and all your father's family to your home. ¹⁹When anyone goes out of the doors of your house on the street, it will be his own fault and not ours if he's killed. But if anyone is in your home and he is struck, we will be responsible for his death. ²⁰Also if you tell what we're doing here, we will not be bound by the oath you had us swear."

²¹"It will be as you say," she said and she let them go. And she tied the scarlet cord in the window.

²²They went into the hills and stayed there three days till their

^{a-a}Gk; Heb they went and came

pursuers, after searching for them all along the road without finding them, had come back. ²⁹Then the two men went back, descended from the hills, crossed over and came to Joshua, Nun's son, and told him everything that had happened to them. ³⁰"The LORD has put the whole country in our hands," they told Joshua. "Yes, the people of the land have given up hope on account of us."

Crossing the Jordan

3 Joshua got up early the next morning, and he and all Israel moved from Shittim and came to the Jordan, where they camped before crossing over.

¹Three days later the officers went through the camp ²and gave the people the following order: "As soon as you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God and the priests of Levi who carry it, leave your places and follow it— ³but there should be a distance of about two thousand cubits between you and it; don't come closer to it—so that you can see the way you're going, since you haven't gone this way before."

⁴Then Joshua told the people, "Give yourselves to the LORD as holy people. Tomorrow He will do wonders among you."

⁵"Take the ark of the covenant," Joshua told the priests, "and go on ahead of the people." They took the ark of the covenant and went ahead of the people.

⁶"Today," the LORD told Joshua, "I will begin to honor you before all Israel to let them know I am with you as I was with Moses. ⁷As for you, give this order to the priests who carry the ark of the covenant: ⁸'When you come to the edge of the

water of the Jordan, stand still in the Jordan.'"

⁹"Come here," Joshua said to Israel, "and listen to what the LORD your God tells you. ¹⁰This will show you," Joshua continued, "that the living God is among you and will certainly drive out ahead of you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites. ¹¹See, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth will go ahead of you into the Jordan. ¹²Now, choose men from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe. ¹³And as soon as the feet of the priests who carry the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, stand still in the water of the Jordan, the water of the Jordan flowing down from above will be cut off, and the water will rise as a dam."

¹⁴When the people left their tents to cross the Jordan, with the priests carrying the ark of the covenant ahead of the people, ¹⁵and when those carrying the ark came to the Jordan and the feet of the priests carrying the ark dipped into the edge of the water (the Jordan overflows all its banks all the time of the harvest), ¹⁶the water flowing down from above rose as a dam far away at Adam, the town near Zarethan, while the water flowing down to the lake of the Arabah, the Salt Lake, was completely cut off, and the people crossed over opposite Jericho. ¹⁷The priests carrying the ark of the LORD's covenant stood firmly on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan while all Israel went over on dry ground till all the people had finished crossing over the Jordan.

4 When all the people had completely crossed over the Jordan,

the LORD said to Joshua: "Take the twelve men from the people, one from each tribe, and give them this order: 'Take twelve stones from here, out of the middle of the Jordan, where the priests' feet were standing still, carry them over with you, and lay them down where you're going to camp tonight.'"

"So Joshua called the 12 men he had appointed from Israel, one from each tribe. "Go out by the ark of the LORD your God in the middle of the Jordan," Joshua told them, "and each of you take one stone on his shoulder, as many stones as there are tribes in Israel, for a memorial among you. Later, when your children ask, 'What do you mean by these stones?' then tell them, 'The water of the Jordan was cut off in front of the ark of the LORD's covenant when it crossed the Jordan; the water of the Jordan was cut off, and these stones should always remind Israel.'"

"The Israelites did as Joshua ordered them; they took 12 stones, according to the number of tribes in Israel, from the middle of the Jordan, as the LORD had told Joshua, and they carried them over to the camp and laid them down there.

"Joshua also set up 12 stones in the middle of the Jordan where the priests carrying the ark of the covenant had stood, and they're still there today.

"The priests carrying the ark remained standing in the middle of the Jordan till everything the LORD had ordered Joshua to tell the people was done (just as Moses had ordered Joshua), and the people hurried to get across. "As soon as all the people had finished crossing over, the LORD's ark and the priests

moved and went ahead of the people.

"The armed men of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh went ahead of the rest of Israel as Moses had told them. "About 40,000 men armed for war crossed over before the LORD to the plains of Jericho for battle.

"On that day the LORD honored Joshua before all Israel, so that as long as he lived they respected him as they had respected Moses.

"The LORD said to Joshua: "Order the priests carrying the ark of the Word of Testimony to come up out of the Jordan." "So Joshua ordered the priests: "Come up out of the Jordan."

"When the priests carrying the ark of the LORD's covenant came up out of the middle of the Jordan and the soles of their feet were lifted onto the dry land, the water of the Jordan again filled its bed and flowed over its banks as it had done before.

They Camp at Gilgal

"On the tenth of the first month the people came up out of the Jordan and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho. "At Gilgal Joshua set up the 12 stones they had taken from the Jordan. "He told Israel: "Later, when your children ask their fathers, 'What do these stones mean?' tell your children, 'Israel crossed this Jordan on dry ground. "The LORD your God dried up the water of the Jordan in front of you till you had crossed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up in front of us till we had crossed over. "He wants all people in the world to know how mighty the LORD's hand is, and He wants you

always to fear the LORD your God.”

5 When all the kings of the Amorites, who were west of the Jordan, and all the kings of the Canaanites, who were by the sea, heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Jordan in front of the Israelites till they had crossed over, they gave up hope and had no courage left as they faced Israel.

Circumcise the People

¹At that time the LORD told Joshua: “Make flint knives, and once again circumcise the Israelites.” Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the Israelites at Foreskins Hill.

²This is why Joshua circumcised them: All the males of the people who left Egypt, that is, all the men who could go to war, died on the way through the wilderness after they left Egypt. ³All the people who left Egypt were circumcised, but none of the people born later on the way through the wilderness were circumcised. ⁴For 40 years Israel wandered in the wilderness till all the people who left Egypt, that is, the men who could go to war, were gone, because they didn’t obey the LORD, and the LORD swore to them not to let them see the land that He swore an oath to their fathers promised to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey. ⁵But He had their children take their place, and Joshua circumcised them, since they were uncircumcised, not having been circumcised on the way.

⁶When all the people had been circumcised, they stayed at home in the camp till they had healed.

^b“Rolling Away”

^aThe LORD said to Joshua: “Today I have rolled away from you the insults of Egypt,” and so that place is still called Gilgal^b today.

⁷While the Israelites camped at Gilgal, they celebrated the Passover in the evening of the 14th day of the month in the plains of Jericho.

⁸On the day after the Passover, that very day, they ate some of the products of the land, bread without yeast and parched grain. ⁹On the day after they had eaten some of the products of the land, the manna stopped, and Israel had no more manna, but that year they ate what grew in the land of Canaan.

Captain of the LORD’s Army

¹⁰When Joshua was near Jericho, he looked up and saw a Man standing in front of him with His drawn sword in His hand. Joshua went up to Him. “Are You one of us or one of our enemies?” he asked Him.

¹¹“Neither,” He answered, “but as captain of the LORD’s army I have come now.”

Joshua bowed down with his face on the ground and worshiped. “What has my Lord to say to His servant?” he asked Him.

¹²“Take your sandals off your feet,” the Captain of the LORD’s army told Joshua. “The place where you’re standing is holy.” Joshua did so.

6 Jericho was afraid of Israel and shut its gates and was closed to anyone from going in or out.

¹“You see,” the LORD said to Joshua, “I have put Jericho with its king and warriors in your hands.

'All the soldiers should go around the city once a day for six days 'while seven priests carry seven rams' horns in front of the ark. But on the seventh day go around the city seven times, and the priests should blow their horns. 'Now when there is a long blast on the rams' horns and you hear the sound of the horns, all the people should shout loudly, and the wall of the city will fall over in its place, and the people should advance, each one straight ahead.'

Jericho Falls

'Joshua, Nun's son, called the priests. "Take the ark of the covenant," he told them, "and seven priests should carry seven rams' horns in front of the LORD's ark."

'He told the people, "March around the city. Let the armed men march ahead of the LORD's ark."

'As Joshua had told the people, seven priests, carrying seven rams' horns before the LORD, marched on and blew their horns, and the ark of the LORD's covenant followed them. 'The armed men went ahead of the priests, who were blowing their horns, and the rear guard followed the ark while the trumpets were blown continually.

⁶"Don't shout," Joshua ordered the people, "don't make any noise, and don't say a word till I tell you. 'Shout.' Then shout."

⁷So he had the LORD's ark go around the city once; then they came back to the camp and stayed there for the night. ⁸Joshua got up early the next morning, and the priests carried the Lord's ark. ⁹The seven priests carrying the seven rams' horns in front of the Lord's ark blew their horns continually as they went, and the armed men went ahead of

them. The rear guard followed the Lord's ark while the horns were blown continually. ¹⁰"They went around the city once on the second day and then went back to the camp. They did this for six days.

¹¹But on the seventh day they got up early at dawn and in the same way went around the city seven times; only on that day did they go around the city seven times. ¹²When they went around the seventh time, the priests blew the horns, and Joshua told the people, "Shout, because the LORD has given you the city. ¹³The city is condemned, and everything in it belongs to the LORD, Only Rahab the prostitute should stay alive and all who are with her in her home, because she hid the messengers we sent. ¹⁴But keep away from what is under holy condemnation, or you'll be condemned too; if you take anything that's condemned, you'll bring condemnation on the camp of Israel and get it into trouble. ¹⁵All the silver and gold and anything made of bronze and iron are holy and belong to the LORD and must go into the LORD's storehouse."

¹⁶So the people shouted when the horns blew. As soon as they heard the blast of the horns, the people shouted very loudly, *the walls fell down*, and the people went into the city, each one straight ahead, and they took the city. ¹⁷And with their swords they carried out the curse on everything in the city, men and women, young and old, as well as cows, sheep, and donkeys.

¹⁸But Joshua had told the two men who had spied out the country, "Go to the prostitute's home, and bring out the woman with everything she has, as you promised her with an oath."

⁶
²⁰ Heb 11:30

²³The spies went and brought out Rahab, her father, mother, brothers, and everything she had; they brought out all her relatives and put them outside the camp of Israel. ²⁴They burned the city and everything in it. But the silver and gold and anything made of bronze and iron they put into the LORD's storehouse. ²⁵But Joshua kept alive Rahab the prostitute, her father's family, and everything she had, and she still lives in Israel today because she hid the messengers Joshua sent to explore Jericho.

²⁶At that time Joshua pronounced a curse:

"May the man be cursed before the LORD who undertakes to rebuild this city of Jericho: he will lose his oldest son when he lays its foundation, and his youngest when he sets up its gates."

²⁷The LORD was with Joshua, and the news about him spread through the whole country.

Achan

7 But the Israelites did wrong in regard to the condemned goods. Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of the condemned goods. And the LORD became angry with Israel.

¹Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is near Beth-aven, east of Bethel. "Go up," he told them, "and explore the country." The men went up and explored Ai.

They came back to Joshua and told him: "The people shouldn't all go up. Only about two or three thousand men should go up and destroy Ai. Don't get the people tired by having them all go there, because there are only a few there."

"So about 3,000 of the people went up, but they fled from the men of Ai. ²The men of Ai struck down about 36 of their men and chased them from the gate to the stone quarries and killed some of them on the way down. The courage of the people melted away and became like water.

³Joshua tore his clothes, and he and the elders of Israel bowed down with their faces on the ground before the LORD's ark. They lay there till evening, putting dust on their heads. ⁴"O Lord GOD," Joshua said, "why did You bring this people over the Jordan only to put us in the hands of the Amorites to destroy us? If only we had been satisfied to live on the other side of the Jordan! ⁵O Lord, what can I say when Israel has turned its back to the enemy? ⁶When the Canaanites and all who live in the country hear about it, they'll surround us and wipe out our name from the earth. What will You do then for Your great name?"

⁷The LORD said to Joshua: "Get up! Why are you lying on your face? ⁸Israel has sinned. Yes, they've broken My covenant that I ordered them to keep. They've taken some of the condemned goods, stolen them, lied about them, and put them among their own goods. ⁹The reason the Israelites can't stand up against their enemies but turn their backs to them is that they themselves have been condemned. I will not be with you anymore unless you destroy the condemned things that are among you. ¹⁰Get up, sanctify the people, and say: 'Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow because this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: There are condemned goods among you. Israel: you can't

stand up against your enemies till you get rid of the condemned goods among you. ¹⁴In the morning come forward by your tribes, then the tribe the LORD chooses should come forward by clans, then the clan the LORD takes should come forward by families, and then the family the LORD chooses should come forward man by man. ¹⁵Then he who is found to have the condemned goods must be burned with everything he has because he has broken the LORD's covenant and done a shameful thing in Israel.' "

¹⁶Joshua got up early in the morning and had Israel come forward by tribes, and the tribe of Judah was taken. ¹⁷Then he had the clans of Judah come forward, and he took the Zerahite clan. Then he had the clan of the Zerahites come forward man by man, and Zabdi was taken. ¹⁸Then he had his family come forward man by man, and Achan, son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken.

¹⁹Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give glory to the LORD, the God of Israel, praise Him, and please tell me, what did you do? Don't hide it from me."

²⁰Then Achan answered Joshua, "It's true, I've sinned against the LORD, the God of Israel, and this is what I did: ²¹I saw among the spoils a fine Babylonian robe, two hundred shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels; I wanted them, and I took them. They're buried in the ground in the middle of my tent, with the silver underneath."

²²Joshua sent messengers, who ran to the tent. They found it buried

in his tent, with the silver underneath. ²³They took the things from the middle of the tent, brought them to Joshua and all the Israelites, and laid them out before the LORD.

²⁴Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan, Zerah's descendant, and the silver and the robe, the bar of gold, his sons and his daughters, his cattle and his donkeys, his sheep and his tent, and everything he had and brought them up to the Valley of Trouble.^c

²⁵Then Joshua said: "Why did you trouble us? The LORD will trouble you today!" And all Israel stoned him with stones, and they burned them and piled stones on them. ²⁶They piled up a big heap of stones over him, which is still there today. So the LORD withdrew His fierce anger. This is why that place is still called the Valley of Trouble today.

Ai Is Captured

8 The LORD said to Joshua: "Don't be afraid or terrified. Take the whole army with you. Start out and march against Ai. See, I put in your hands the king of Ai, his people, his town, and his country. ²Do to Ai and its king what you did to Jericho and its king except that you can take its goods and its cattle as your spoils. Set an ambush behind the town."

³So Joshua and all the soldiers started to march against Ai. Joshua picked 30,000 bold fighting men and sent them out at night. ⁴And he gave them the order: "You're going to set an ambush behind the town. Don't get too far from the town, and all of you, be ready. ⁵I and all the people with me will go toward the town, and when they come out

^cHeb Achor

against us as they did the first time, we'll flee from them. "They'll come out after us till we have drawn them away from the town, because they'll say, 'They're running away from us like the first time.' And so we'll flee from them. "Then you'll come out of your ambush and take the town. The LORD your God puts it in your hands. "When you have taken the town, set the town on fire. Do what the LORD says. See, I've given you the order."

"When Joshua had sent them out, they went to the place of ambush and were lying there west of Ai, between Bethel and Ai. But Joshua stayed that night with the troops.

"Early in the morning Joshua got up and inspected the people. Then he and the elders of Israel led the people to Ai. "The whole army that was with him went up till they were near the place. Coming opposite the town, they camped north of Ai with the valley between them and Ai.

"He had taken about 5,000 men and put them in an ambush between Bethel and Ai, west of the town. "So the people were given their places: the whole camp of the people was north of the town, and the ambush was west of the town.

That night Joshua went down into the middle of the valley. "When the king of Ai saw this, he and all his people, that is, the men of the town, rose quickly and went out to fight Israel at the place before the plain that had been chosen. He didn't know there was an ambush for him behind the town.

"Joshua and all Israel let them defeat them, and they fled on the way to the wilderness. "All the people in the town were called out to pursue them, and as they pursued

Joshua, they were drawn away from the town. "There was no man left in Ai or Bethel who didn't go out after Israel. They left the town without any protection as they pursued Israel.

"The LORD said to Joshua: "Hold out the spear in your hand toward Ai, because I'm putting it in your hands." And Joshua held out the spear in his hand toward the town. "Then the men in the ambush hurried from their place, and as soon as he stretched out his hand, they ran, went into the town, and took it. They quickly set the town on fire. "When the men of Ai looked back, they saw the smoke go up from the town to the sky, and they couldn't flee anywhere. Then the people who had been fleeing into the wilderness turned against their pursuers. "When Joshua and all Israel saw the ambush had taken the town and smoke went up from the town, they turned and attacked the men of Ai. "When the others came out of the town against them, they were in the middle of Israel, some being on one side and the others on the other. The Israelites struck them down till none of them was left or could escape. "But they took the king of Ai alive and brought him to Joshua.

"When Israel finished killing all the inhabitants of Ai who were in the fields and in the wilderness where they pursued them, and the sword had cut them all down to the last man, all Israel went back to Ai and struck it down with the sword. "The total of the men and women who fell that day, all the people of Ai, was 12,000. "Joshua didn't lower his hand with which he held out the spear till he had destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. "But the

cattle and the goods of that city Israel took as their spoils as the LORD had ordered Joshua. ²⁸So Joshua burned Ai and made it a heap of ruins and a desolate place forever.

²⁹But the king of Ai he hanged on a tree and left him there till evening. When the sun went down, Joshua gave the order, and they took his body from the tree and threw it down at the entrance of the gate of the town, and over it they piled a big heap of stones that is still there today.

Blessing and Curse

³⁰At that time Joshua built an altar for the LORD, the God of Israel, on Mount Ebal ³¹as Moses, the LORD's servant, had ordered Israel to do and as it is written in the book of the law of Moses: "an altar of unhewn stones on which no chisel has been used"; and on it they brought burnt offerings to the LORD and sacrificed peace offerings. ³²There on the stones he wrote a copy of the law that Moses had written down in the presence of the Israelites.

³³All Israel, foreigners as well as natives, with their elders, officers, and judges, were standing on opposite sides of the ark, facing the priests of Levi who carried the ark of the LORD's covenant, half of them in front of Mount Gerizim and the other half in front of Mount Ebal, as Moses, the LORD's servant, in the beginning had ordered them to bless the people of Israel. ³⁴Afterwards Joshua read the whole law, the blessing and the curse, as it was all written in the book of the law. ³⁵There wasn't a word of everything Moses had ordered that Joshua didn't read before the whole

assembly of Israel, including women and children and the foreigners living among them.

Treaty with Gibeon

9 When all the kings heard of it, who were on that side of the Jordan, in the highlands and the lowlands and all along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea as far as Lebanon, the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, ²they got together to fight like one man against Joshua and Israel.

³But when the people living in Gibeon heard what Joshua did to Jericho and Ai, ⁴they used a trick: They went as messengers and took along worn-out sacks on their donkeys, old wineskins that were dried and patched; ⁵they had worn-out and mended shoes on their feet and wore tattered clothes, and all the bread for their food was dried and crumbled. ⁶They went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal. "We have come from a distant country," they told Joshua and the men of Israel, "and now make a treaty with us."

⁷"Perhaps you're living among us," the men of Israel said to the Hivites; "how could we make a treaty with you?"

⁸"We are your servants," they answered Joshua.

⁹"Who are you?" Joshua asked them. "And where did you come from?"

¹⁰"Your servants have come from a country very far away," they answered him, "because of the fame of the LORD your God. We heard the report of Him, everything He did in Egypt ¹¹and everything He did to the two kings of the Amorites on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon king

of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, who was in Ashtaroth. "Our elders and all who live in our country told us, 'Take food with you on the way, and go to meet them and tell them: "We are your slaves, and now make a treaty with us."' "This is our bread—it was hot when we took it as food from our homes the day we started out to come to you, and now see how dry and crumbled it is. "And these wineskins that we filled were new, and see how torn they are. And these clothes and shoes of ours are worn out because we have come such a very long way."

"The men ate with them without even asking the LORD about it. "So Joshua made peace with them and made a treaty to let them live, and the leaders of the community confirmed it to them with an oath.

"Three days after they made the treaty with them they heard they were their neighbors and were living among them. "Israel moved and came to their towns on that third day. Their towns were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim. "But Israel didn't destroy them, because the leaders of the community had sworn to them by the LORD, the God of Israel. And the whole community complained against the leaders. "But all the leaders said to the entire community, "We've sworn to them by the LORD, the God of Israel, and now we can't touch them. "This is what we'll do to them: We'll let them live, or else the LORD will be angry with us on account of the oath we swore to them." "The leaders said about them, "Let them live." And so they became woodcutters and water carriers for the whole community,

as the leaders had said about them.

"Joshua called for them. "Why did you deceive us," he asked them, "by saying, 'We live very far away from you,' when you're living among us? "Now you're cursed and must always be slaves: woodcutters and water carriers for the house of my God."

"They answered Joshua, "Your servants were definitely told that the LORD your God ordered His servant Moses to give you the whole land and destroy all who live there. When you made us fear very much for our lives, we did this thing. "Here we are now in your hands. Do to us what you think is right and good."

"And that was what Joshua did to them: he saved them from the Israelites and didn't let them kill them. "But that day Joshua made them woodcutters and water carriers for the community and for the LORD's altar in the place He would choose; they're still that today.

"Sun, Stand Still!"

10 When Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, heard how Joshua had taken Ai and destroyed it, doing to Ai and its king what he had done to Jericho and its king, and how the people living in Gibeon had made peace with Israel and were with them, "they were very much afraid because Gibeon was a large town, like one of the royal cities—it was larger than Ai, and its men were all good fighting men. "So Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem, sent to Hoham, king of Hebron, Piram, king of Jarmuth, Japhia, king of Lachish, and Debir, king of Eglon, and asked: "Come up to me and help me, and let us destroy Gibeon,

because it has made peace with Joshua and the people of Israel.”
⁵So the five kings of the Amorites, the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon, and all their armies got together, marched up, camped against Gibeon, and fought against it.

⁶The men of Gibeon sent messengers to Joshua at the camp in Gilgal to tell him: “Don’t leave your servants alone. Come up to us quickly, save us, and help us because all the kings of the Amorites who live in the highlands have gathered against us.”

⁷So Joshua with all his army and all his fighting men went up from Gilgal. ⁸“Don’t be afraid of them,” the LORD told Joshua; “I’ve put them in your hands. None of them can stand up to you.” ⁹So Joshua marched all night from Gilgal and attacked them by surprise. ¹⁰The LORD threw them into a panic before Israel and struck them down in a great defeat at Gibeon. They chased them along the way of the slope of Beth-horon. And they struck them down all the way to Azekah and Makkedah.

¹¹As they fled from Israel down the slope of Beth-horon, the LORD threw down on them huge hailstones from heaven, all the way to Azekah, so that more of them died from the hailstones than from the swords of the Israelites.

¹²Then Joshua spoke to the LORD on the day the LORD delivered the Amorites to the people of Israel. And while Israel was watching, he said:

“Sun, stand still over Gibeon, and moon over the valley of Ajalon!”

¹³Then the sun stood still, and the moon stopped until a nation took

vengeance on its enemies. Isn’t this written in the Book of Jasher? The sun stopped in the middle of the sky and for about a whole day didn’t hurry to go down. ¹⁴Never before or after was there a day like this one, when the LORD did what a man told him, because the LORD fought for Israel.

¹⁵Then Joshua and all Israel went back to the camp at Gilgal.

¹⁶Those five kings fled and hid in the cave at Makkedah. ¹⁷and Joshua was told: “The five kings have been found hiding in the cave at Makkedah.”

¹⁸Then Joshua said: “Roll large stones against the cave opening, and post a guard there. ¹⁹But don’t stay yourselves; chase your enemies, cut off their rear, and don’t let them get into their towns, because the LORD your God has put them in your hands.”

²⁰When Joshua and Israel had finished dealing them a very great and total defeat, though some of them escaped into the fortified towns, ²¹all the people returned safely to Joshua in the camp at Makkedah. And no one dared to open his mouth against anyone in Israel. ²²Then Joshua said, “Open the cave and bring me those five kings from the cave.” ²³They did so and brought him those five kings from the cave, the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon.

²⁴When they brought those kings to Joshua, he called for all the men of Israel and told the captains of the soldiers who had gone with him, “Come forward and put your feet on the necks of these kings.” They came and put their feet on their necks. ²⁵“Don’t be afraid or terrified,” Joshua told them: “be

strong and bold, because this is what the LORD will do to all your enemies you're fighting against."

"After this Joshua struck them down, killed them, and hanged them on five trees, and they were hanging on the trees till evening. "But when the sun went down, Joshua gave the order, and they took them down from the trees and threw them into the cave where they had hidden, and they put large stones against the cave opening, where they still are today.

The Southern Campaign

"That day Joshua took Makkedah and put it and its king to the sword. He carried out the sacred curse on all who lived there and let nobody escape, and he did to the king of Makkedah what he had done to the king of Jericho.

"Joshua and all Israel went from Makkedah to Libnah and fought against Libnah. "The LORD also put it and its king into Israel's hands; he put it to the sword, and all who lived there; he let nobody there escape, and he did to its king what he had done to the king of Jericho.

"Joshua and all Israel went from Libnah to Lachish, camped against it, and fought against it. "The LORD put Lachish in Israel's hands; he took it on the second day and put it to the sword, including all who lived there, just as he had done to Libnah. "Then Horam, king of Gezer, came up to help Lachish, but Joshua defeated him and his people and didn't let even one of his men escape.

"Joshua and all Israel went from Lachish to Eglon, camped against it, and fought against it. "He took it that day and put it to the sword; he carried out the sacred curse that

day on all who lived there, just as he had done to Lachish.

"Then Joshua and all Israel went from Eglon up to Hebron and fought against it. "He took it and put it and its king to the sword, and all its towns and all who lived there. He let nobody escape, just as he had done to Eglon. He carried out the sacred curse on all who lived there.

"Then Joshua and all Israel went back to Debir and fought against it. "He took it and its king and all its towns and put them to the sword, carrying out the sacred curse on everyone living there. He let no one escape; he did to Debir and its king what he had done to Hebron and to Libnah and its king.

"So Joshua defeated the whole country, the hill country, the Negeb, the foothills, the slopes, and all their kings. He let nobody escape. He carried out the sacred curse on everything that breathed, as the LORD, the God of Israel, had ordered. "Joshua defeated the people from Kadesh-barnea to Gaza, all the country of Goshen as far as Gibeon. "And all these kings and their countries Joshua took at one time, because the LORD, the God of Israel, fought for Israel. "Then Joshua and all Israel went back to the camp at Gilgal.

More Victories

11 When Jabin, king of Hazor, heard about this, he sent messengers to Jobab, king of Madon, the king of Shimron, the king of Achshaph, "and the kings in the northern hills, in the Arabah south of Chinnereth, in the foothills, and in the district of Dor in the west, "to the Canaanites in the east and the west, the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, the Jebusites in the hills,

and the Hivites below Mount Hermon in the country of Mizpah. ⁴They came out with all their armies, as many troops as the sand on the seashore, with many horses and chariots. ⁵All these kings got together and camped at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

⁶"Don't be afraid of them," the LORD told Joshua. "About this time tomorrow I will turn them over to Israel, all of them dead. Cut their horses' hamstrings, and burn their chariots." ⁷So Joshua and all his army came against them suddenly by the waters of Merom and attacked them. ⁸The LORD put them in Israel's hands; they defeated them and chased them as far as Great Sidon and Misrephoth by the sea and the valley of Mizpah in the east. They defeated them so thoroughly no one escaped. ⁹Joshua did to them as the LORD had told him: he cut the horses' hamstrings and burned their chariots.

¹⁰Then Joshua turned back and took Hazor and defeated its king with the sword. (Hazor was formerly the head of all those kingdoms.) ¹¹They put to the sword everyone who was there, carrying out the sacred curse until nothing was left that breathed; and he burned Hazor.

¹²So Joshua took all the cities of those kings and all their kings and put them to the sword, carrying out the sacred curse on them, as Moses, the LORD's servant, had ordered him. ¹³But as for the cities standing on mounds of ruins, Israel burned none of them—only Hazor Joshua burned. ¹⁴The Israelites took all the goods of these cities and their cattle as their spoils, but they put to the sword every human being till

they had destroyed them; they left nothing that breathed. ¹⁵As the LORD had ordered His servant Moses, so Moses had ordered Joshua, and so Joshua did; he didn't fail to do anything of all the LORD had ordered Moses.

¹⁶So Joshua took all that country, the hill country and all the Negeb, all the country of Goshen and the foothills, the Arabah, both the high country and the lowlands of Israel; ¹⁷from the bare mountain that goes up to Seir to Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon below Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings, struck them down, and killed them. ¹⁸Joshua had made war with all those kings a long time. ¹⁹There was no city that made peace with the people of Israel except the Hivites who lived at Gibeon; everything was taken in battle. ²⁰The LORD wanted to make them stubborn, so that they would come and fight against Israel and be given over to the sacred curse with no mercy, that they be wiped out as the LORD had ordered Moses.

²¹At that time Joshua also went and cleared the people of Anak out of the hills, from Hebron, Debir, and Anab, from all the hills of Judah and all the hills of Israel. Joshua carried out the sacred curse on them, with their cities. ²²None of the people of Anak were left in the land of Israel. Only in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod were some of them left. ²³So Joshua took the whole country as the LORD had told Moses, and Joshua distributed it to Israel as their hereditary land according to the divisions of their tribes. And the country rested from war.

East of the Jordan

12 The following are the kings of the country east of the

Jordan whom the Israelites defeated and whose land they took, from the Arnon valley to Mount Hermon, with all the eastern part of the Arabah: ⁷Sihon, king of the Amorites, who lived in Heshbon and ruled from Aroer on the edge of the Arnon valley, the middle of the valley, and half of Gilead to the Jabbok river, the border of the Ammonites: ⁸this includes the eastern part of the Arabah from the lake of Chinnereth to the lake in the Arabah, the Salt Lake, in the direction of Beth-jeshimoth, by Teman beneath the slopes of Pisgah. ⁹Also Og, king of Bashan, one of the survivors of the Rephaites; he lived in Ashtaroth and Edrei ¹⁰and ruled over Mount Hermon and Salecah and all Bashan as far as the border of the people of Geshur and Maacah, over half of Gilead, to the border of Sihon, king of Heshbon. ¹¹Moses, the LORD's servant, and the Israelites defeated them, and Moses, the LORD's servant, gave the land to Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh.

West of the Jordan

¹²The following are the kings of the country whom Joshua and Israel defeated west of the Jordan, from Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon as far as the bare mountain that stands opposite Seir (Joshua distributed it to the tribes of Israel according to their divisions, ¹³in the hill country, the lowlands, the Arabah, the slopes, the wilderness, and the Negeb: Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites):

¹⁴the king of Jericho, one;
the king of Ai, which is

near Bethel, one;
¹⁵the king of Jerusalem, one;
the king of Hebron, one;
¹⁶the king of Jarmuth, one;
the king of Lachish, one;
¹⁷the king of Eglon, one;
the king of Gezer, one;
¹⁸the king of Debir, one;
the king of Geder, one;
¹⁹the king of Hormah, one;
the king of Arad, one;
²⁰the king of Libnah, one;
the king of Adullam, one;
²¹the king of Makkedah, one;
the king of Bethel, one;
²²the king of Tappuah, one;
the king of Hepher, one;
²³the king of Aphek, one;
the king of Sharon, one;
²⁴the king of Madon, one;
the king of Hazor, one;
²⁵the king of Shimron-meron, one;
the king of Achshaph, one;
²⁶the king of Taanach, one;
the king of Megiddo, one;
²⁷the king of Kedesh, one;
the king of Jokneam in Carmel, one;
²⁸the king of Dor in the district of Dor, one;
the king of the Goyim in Galilee,^d one;
²⁹the king of Tirzah, one;
the total of kings: 31.

"Divide the Land"

13 When Joshua had grown old, the LORD said to him: "You have grown old, and there is still very much land to be taken. ²This is the land that is left: all the districts of the Philistines and the Geshurites, ³from the Shihor east of Egypt northward as far as the border of Ekron (it's considered Canaanite territory): the five rulers

^dGk: Heb Gilgal

of the Philistines at Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron, and the Avvites 'in the south; all the country of the Canaanites, the open country that belongs to the people of Sidon, as far as Aphek and the border of the Amorites; ⁵and the land of the Gebalites and all of Lebanon eastward from Baal-gad below Mount Hermon to the entrance to Hamath; ⁶all who live in the highlands from Lebanon to Misrephoth on the sea, all the people of Sidon—I will drive them out of Israel's way. But distribute the land to Israel as a heritage as I ordered you. ⁷Now then, divide this land by lot as a heritage among the nine tribes and half of the tribe of Manasseh."

The 2½ Tribes

⁸With the other half of the tribe of Manasseh, Reuben and Gad had received their heritage that Moses gave them east of the Jordan, just as Moses, the LORD's servant, had assigned it to them: ⁹from Aroer on the edge of the Arnon valley and the town in the middle of the valley and all the tableland of Medeba as far as Dibon; ¹⁰all the cities of Sihon, king of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon, as far as the border of the Ammonites; ¹¹and Gilead, the territory of the people of Geshur and Maacah; all of Mount Hermon; and all of Bashan as far as Salcah. ¹²the whole kingdom of Og in Bashan, who ruled in Ashtaroth and Edrei (he was the last of the Rephaites that Moses defeated and drove out). ¹³But Israel didn't drive out the people of Geshur and Maacah, and so Geshur and Maacah still live in Israel today.

¹⁴Only the tribe of Levi was not given any property. They got what

was offered by fire to the LORD, the God of Israel, as He had promised.

¹⁵Moses gave land to the tribe of Reuben according to its clans. ¹⁶Their territory was from Aroer on the edge of the Arnon valley and the town in the middle of the valley and all the tableland near Medeba; ¹⁷Heshbon and all its towns on the tableland; Dibon, Bamoth-baal, Beth-baal-meon. ¹⁸Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mephaath, ¹⁹Kiriathaim, Sibmah, and Zereth-shahar on the hill in the valley, ²⁰Beth-peor, the slopes of Pisgah, Beth-jeshimoth. ²¹all the towns of the tableland, the whole kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon and whom Moses defeated with the leaders of Midian: Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the vassal princes of Sihon, who lived in that country. ²²Among these victims was also Balaam, Beor's son, who practiced divination and whom the Israelites killed with the sword. ²³Reuben's border was the Jordan and its bottomland. This with the cities and their villages was the land given to Reuben according to its clans.

²⁴Moses gave land to the tribe of Gad, to Gad's descendants, according to their clans. ²⁵Their territory was Jazer, all the cities of Gilead, and half the land of the Ammonites as far as Aroer, which is before Rabbah; ²⁶and from Heshbon to Ramath-mizpeh and Betonim, and from Mahanaim as far as the border of Lo-debar; ²⁷and in the valley Beth-haram, Beth-nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon, king of Heshbon, with the Jordan as boundary, the area east of the Jordan to the end of the lake of Chinnereth. ²⁸This with the cities and their villages is the land given to Gad according to its clans.

²⁸Moses gave land to half the tribe of Manasseh, and so it belonged to the half tribe of Manasseh according to its clans. ²⁹Its territory extended from Mahanaim through all of Bashan, the whole kingdom of Og, king of Bashan, all the tent settlements of Jair that were in Bashan, 60 towns; ³⁰half of Gilead, with Ashtaroth and Edrei, the royal cities of Og in Bashan. They were given to the descendants of Machir, Manasseh's son, that is, to half of Machir's descendants according to their clans.

"These are the hereditary lands Moses allotted on Moab's plains, east of the Jordan near Jericho. ¹¹But to the tribe of Levi Moses gave no hereditary land; as their heritage they have the LORD, the God of Israel, as He promised them.

The Land Is Divided

14 These are the hereditary lands the Israelites took in Canaan, which Eleazar the priest, Joshua, Nun's son, and the heads of the families of Israel gave them as their heritage. ²The nine and a half tribes got their land by lot as the LORD had ordered through Moses. ³Moses had given the two and a half tribes their hereditary lands on the other side of the Jordan; but to the Levites he had given no hereditary lands among them. ⁴Since Joseph's descendants, Manasseh and Ephraim, formed two tribes, the Levites were given no part of the land except some cities to live in and the pastures around them for their cattle and other property. ⁵So Israel divided the land, doing as the LORD had ordered Moses.

Caleb Gets Hebron

"Then the people of Judah came to

Joshua at Gilgal, and Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, the son of Kenaz, said to him: "You know what the LORD told Moses, the man of God, about me and you at Kadesh-barnea. ⁷I was forty years old when Moses, the LORD's servant, sent me from Kadesh-barnea to explore the land, and I brought back to him an independent report. ⁸While my fellow Israelites who went up with me discouraged the people, I followed the LORD my God fully. ⁹That day Moses said an oath: 'The land you walked on will belong to you and your descendants forever because you followed the LORD my God fully.' ¹⁰And now, you see, as He promised, the LORD has kept me alive these forty-five years since the LORD said this to Moses, while Israel wandered through the wilderness; and so, you see, I'm now eighty-five years old. ¹¹I'm still as strong today as when Moses sent me; my strength is now as it was then, to fight or move about. ¹²Give me, then, these hills the LORD spoke of that day, since you heard that day how the Anakites were there and that the cities were great and fortified. Perhaps the LORD will be with me and I will drive them out, as the LORD promised."

"Joshua blessed Caleb, Jephunneh's son, and gave him Hebron as his hereditary property. ¹⁴And so Hebron became the hereditary property of Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, the son of Kenaz, and still is that today because he was in every way with the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁵Formerly the name of Hebron was the City of Arba, who had been the greatest man among the Anakites. So the land rested from war.

⁷⁻¹⁵

Judah's Territory

15 To the tribe of Judah according to its clans was allotted the land to the border of Edom and the wilderness of Zin, with the Negeb at its southern end. ²This southern border starts from the lower end of the Salt Lake, at the bay facing south. ³and goes south of the slope of Scorpions, passing Zin and going up south of Kadesh-barnea; it goes on to Hezron, up to Addar, around to Karka. ⁴on to Azmon, and comes out at the ravine of Egypt, so that the border ends at the sea. This will be your southern border.

⁵The eastern border is the Salt Lake as far as the mouth of the Jordan. On the north side the border starts from the bay of the sea at the mouth of the Jordan ⁶and goes up to Beth-hoglah, then north to Beth-arabah; it then goes up to the stone of Bohan, son of Reuben. ⁷From the valley of Achor the border goes up to Debir and turns north to the regions^e opposite the slope of Adummim, south of the ravine; then the border goes to the waters of En-shemesh and ends at En-rogel. ⁸The border goes up the valley of the son of Hinnom to the southern slope of the Jebusite city, which is Jerusalem, and then goes to the top of the hill that overlooks the valley of Hinnom in the west, which is at the northern end of the valley of the Rephaites. ⁹From the top of the hill country the border goes around to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah, and from there to the towns of Mount Ephron; then the border goes around to Baalah, which is Kiriath-jearim. ¹⁰From Baalah the border

turns west to the hill country of Seir and over to the northern slope of Mount Jearim, which is Chesalon, and down to Beth-shemesh and on to Timnah. ¹¹From there the border goes on the northern side of Ekron; then the border turns to Shikkeron, on to the hill of Baalah, and comes out at Jabneel; the border ends at the sea. ¹²The western border is the Mediterranean Sea and its adjacent land. This is the border around Judah for its clans.

¹³But to Caleb, Jephunneh's son, he gave a part in the middle of Judah as the LORD told Joshua: the city of Arba (the ancestor of the Anakites), which is Hebron. ¹⁴Caleb drove out from there three Anakites: Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi, who were descendants of Anak. ¹⁵From there he marched against the people living in Debir (the name of Debir formerly was Kiriath-sepher). ¹⁶Caleb said: "I will give my daughter Achsah as wife to anyone who storms Kiriath-sepher and takes it." ¹⁷Then Othniel, the son of Kenaz, Caleb's brother, took it, and Caleb gave him his daughter Achsah as wife. ¹⁸When she came to him, she persuaded him they should ask her father for a field. When she got off her donkey, Caleb asked her, "What do you want?"

¹⁹"Give me a blessing," she answered. "Since you have put me in the dry land of the Negeb, give me springs of water." So he gave her the upper and lower springs.

²⁰This is the hereditary property of the tribe of Judah according to its clans. ²¹The towns of the tribe of Judah from the frontier on the border of Edom in the Negeb were: Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, ²²Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, ²³Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan,

^eHeb Gilgal; compare 18:17, *geliloth*: "regions"

⁴Ziph, Telem, Bealoth. ⁵New Hazor, Keriath-hezron, which is Hazor. ⁶Amam, Shema, Moladah. ⁷Hazar-gaddah, Heshmon, Beth-pelet. ⁸Hazar-shual, Beer-sheba, Biziothiah. ⁹Baal-lah, Iim, Ezem. ¹⁰Eltolad, Chesil, Hormah. ¹¹Ziklag. Madmannah, Sansannah. ¹²Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, Rimmon—a total of 29 towns with their villages.

¹³In the lowlands: Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah. ¹⁴Zanoah, En-gannim, Tap-puah, Enam. ¹⁵Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah. ¹⁶Shaaraim, Adithaim, Gederah, Gederothaim—14 towns with their villages.

¹⁷Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal-gad, ¹⁸Dilean, Mizpah, Joktheel. ¹⁹Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon. ²⁰Cabbon, Lahmas, Chithlish. ²¹Gederoth, Beth-dagon, Naamah, Makkedah—16 towns with their villages.

²²Libnah, Ether, Ashan. ²³Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezip. ²⁴Keilah, Achzib, Mareshah—9 towns with their villages.

²⁵Ekron with its towns and its villages: ²⁶all the towns between Ekron and the sea and alongside Ashdod with their villages. ²⁷Ashdod with its towns and its villages: Gaza with its towns and its villages, as far as the ravine of Egypt; and the Mediterranean Sea is its border.

²⁸In the hill country: Shamir, Jattir, Socoh. ²⁹Dannah, Kiriath-sannah, which is Debir. ³⁰Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim. ³¹Goshen, Holon, Giloh—11 towns with their villages.

³²Arab, Dumah, Eshan. ³³Janim, Beth-tappuah, Apekah, ³⁴Humtah, Kiriath-arba, which is Hebron, and Zior—9 towns with their villages.

³⁵Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah. ³⁶Jezreel, Jokdeam, Za-

noah. ³⁷Kain, Gibeah, Timnah—10 towns with their villages.

³⁸Halhul, Beth-zur, Gedor. ³⁹Maarath, Beth-anoth, Eltekon—6 towns with their villages.^f

⁴⁰Kiriath-baal, which is Kiriath-jearim, and Rabbah—2 towns with their villages.

⁴¹In the wilderness: Beth-arabah, Middin, Secacah. ⁴²Nibshan, Salt City, En-gedi—6 towns with their villages.

⁴³Judah couldn't drive out the Jebusites living in Jerusalem, so the Jebusites still live with Judah in Jerusalem today.

Territory of Ephraim and Half of Manasseh

16 To Joseph's descendants was allotted land from the Jordan at Jericho, the waters of Jericho on the east, through the wilderness that goes up from Jericho through the hills to Bethel. ²From Bethel the border goes to Luz and over to Ataroth at the border of the Archites. ³then down west to the territory of the Japhletites and the territory of lower Beth-horon, then to Gezer, and it ends at the sea. ⁴So Joseph's descendants, Manasseh and Ephraim, received their inheritance.

⁵The territory given to the descendants of Ephraim according to their clans was as follows: The border of their inheritance in the east is Ataroth-addar to upper Beth-horon; ⁶from there the border goes west, with Michmethah in the north; then the border turns east to Taanath-shiloh and passes by it east of Janoah. ⁷From Janoah it goes down to Ataroth and to Naarah, and

^fGk adds Tekoa, Ephrathah, which is Bethlehem, Peor, Etam, Kulon, Tatam, Sores, Carem, Gallim, Bether, Manach—11 towns with their villages.

touching Jericho, it ends at the Jordan. ⁸From Tappuah the border goes west along the Kanah ravine and ends at the sea. This is the land given to the tribe of Ephraim according to its clans. ⁹with the towns set aside for Ephraimites in Manasseh's territory, all the towns with their villages. ¹⁰But they didn't drive out the Canaanites living in Gezer, and the Canaanites still live in Ephraim today; they became slaves serving them.

17 This was the land that fell by lot to the tribe of Manasseh, because he was Joseph's firstborn. As for Machir, Manasseh's firstborn, the father of Gilead, since he was a warrior, he received Gilead and Bashan. ²Land was allotted to the rest of Manasseh's descendants according to their clans, to the descendants of Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hopher, and Shemida. These were the male descendants of Manasseh, Joseph's son, clan by clan.

³But Zelophehad, the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons but only daughters. The names of his daughters were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. ⁴They came before Eleazar the priest, Joshua, Nun's son, and the leaders. ⁵The LORD ordered Moses to give us hereditary property among our relatives," they said. Therefore he gave them, as the LORD told him, a heritage among their father's brothers. ⁶And so 10 shares were allotted to Manasseh, besides the land of Gilead and Bashan on the other side of the Jordan, ⁷because Manasseh's daughters had a heritage among his sons:

and the land of Gilead belonged to Manasseh's other sons.

⁷Manasseh's border goes from Asher to Michmethath, which is over against Shechem. Then the border goes south to the people living at the spring of Tappuah. ⁸The territory of Tappuah belongs to Manasseh, but Tappuah itself, at Manasseh's border, belongs to Ephraim. ⁹The border goes along the Kanah ravine. South of the ravine are towns that belong to Ephraim although they are among Manasseh's towns. Manasseh's border is north of the ravine and ends at the sea. ¹⁰What is south belongs to Ephraim; what is north belongs to Manasseh; both bordering on the sea; the borders touch Asher in the north and Issachar in the east. ¹¹In Issachar and Asher Manasseh has Beth-shean and its villages, Ibleam and its villages, the people living in Dor and its villages, in En-dor and its villages, Taanach and its villages, and in Megiddo and its villages (a third of the area). ¹²But Manasseh couldn't drive out those who lived in these towns, so the Canaanites persisted in living in this territory. ¹³When the Israelites got strong enough, they made the Canaanites their slaves, but didn't completely drive them out.

¹⁴Joseph's descendants asked Joshua, "Why did you give me only one lot or one share when I am a people the LORD blessed to be so great?"

¹⁵"If you are a great people," Joshua answered, "go up to the forest and clear ground for yourselves there in the country of the Perizzites and the Rephaites, since the hills of Ephraim are too narrow for you."

¹⁶"The hills are not enough for us," Joseph's descendants an-

swered, "but all the Canaanites living in the valley, those in Bethshean and its villages and in the valley of Jezreel, have iron chariots."

"Then Joshua said to the people of Joseph, to Ephraim and Manasseh: "You are a great people and very strong. You will have not only one lot. "but the hill country will be yours. Although it is a forest, cut it down; even its outer limits will be yours; you must drive out the Canaanites even though they have iron chariots and are strong."

Survey of the Rest of Canaan

18 The whole congregation of Israel met at Shiloh and there set up the tent for God to meet with them. The land was subdued before them.

"There were still seven tribes in Israel who hadn't yet received their hereditary land. "So Joshua asked Israel: "How long will you neglect to go and take the land the LORD, the God of your fathers, gave you? "Select three men for each tribe, and I will send them to go through the land and write a description of it to show how it should be divided and then come back to me. "They are to divide it into seven parts. Judah will stay in his territory in the south, and Joseph's people will stay in their territory in the north. "You must write a description of the land in seven parts and report to me here. I will cast lots for you here before the LORD our God. "The Levites have no part among you, because their heritage is to serve the LORD as priests. Gad, Reuben, and half of the tribe of Manasseh have on the east side of the Jordan received their

inheritance that Moses, the LORD's servant, gave them."

"As the men got ready to go, Joshua ordered them to write a description of the land: "Go and walk through the land. Write a description of it, and come back to me. Then I will cast lots for you here in Shiloh before the LORD."

"The men went and passed through the land, describing it in a scroll by towns and in seven parts, and then came to Joshua at the camp at Shiloh. "Joshua cast lots for them before the LORD in Shiloh, and there Joshua assigned the land to Israel, to each division its part.

Territories Assigned

"Then the lot fell for the clans of the tribe of Benjamin according to its clans. The territory allotted to them lies between Judah and Joseph. "On the northern side their border starts at the Jordan, goes up the slope north of Jericho, up west through the hills, ending at the wilderness of Beth-aven. "From there the border goes to Luz, the southern slope of Luz, which is Bethel. Then the border goes down to Ataroth-addar over the hill country south of lower Beth-horon. "The border turns and goes around on the west side, south of the hill that faces Beth-horon, and it ends at Kiriath-baal, which is Kiriath-jearim, a city of Judah. "The southern side begins at the outskirts of Kiriath-jearim; from there the border goes west and then to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah. "The border goes down to the foot of the hill that overlooks the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is at the northern end of the valley of the Rephaites; it goes down to the valley of Hinnom, to the southern slope of

the Jebusite city, and down to En-rogel. ¹⁷It turns north and goes to En-shemesh and from there to the regions opposite the slope of the Adummim, then down to the stone of Bohan, the son of Reuben. ¹⁸Then it passes to the northern side of the slope facing the Arabah and down into the valley. ¹⁹Then the border passes to the northern ridge of Beth-hoglah, and the border ends at the northern bay of the Salt Lake at the southern end of the Jordan. This is the southern border. ²⁰The Jordan is its border on the east side. This is the hereditary land given to Benjamin according to its clans and according to the border that is around it.

²¹The cities that belong to the clans of the tribe of Benjamin are Jericho, Beth-hoglah, Emek-kezis, ²²Beth-arabah, Zemaraim, Beth-el, ²³Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, ²⁴Chephar-ammoni, Ophni, Geba—12 cities with their villages. ²⁵Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, ²⁶Mizpah, Chephirah, Mozah, ²⁷Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, ²⁸Zela, Eleph, and the Jebusite city, which is Jerusalem, Gibeah, and Kiriath—14 cities with their villages. This is the land given to Benjamin, clan by clan.

19 The second lot came out for Simeon according to the clans of the tribe of Simeon. Their hereditary property was within that of Judah. ¹In their property they had Beersheba, Shema, Moladah, ²Hazar-shual, Balah, Ezem, ³Elto-lad, Bethul, Hormah, ⁴Ziklag, Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susah, ⁵Beth-lebaoth, Sharuhin—13 towns with their villages; ⁶Ain, Rimmon, Ether, Ashan—4 cities with their villages; ⁷and all the villages around these towns as far as

Baalath-beer and Ramah in the Negeb. This is the heritage of the tribe of Simeon, clan by clan. ⁸Simeon's property was a part of Judah's because Judah's portion was too large for them. So Simeon had its hereditary property within theirs.

⁹The third lot came up for Zebulun according to its clans. The boundary of their inheritance goes as far as Sarid. ¹⁰Toward the west the border goes up to Maralah and touches Dabbesheth and the ravine east of Jokneam. ¹¹But turning east from Sarid, it goes toward the rising sun to the area of Chisloth-tabor; from there it goes to Dobrath and up to Japhia. ¹²From there it goes east toward the sunrise, to Gath-hepher and Eth-kazin; from there it goes to Rimmon and turns to Neah. ¹³going around it in the north to Hannathon and ending at the valley of Iphtahel. ¹⁴Then Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem—12 towns with their villages. ¹⁵These towns with their villages are the inheritance given to Zebulun according to its clans.

¹⁶The fourth lot came out for Issachar, according to its clans. ¹⁷Their territory included Jezreel, Chesulloth, Shunem, ¹⁸Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, ¹⁹Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, ²⁰Remeth, En-gannim, En-haddah, Beth-pazzez; ²¹and the border touches Tabor, Shihazimah, and Beth-shemesh; and their border ends at the Jordan—16 towns with their villages. ²²These towns with their villages are the heritage given to the tribe of Issachar, clan by clan.

²³The fifth lot came out for the tribe of Asher according to its clans. ²⁴Their territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Achshaph. ²⁵Allam-

melech, Amad, Mishal, and it touches Carmel in the west and the river of Libnath. ²⁷It turns east to Beth-dagon and touches Zebulun and the valley of Iphthahel in the north and goes to Beth-emek and Neiel. From there it goes to Cabul in the north ²⁸and Abdon, Rehob, Hammon, Kanah, and as far as Great Sidon. ²⁹Then the border turns at Ramah and goes on to the fortified city of Tyre. The border then turns at Hosah and goes toward the west, from Ahlab to Achzib. ³⁰then Acco, Apeh, and Rehob—22 towns with their villages. ³¹These towns with their villages are the hereditary property of the tribe of Asher according to their clans.

³²The sixth lot came out for Naphtali according to its clans. ³³Their border is from Heleph, the oak at Zaananim, Adami-nekeb, and Jabneel to Lakkum, and it ends at the Jordan. ³⁴The border turns west to Aznoth-tabor, and from there it goes to Hukok. It touches Zebulun in the south, Asher in the west, and the stretch of the Jordan in the east. ³⁵The fortified towns were Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rak-kath, Chinnereth. ³⁶Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, ³⁷Kedesh, Edrei, En-hazor. ³⁸Iron, Migdal-el, Horem, Beth-anath, and Beth-shemeth—19 towns with their villages. ³⁹These towns with their villages are the hereditary property given to the tribe of Naphtali clan by clan.

⁴⁰The seventh lot came out for the tribe of Dan according to its clans. ⁴¹Their territory included Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir-shemesh, ⁴²Shaal-abbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, ⁴³Elon, Timnah, Ekron, ⁴⁴Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath. ⁴⁵Jehud, Bene-

berak, Gath-rimmon, ⁴⁶Me-jarkon, and Rakkon, with the border in front of Joppa. ⁴⁷When the territory of Dan was lost to them, Dan's descendants went up and fought against Leshem, captured it, and put it to the sword. They took it and settled there and called Leshem Dan after the name of their ancestor Dan. ⁴⁸These towns with their villages are the heritage given to the tribe of Dan according to its clans.

⁴⁹When they had finished assigning the hereditary lands, border by border, the Israelites gave a property in their land to Joshua, Nun's son. ⁵⁰As the LORD directed them, they gave him the city he asked for, Timnath-serah in the hills of Ephraim. He rebuilt the city and lived there.

⁵¹These are the hereditary lands that Eleazar the priest, Joshua, Nun's son, and the leaders of the families of the tribes of Israel distributed by lot at Shiloh before the LORD at the entrance of the tent where God met with them. So they finished dividing the land.

Six Cities of Refuge

20 The LORD said to Joshua: ¹"Tell Israel: 'Provide the cities of refuge of which I spoke to you through Moses, ²so that anyone can flee there who kills someone by mistake and unintentionally. There he can find refuge from the avenger of blood. ³He should flee to one of these cities, stand at the entrance of the gate of the city, and explain his case to the elders of this city; and they should take him into their city and give him a place so he can live with them. ⁴If the avenger of blood pursues him,

⁸Heb Judah at the Jordan in the east

they should not hand the killer over to him, since he struck the other person unintentionally and hadn't hated him before this. "He should live in that city till he has appeared before the community for a trial and until the man who is the high priest at the time has died. Then the killer may go back to his own town and his home in the town he fled from" "

"They set aside Kedesh in Galilee, in the hill country of Naphtali, Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and the city of Arba, which is Hebron, in the hill country of Judah. "And on the other side of the Jordan, east of Jericho, they set aside Bezer in the wilderness on the tableland, from the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead from the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan from the tribe of Manasseh. "These were the cities appointed for all Israel and for the foreigners living among them in order that anyone who might kill another unintentionally might flee there and not be killed by the avenger of blood till he appeared before the community:

Levi's Cities

21 Then the leaders of the families of Levi came to Eleazar the priest and to Joshua, Nun's son, and to the leaders of the families of the other tribes of Israel, and they said to them at Shiloh in Canaan: "The LORD gave an order through Moses to give us cities to live in, with their pastures for our cattle." "So Israel, as the LORD had ordered, gave out of their hereditary property the following cities with their pastures to Levi's descendants.

"The lot came out for the clans of

Kohath. Those descendants of Levi who were descended from Aaron the priest received by lot 13 cities from the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. "The rest of Kohath's descendants received by lot 10 cities from the clans of the tribes of Ephraim and Dan and half of Manasseh.

"Gershon's descendants received by lot 13 cities from the clans of the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the half of Manasseh in Bashan. "The clans of Merari received by lot 12 cities from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun. "Israel gave these cities and their pastures by lot to Levi's descendants as the LORD had ordered through Moses.

"The tribes of Judah and Simeon gave the following cities, mentioned by name, "to those descendants of Levi and Aaron who were of the clans of Kohath, since they got the first lot. "They gave them the city of Arba (the ancestor of the Anakites), which is Hebron, in the hill country of Judah, with the pastures around it. "But the fields and villages of the city they gave to Caleb, Jephunneh's son, as his property. "To the descendants of Aaron the priest they gave Hebron, a city of refuge for the killer, with its pastures, Libnah with its pastures, "Jattir with its pastures, Eshtemoa with its pastures, "Holon with its pastures, Debir with its pastures, "Ashan^h with its pastures, Juttah with its pastures, Beth-shemesh with its pastures—9 cities from those two tribes. "And from the tribe of Benjamin: Gibeon with its pastures, Geba with its pastures, "Anathoth with its pastures, Almon with its pastures—4 cities. "There

^hHeb Ain, but see 1 Chron 6:59

was a total of 13 cities with their pastures given to the priests, who were descended from Aaron.

²⁰Kohath's clans, that is, the rest of Kohath's descendants (descended from Levi), received by lot cities from the tribe of Ephraim. ²¹They were given Shechem, a city of refuge for the killer, with its pastures, in the hill country of Ephraim, and Gezer with its pastures. ²²Kibzaim with its pastures, Beth-horon with its pastures—4 cities. ²³And from the tribe of Dan: Eltekeh with its pastures, Gibbethon with its pastures. ²⁴Aijalon with its pastures, Gath-rimmon with its pastures—4 cities. ²⁵And from the half tribe of Manasseh: Taanach with its pastures, Gath-rimmon with its pastures—2 cities. ²⁶There was a total of 10 cities with their pastures for the clans of the rest of Kohath's descendants.

²⁷The clans of Levi who were Gershon's descendants received from the half tribe of Manasseh Golan in Bashan with its pastures, a city of refuge for the killer, and Ashtaroth with its pastures—2 cities. ²⁸And from the tribe of Issachar: Kishion with its pastures, Daberah with its pastures. ²⁹Jarmuth with its pastures, En-gannim with its pastures—4 cities. ³⁰And from the tribe of Asher: Mishal with its pastures, Abdon with its pastures. ³¹Helkath with its pastures, Rehob with its pastures—4 cities. ³²And from the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee with its pastures, a city of refuge for the killer, and Hammoth-dor with its pastures, and Kartan with its pastures—3 cities. ³³There was a total of 13 cities with their pastures given to Gershon's clans.

³⁴Merari's clans, the rest of Levi's

descendants, received from the tribe of Zebulun Jokneam with its pastures, Kartah with its pastures. ³⁵Dimnah with its pastures, Nahalal with its pastures—4 cities. ³⁶From the tribe of Reuben: Bezer with its pastures, Jahaz with its pastures. ³⁷Kedemoth with its pastures, Mephaath with its pastures—4 cities. ³⁸And from the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead with its pastures, a city of refuge for the killer, and Mahanaim with its pastures. ³⁹Heshbon with its pastures, Jazer with its pastures—4 cities in all. ⁴⁰All these were the cities of the clans of Merari, the rest of the clans of Levi. They received 12 cities by lot.

⁴¹Within the land belonging to Israel there was for Levi's descendants a total of 48 cities with their pastures. ⁴²Each of these cities had its own pastures around it. It was the same at all these cities.

⁴³And so the LORD gave Israel all the land He swore to give their fathers, and they took it and settled there. ⁴⁴And the LORD gave them rest all around, just as He promised with an oath to their fathers. Not one of all their enemies could resist them; the LORD put all their enemies in their hands. ⁴⁵Of all the good the LORD promised the people of Israel not one thing failed to be carried out; all of it came true.

The 2½ Tribes Go Home

22 Then Joshua called for Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh. ²"You have done everything Moses, the LORD's servant, ordered you to do," he told them, "and you have obeyed me in everything I ordered. ³All this time you didn't desert your fellow Israelites, to this day you've done

what the LORD your God ordered you to do. 'And now the LORD your God has given your fellow Israelites rest as He promised them. Return then, and go home to the land that belongs to you, that Moses, the LORD's servant, gave you on the other side of the Jordan. 'Only be very careful to do what you're told in the commandment and law that Moses, the LORD's servant, gave you: Love the LORD your God and live in all His ways, keep His commandments, be loyal to Him, and serve Him with all your heart and soul.'" 'So Joshua blessed them and sent them away, and they went to their homes.

'Moses had given half the tribe of Manasseh land in Bashan, and Joshua had given the other half land with the rest of Israel west of the Jordan. When Joshua sent them home, he blessed them 'and told them: "Go back home with much wealth, very many cattle, with silver, gold, bronze, iron, and lots of clothing. Divide the spoils of your enemies with your fellow Israelites."

'Reuben, Gad, and the half of the tribe of Manasseh left the rest of Israel at Shiloh in Canaan to go back to their own land of Gilead that they had taken by the LORD's order through Moses. 'When they came to the region of the Jordan that was still in Canaan, Reuben, Gad, and the half of the tribe of Manasseh built an altar there by the Jordan, an altar so large it caught the eye. "Hearing about it, the rest of Israel said: "Reuben, Gad, and the half of the tribe of Manasseh have built an altar at the frontier of Canaan, in the region of the Jordan that is next to the Israelites." 'When Israel heard about it, the whole community of Israel got together at Shiloh to go

up and fight against them.

'Israel sent Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the priest, to Reuben, Gad, and the half of the tribe of Manasseh, to Gilead, 'and with him 10 leaders, each the leader of a house, one for every tribe in Israel, and each was the head of a family among the clans of Israel. 'When they came to Reuben, Gad, and the half of the tribe of Manasseh, to Gilead, they said to them: "All of the LORD's community is asking: What is this treacherous thing you've done to the God of Israel? You have today turned away from the LORD by building an altar for yourselves; you have today rebelled against the LORD! 'Does the sin of Peor—from which we still haven't cleansed ourselves to this day and for which a plague came on the LORD's community—mean so little to us 'that you have to turn away from the LORD today? This is what will happen: You rebel against the LORD today, and tomorrow He will be angry with the whole community of Israel. 'If your own land is unclean, come over to the LORD's country, where the LORD's tabernacle is standing, and take land among us to settle on, but don't rebel against the LORD or against us by building another altar for yourselves besides the altar of the LORD our God. 'When Achan, Zerach's son, was unfaithful in regard to the condemned goods, didn't He get angry with the whole community of Israel, although he was only one man? And didn't he die for his sin?"

'Then Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh answered the leaders of the clans of Israel: "The God of gods is the LORD! 'The God of gods is the LORD! He understands and Israel should understand: If

there is rebellion here or treachery against the LORD, don't save us today. ²³If in building an altar for ourselves we turn away from the LORD and offer burnt offerings on it or food offerings or make peace offerings on it, may the LORD punish us. ²⁴We did this only because we're troubled about the future, when your children may say to our children, 'What have you to do with the LORD, the God of Israel?' ²⁵The LORD has made the Jordan a line dividing us from you; you descendants of Reuben and Gad have no share in the LORD!' So your descendants may make our descendants stop worshiping the LORD. ²⁶Then we said, 'Let us do something for ourselves by building the altar, not for burnt offerings or sacrifices' ²⁷but as a witness between us and you, and between our descendants after us, that we may worship before the LORD with our burnt offerings, sacrifices, and peace offerings.' Then your descendants can't in the future say to our descendants, 'You have no share in the LORD!' ²⁸So we thought: When in the future we or our descendants are told this, we will answer, 'Look at the model of the LORD's altar our fathers made, not for burnt offerings or sacrifices but as a witness between us and you.' ²⁹Far be it from us to rebel against the LORD or to turn away from the LORD today by building another altar for burnt offerings, food offerings, or sacrifices besides the altar of the LORD our God that is before His tabernacle."

³⁰When Phinehas the priest, the leaders of the community, and the heads of the clans of Israel heard what Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh said, they thought it was a good

idea. ³¹Then Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the priest, said to Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh: "Today we know the LORD is among us, because you didn't do such an act of treachery against the LORD. Now you have delivered Israel from the LORD's hand."

³²Then Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the priest, and the leaders went back from Reuben and Gad in Gilead to Israel in Canaan and brought them a report. ³³Israel was pleased and praised God and thought no more of going up to fight them and to ravage the land where Reuben and Gad were living.

³⁴Reuben and Gad gave the altar a name, saying: "It is a witness between us that the LORD is God."

Joshua's First Farewell

23 A long time afterward, when the LORD had given Israel rest from its enemies all around and Joshua had grown old, ¹Joshua called for all Israel, its elders and chiefs, its judges and officers, and said to them: "I have become old. ²You have seen everything the LORD your God did to all these nations for you, because the LORD your God fought for you. ³See, I have not only allotted to you all the nations I destroyed from the Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea in the west, but I have also given you, as a heritage for each of your tribes, these people who still remain. ⁴The LORD your God Himself will push them back and drive them out ahead of you, and you will take their land as the LORD your God promised you. ⁵Do your utmost to keep and carry out everything written in the book of the law of Moses. Don't turn away from it to right or left. ⁶Don't mix with these nations who are still with you

or call on the name of their gods or have anyone swear by them or serve and worship them. ⁶But be loyal to the LORD your God as you still are today. ⁷The LORD has driven out great and mighty nations ahead of you, and nobody can resist you to this day. ⁸One of you chases a thousand, because the LORD your God is fighting for you, as He promised you. ⁹Be very careful, then, to love the LORD your God.

¹²“But if you turn away and join the rest of these people who are still with you and intermarry with them and live with them. ¹³You should know that the LORD your God will no more drive out these people ahead of you, but they will be a snare and a trap to you, a whip laid to your sides, and thorns in your eyes till you perish from this good land the LORD your God gave you.

¹⁴“You see, I’m now going the way of all the earth. With all your heart and soul you know that not one of all the good things the LORD your God promised you has failed; everything has come true: not one of them has failed.

¹⁵“But as every good thing the LORD your God promised you has come to you, so the LORD will carry out on you every threat till you are destroyed and taken from this good land the LORD your God gave you. ¹⁶When you break the covenant of the LORD your God that He ordered you to keep and you go and serve other gods and worship them, then the LORD will be very angry with you, and you will quickly perish from the good land He gave you.”

Joshua's Last Farewell

24 Joshua had all the tribes of Israel come together at Shechem, and he called for Israel's

elders, chiefs, judges, and officers, and they stood before God.

²Joshua said to all the people: “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: Long ago your ancestors—Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor—lived on the other side of the river and served other gods. ³And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the river, had him go through the whole land of Canaan, and gave him many descendants. I gave him Isaac. ⁴To Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau, and to Esau I gave the mountains of Seir as his own. Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt. ⁵Then I sent Moses and Aaron and plagued Egypt with what I did there, and I brought you out. ⁶When I took your fathers out of Egypt, you came to the sea. The Egyptians with their chariots and horsemen pursued your fathers to the Red Sea. ⁷When they cried out to the LORD, He put darkness between you and the Egyptians and made the sea overflow them and cover them. Your eyes saw what I did to Egypt. Then you lived in the wilderness a long time. ⁸And I brought you to the land of the Amorites living on the other side of the Jordan. They fought with you, but I put them in your hands. You took the country, and I destroyed them before you. ⁹Then Balak, Zippor's son, king of Moab, started to fight against Israel and sent and called Balaam, Beor's son, to curse you. ¹⁰But I didn't listen to Balaam; so he blessed you, and I saved you from him.

¹¹“You crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho. The citizens of Jericho fought against you—Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites, and Jebusites—but I put them in your hands.

"I sent terrorⁱ ahead of you, which drove out before you the two kings of the Amorites; it wasn't by your sword or bow. "I gave you a land you hadn't worked, cities to live in that you didn't build, vineyards and olive trees to eat from that you didn't plant. "And now fear the LORD, and serve Him sincerely and faithfully. Put away the idols your ancestors served on the other side of the river and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. "But if you think it is bad to serve the LORD, choose today whom you will serve, the idols your ancestors served on the other side of the river or the idols of the Amorites whose land you live in; but I and my family will serve the LORD."

"Far be it from us," the people answered, "to leave the LORD in order to serve other gods, "since the LORD our God brought us and our fathers out of Egypt, where we were slaves, and He did those great miracles before our eyes and kept us safe all the way we went and among all the people we passed through. "The LORD drove out of our way all the people, like the Amorites who lived in the land. We too will serve the LORD, because He is our God."

"But Joshua answered the people: "You can't serve the LORD, because He is a holy God and a jealous God, who will not forgive your transgressions and sins. "If you forsake the LORD and serve strange gods, He will turn, and hurt, and consume you after He has been so good to you."

"No!" the people told Joshua. "We will serve the LORD!"

"You are witnesses against yourselves," Joshua said to the people.

ⁱHeb the hornet: used figuratively.

"that you have chosen the LORD to serve Him."

"We are witnesses," they answered.

"Then get rid of the strange gods that are among you, and turn your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel."

"We will serve the LORD our God," the people told Joshua, "and obey Him."

That day Joshua made a covenant for the people and set up statutes and laws for them in Shechem. Joshua wrote these things into the book of God's law. Then he took a large stone and set it up there under the oak at the LORD's holy place. "You see," Joshua told all the people, "this stone will be a witness against us, since it has heard everything the LORD told us. It will be a witness against you to keep you from denying your God." Then Joshua sent the people away, everyone to his own territory.

After this, Joshua, Nun's son, the LORD's servant, died at the age of 110. He was buried on his own property at Timnath-erah, which is in the hill country of Ephraim, north of the mountain of Gaash.

Israel served the LORD all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and knew everything the LORD had done for Israel.

Joseph's bones, which Israel had brought from Egypt, were buried in Shechem in the piece of ground Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, for 100 pieces of money; it became the heritage of Joseph's descendants.

Eleazar, Aaron's son, died and was buried on the hill of his son Phinehas, which had been given to him in the hill country of Ephraim.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Judah to Be Leader

1 After Joshua died, Israel asked the LORD: "Which of us should go up first against the Canaanites to fight against them?"

"Judah should go up," the LORD said. "See, I've given him the land."

Judah said to his brother Simeon: "Come up with me into the land assigned to me by lot, to fight against the Canaanites. Then I'll also go with you into the land assigned to you." So Simeon went with him.

Judah went up, and the LORD put the Canaanites and Perizzites in their hands; they defeated 10,000 of their men at Bezek. ⁵At Bezek they surprised Adoni-bezek, fought against him, and defeated the Canaanites and Perizzites. ⁶Adoni-bezek fled. They pursued him, caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his big toes. ⁷And Adoni-bezek said, "Seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off used to pick up food under my table. As I did, so God paid me back." He was taken to Jerusalem, where he died.

Judah fought against Jerusalem, took it, put it to the sword, and set the city on fire. ⁹Then Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites living in the mountains, the Negeb, and the foothills. ¹⁰So Judah went against the Canaanites living at Hebron; Hebron formerly was called Kiriath-arba. They defeated Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai.

¹¹From there they went against

the people living at Debir; Debir formerly was called Kiriath-sepher.

¹²Caleb said, "I will give my daughter Achsah as wife to anyone who storms Kiriath-sepher and takes it."

¹³Then Othniel, the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it, and he gave him his daughter Achsah as wife. ¹⁴When she came to him, she persuaded him they should ask her father for a field. When she got off her donkey, Caleb asked her, "What do you want?"

¹⁵"Give me a present," she answered him. "Since you've put me in the dry land of the Negeb, give me springs of water." So Caleb gave her the upper and lower springs.

¹⁶The descendants of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up with the men of Judah from Palm City into the wilderness of Judah, which is in the Negeb of Arad. They went and lived with the Amalekites.^a

¹⁷Judah went with his brother Simeon, and they defeated the Canaanites living in Zephath and destroyed it since it was under the curse. So the city was called Hormah.^b ¹⁸Judah also took Gaza with its territory, Ashkelon with its territory, and Ekron with its territory. ¹⁹The LORD was with Judah; so he took the hill country. But he couldn't drive out the people living in the valley, because they had iron chariots. ²⁰Hebron was given to Caleb as Moses had promised; and he drove out the three sons of Anak. ²¹Benjamin didn't drive out

^aGk: *Heb the people*

^b'Destruction'

the Jebusites living in Jerusalem, but the Jebusites still live with Benjamin in Jerusalem today.

²¹Joseph also went up against Bethel, and the LORD went with him. ²²Joseph sent men to explore Bethel; the city formerly was called Luz. ²⁴When the spies who were watching saw a man coming out of the city, they told him, "Please show us a way into the city; then we'll be kind to you." ²⁵He showed them a way into the city. They put the city to the sword but let the man and his relatives go. ²⁶The man went to the land of the Hittites, built a city, and called it Luz, which is still its name today.

²⁷But Manasseh didn't drive out the people of Beth-shean with its villages or Taanach with its villages or the people who lived at Dor with its villages or those who lived in Ibleam with its villages or those who lived in Megiddo with its villages; the Canaanites were determined to live in that land. ²⁸When Israel was stronger, they made the Canaanites work as slaves but didn't completely drive them out.

²⁹And Ephraim didn't drive out the Canaanites living in Gezer, but the Canaanites lived with them in Gezer.

³⁰Zebulun didn't drive out those who lived at Kitron or those who lived at Nahalol, but the Canaanites lived with them and became their slaves.

³¹Asher didn't drive out those who lived at Acco, Sidon, Ahlab, Achzib, Helbah, Aphek, and Rehob. ³²But Asher lived among the Canaanites inhabitants of the land, because they didn't drive them out.

³³Naphtali didn't drive out those who lived at Beth-shemesh or Beth-anath, but they lived among the Canaanite inhabitants of the land; however, the people of Beth-shemesh and Beth-anath became their slaves.

³⁴The Amorites forced the Danites into the hills and wouldn't let them come down into the valley. ³⁵The Amorites were determined to live at Har-heres, Aijalon, and Shaalbim; but when Joseph became stronger than they, they became slaves. ³⁶The territory of the Edomites^c was from the slope of Scorpions, from Selah on up.

2 The LORD's Angel went up from Gilgal to Bochim. "I brought you up from Egypt," He said, "and into the land I promised with an oath to your fathers. And I said, 'Never will I break My covenant with you. ²And don't you make any covenant with the people who live in this land. Tear down their altars.' But you haven't obeyed Me. What have you done? ³So I also say, 'I will not drive them out ahead of you, and they will be in your sides, and their gods will be a trap for you.'"^d "When the LORD's Angel said this to all Israel, the people raised their voices and wept. ⁵So they called that place Bochim,^d and there they sacrificed to the LORD.

⁶When Joshua sent the people away, every Israelite went to his inheritance to take possession of the land. ⁷The people served the LORD as long as Joshua lived and as long as the elders lived that outlived Joshua and had seen all the great

^cGk: Heb Amorites

^d"Weepers"

deeds the LORD did for Israel. ⁸But Joshua, Nun's son, the LORD's servant, died at the age of 110 ⁹and was buried on the land of his inheritance, in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash. ¹⁰And all the people of that age also were taken to be with their fathers, and another generation grew up after them who didn't know the LORD or what He had done for Israel.

¹¹Then Israel did what displeased the LORD and served the Baals. ¹²They left the LORD, the God of their fathers, who brought them out of Egypt, and followed other gods, the gods of the people around them, and worshiped them and so made the LORD angry. ¹³They left the LORD and served Baal and Astarte. ¹⁴So the LORD got angry with Israel and put them in the hands of raiders that robbed them, and He sold them to the enemies around them so they couldn't anymore resist their enemies. ¹⁵Whenever they marched out, the LORD's hand was against them to harm them as the LORD had warned and threatened with an oath; and they were in great trouble.

¹⁶The LORD would raise up judges to save them from those who robbed them. ¹⁷But they wouldn't listen to their judges either, because they lusted after other gods and worshiped them, turning away quickly from the way their fathers had gone who obeyed the LORD's commandments—but they didn't do so. ¹⁸When the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with such a judge and saved them from their enemies as long as the judge lived, because their groaning under those who were cruelly oppressing them made the LORD feel sorry for them. ¹⁹But after the judge died, they

turned back and behaved worse than their fathers by following other gods, serving and worshiping them, omitting none of their practices and stubborn ways. ²⁰Then the LORD got angry with Israel and said: "Because these people have broken My covenant that I ordered their fathers to keep and have refused to obey Me. ²¹I will no more drive out ahead of them any of the nations Joshua left when he died. ²²so that by them I may test Israel whether they will carefully go in the LORD's way as their fathers did, or not." ²³So the LORD let those nations stay and didn't drive them out quickly, nor had He delivered them to Joshua.

3 These are the people the LORD left in order to use them to test all those in Israel who had experienced no wars in Canaan. ²just so Israel's descendants in later ages would learn and be taught how to fight, at least those who before knew nothing about it: ³the five lords of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, the people around Sidon, the Hivites who lived on Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-hermon to the pass at Hamath. ⁴They were there to test Israel to find out if they would obey the commandments the LORD by Moses ordered their fathers to keep. ⁵So Israel lived among the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. ⁶They married their daughters and let their own daughters marry their sons. And they served their gods.

Othniel

¹Israel did what was wrong before the LORD, forgot the LORD their God, and served the Baals and

the Asherahs.^e *The LORD got very angry with Israel and surrendered them to the power of Cushan-rishathaim, king of the Arameans in Mesopotamia, and Israel was subject to Cushan-rishathaim 8 years.

*Then Israel cried to the LORD, and the LORD raised a man to save Israel, and he saved them; it was Othniel, the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. ¹⁰The LORD's Spirit came on him, and he became the judge of Israel. When he went out to war, the LORD put Cushan-rishathaim, king of the Arameans, in his hands, and he conquered Cushan-rishathaim. ¹¹Then the country had peace 40 years. And Othniel, Kenaz' son, died.

Ehud

¹²Israel again did what was wrong before the LORD. So the LORD strengthened Eglon, king of Moab, to oppose Israel because they did wrong before the LORD. ¹³He got the people of Ammon and Amalek to help him, and they went and defeated Israel and occupied Palm City. ¹⁴Israel was subject to Eglon, king of Moab, 18 years.

¹⁵When Israel cried to the LORD, He raised a man to free them, Ehud, Gera's son, a lefthanded man of Benjamin. Israel sent him with a present to Eglon, king of Moab. ¹⁶Ehud made a short, two-edged sword for himself and fastened it with his belt on his right side under his garment. ¹⁷Then he brought the present to Eglon, king of Moab. (Now Eglon was a very fat man.) ¹⁸When he finished delivering the present, he dismissed the men who had carried it. ¹⁹At the stone idols at Gilgal he

turned back and said, "I have a secret message for you, King."

He said, "Silence!" and all his attendants left him. ²⁰Then Ehud came to him as he sat alone in his own cool room on the roof. "I have a message from God for you," Ehud said. As he rose from his chair, ²¹Ehud reached with his left hand, took the sword from his right side, and plunged it into his belly. ²²The handle also went in after the blade, and the fat closed around the blade because he didn't draw the sword from his belly; and it came out behind. ²³Then Ehud went out by the porch, closed the doors of the upper room behind him, and bolted them.

²⁴After he left, Eglon's servants came and saw the doors were bolted. "He must be covering his feet^f in the private place of the cool room," they said. ²⁵They waited till they were very much puzzled, and still he didn't open the doors of the room. So they took the key and opened the room, and there was their master—fallen to the ground, dead!

²⁶While they delayed, Ehud escaped. He went past the stone idols and escaped to Seirah. ²⁷When he came there, he blew a horn in the hills of Ephraim. So Israel went down from the hills with him, and he led them. ²⁸"Follow me quickly," he told them. "The LORD has put your enemies, the Moabites, in your hands."

They followed him down and took the places where the Moabites had to cross the Jordan and refused to let anyone cross over. ²⁹At that time they killed about 10,000 Moabites, all of them stout and strong

^eAnother Canaanite fertility goddess
^fHaving a bowel movement

men; not one escaped. ³⁰That day Moab was made subject to Israel. Then the country had peace 80 years.

Shamgar

³¹After him was Shamgar, Anath's son. He killed 600 Philistines with an oxgoad. So he too freed Israel.

Deborah

4 After Ehud died, Israel again did what was wrong before the LORD. ²So the LORD delivered them to Jabin, king of Canaan, ruling at Hazor. The general of his army was Sisera, who lived at Harosheth-Among-the-Nations. ³Israel cried to the LORD, because he had 900 iron chariots and severely oppressed Israel 20 years.

⁴Now Deborah, a woman prophet, Lappidoth's wife, was the judge in Israel at that time. ⁵She used to sit under Deborah's palm tree between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites came up to her to have her decide what was right.

⁶She sent a messenger to call Barak, Abinoam's son, from Kedesh in Naphtali. She told him: "Hasn't the LORD, the God of Israel, given this order? Go and gather troops on Mount Tabor, and take with you ten thousand men from Naphtali and Zebulun. ⁷I will lure Sisera, the general of Jabin's army, his chariots, and troops to you in the valley of the Kishon, and I will put him in your hands."

⁸Barak told her: "If you go with me, I'll go; but if you won't go with me, I won't go. ⁹Because I don't know the day when the LORD would prosper the Angel with me."^g

"Of course I'll go with you," she said; "but where you're going, you won't get the honor, because the LORD will deliver Sisera to a woman."

Deborah started out and went with Barak to Kedesh. ¹⁰Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali together at Kedesh, and 10,000 men followed him up. Deborah also went up with him.

¹¹Now Heber the Kenite had separated from the other Kenites, the descendants of Hobab, the father-in-law of Moses, and had set up his tent as far away as the Oak-at-Zaananim, which is near Kedesh.

¹²When Sisera was told that Barak, Abinoam's son, went up to Mount Tabor, ¹³Sisera called all his chariots together, 900 iron chariots, and all the men who were with him, out of Harosheth-Among-the-Nations to the Kishon river.

¹⁴Then Deborah said to Barak: "Go ahead, this is the day the LORD puts Sisera in your hands. Hasn't the LORD gone out ahead of you?"

Barak went down from Mount Tabor, and 10,000 men followed him. ¹⁵And the LORD threw Sisera and all his chariots and all his foot soldiers into a panic as Barak fought them with the sword. Sisera got down from his chariot and fled on foot. ¹⁶Barak pursued the chariots and foot soldiers to Harosheth-Among-the-Nations, and Sisera's whole army was destroyed by the sword; not a single man was left.

Jael Kills Sisera

¹But Sisera fled on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, since there were friendly relations between Jabin, king of Hazor, and

^gSupplied from Gk; lacking in Heb

the family of Heber the Kenite.
 18Jael came out to meet Sisera.
 "Turn aside, my lord," she told him,
 "and come to me. Don't be afraid."
 So he came to her in the tent, and
 she covered him with a tent curtain.

19"Please give me a little drink of
 water," he asked her; "I'm thirsty."
 She opened a skin of milk, gave him
 a drink, and covered him again.

20"Stand at the door of the tent,"
 he told her, "and if anyone comes
 and asks you, 'Is anyone here?' say,
 'No.'"

21Then Jael, Heber's wife, took a
 tent peg, and taking a hammer in
 her hand, she went softly to him
 while he was sound asleep from
 exhaustion and hammered the peg
 through his temple and down into
 the ground. And so he died.

22There was Barak still pursuing
 Sisera. Jael went out to meet him.
 "Come," she told him, "I'll show you
 the man you're looking for." He
 came to her, and there was Sisera
 lying dead with the peg in his
 temple.

23That day God humbled Jabin,
 king of Canaan, by letting Israel
 defeat him. 24Israel got stronger
 and stronger against Jabin, king of
 Canaan, till they destroyed him.

Song of Deborah and Barak

5 That day Deborah and Barak,
 Abinoam's son, sang a song:

21"Men let their hair grow^b in
 Israel,

and people volunteered—
 praise the LORD!

"Hear, kings! Listen, princes!
 I will sing to the LORD.

I will sing with music to the
 LORD, the God of Israel.

4"When the LORD went out from
 Seir
 and marched from the country of
 Edom,
 the earth shook, the sky dropped
 water,
 yes, the clouds dropped water.

5"The mountains quaked before
 the LORD, the One on Sinai,
 before the LORD, the God of
 Israel.

6"In the days of Shamgar, Anath's
 son,
 in the days of Jael,
 there were no caravans
 anymore.

and those walking along the
 paths
 took the roundabout ways.

7"The villages in Israel were
 deserted;
 they were deserted till you came,
 Deborah.

and stood there, a mother of
 Israel.

8"When people chose new gods,
 war was at their gates.
 Did anyone see a shield or a
 spear
 among forty thousand in Israel?

9"My heart is with the men who
 command Israel,
 who volunteer among the
 people—
 praise the LORD!

10"Think about it, you who ride on
 tawny donkeys,
 you who sit on rich rugs,
 and you who walk on the road.

11"Hear the musicians at the places
 where water is drawn.

People are celebrating the righ-
 teous things the LORD has
 done.

the righteous deeds of His war-
 riors in Israel.

^bAs a vow to fight

- Then the people of the LORD
went down to the gates.
- ¹²Rise, rise, Deborah;
rise, rise, sing a song.
Up, Barak; take your prisoners,
Abinoam's son.
- ¹³Then those who were left of the
noblemen came down,
the LORD's people came down to
me with their heroes.
- ¹⁴From Ephraim came those who
had settled in Amalek's coun-
try.
Benjamin followed you among
your troops.
Commanding officers came
down from Machir,
and from Zebulun those who
march with a leader's staff.
- ¹⁵The leaders of Issachar were
with Deborah;
Issachar was with Barak,
following him into the valley.
In Reuben's valleys there was
great heart-searching.
- ¹⁶Why did you sit among the
sheep-pens
to listen to the shepherds calling
for their flocks?
In Reuben's valleys there was
great heart-searching.
- ¹⁷Gilead stayed on the other side
of the Jordan.
And why does Dan linger by the
ships?
Asher sat on the shore of the sea
and continued to live along the
coves.
- ¹⁸With a contempt for life Zebulun
faced death,
Naphtali too in the uplands.
- ¹⁹Kings came and fought;
then fought the kings of Canaan
at Taanach, by the waters of
Megiddo.
They took no silver as spoils.
- ²⁰The stars fought from heaven;
from their orbits they fought
with Sisera.
- ²¹The Kishon river swept them
away,
the river that has flowed for
ages, the Kishon river.
Mightily march on, my soul!
- ²²Then the horses' hoofs
pounded—
their strong animals were gal-
loping, galloping.
- ²³'Curse Meroz,' said the LORD's
Angel;
'Curse bitterly those who live
there,
because they didn't come to help
the LORD,
to help the LORD like brave
men.'
- ²⁴Jael, the wife of Heber the
Kenite,
be blessed among women,
blessed among women living in
tents.
- ²⁵He asked for water; she gave
him milk;
in a bowl for lords she brought
him sour cream.
- ²⁶With one hand she reached for a
tent peg,
with her right hand for the
hammer of a workingman.
She gave Sisera a blow, crushed
his head,
shattered and pierced his tem-
ple.
- ²⁷At her feet he sank, fell, and lay
there;
at her feet he sank and fell;
where he sank, there he fell—
dead!
- ²⁸Sisera's mother looked through
her window;
she gave a shrill cry through her
lattice:
'Why has his chariot failed to
come?'

Why this delay of the hoofbeats
of his chariot horses?'

"Her wisest ladies answer her,
and she too tells herself the
answer:

"Aren't they finding and divid-
ing the spoils?

A girl or two for each soldier;
colored garments are the spoils
for Sisera.

colored, embroidered garments,
a colored cloth and two pieces of
embroidery

for the neck of him who takes the
spoils.'

"May all Your enemies, LORD,
perish like that.

But may those who love You
be like the sun when he rises in
his might!"

The country had peace 40 years.

Oppressed by Midian

6 Israel did what was wrong be-
fore the LORD, and the LORD
put them in the hands of Midian for
7 years. 'Midian overpowered
Israel; to protect itself against
Midian, Israel found hiding places
in the hills, caves, and mountain
strongholds. 'Whenever Israel sowed
the ground, Midian, Amalek,
and the other people of the east
would come: they would come up
and attack them. 'They would
camp against them and destroy the
products of the land up to Gaza and
leave nothing for Israel to live on,
not a sheep, cow, or donkey, 'be-
cause they came up with their cattle
and their tents, coming in like
locusts. They and their camels could
not be counted. They came into the
land to ruin it. 'When Midian had
made Israel miserable, the people
cried to the LORD.

'When Israel cried to the LORD on

account of Midian, "The LORD
sent a prophet to Israel, who told
them: "The LORD, the God of Israel,
says: I brought you up from Egypt
and took you away from the place
where you were slaves. 'I freed
you from the Egyptians and all who
oppressed you and drove out the
people ahead of you and gave you
their country. "I told you, 'I the
LORD am your God; don't be afraid
of the gods of the Amorites, in whose
country you're living.' But you didn't
listen to Me."

The LORD's Angel

"The LORD's Angel came and sat
under the tree in Ophrah (it be-
longed to Joash of the clan of
Abiezer) while his son Gideon was
beating out wheat in the winepress
to keep it from the Midianites.

"When He appeared to him, the
LORD's Angel said to him, "The
LORD is with you, brave man!"

"Please, Sir," Gideon answered
Him, "if the LORD is with us, why
has all this happened to us? What
has become of all the miraculous
deeds our fathers told us about
when they said, 'The LORD brought
us out of Egypt, didn't He?' Now the
LORD has rejected us and put us in
Midian's hands."

"The LORD turned to him. "Go in
this strength of yours," He said,
"and save Israel from Midian's
tyranny. I'm sending you, am I not?"

"Please, LORD," he asked Him,
"how can I save Israel when my
clan is the weakest in Manasseh and
I'm the least in my father's family?"

"Because I will be with you," the
LORD answered him, "and you will
strike down Midian as if he were
one man."

"If You are kind to me," he said
to Him, "please give me a wonderful

" 8 116

proof of what You're telling me. "Please don't leave this place till I come back to You and bring my offering and set it before You."

"I will stay till you come back." He said.

¹⁹Then Gideon went and prepared a young goat and bread made without yeast from a measure of flour. He put the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot. Then he took them out to Him under the tree and offered them to Him.

²⁰"Take the meat," God's Angel told him, "and the bread without yeast, and lay it on that rock, and pour out the broth." He did so. ²¹Then the LORD's Angel reached with the tip of the staff in His hand and touched the meat and the bread—fire blazed from the rock and burned the meat and the bread. Then the LORD's Angel vanished. ²²When Gideon realized this had been the LORD's Angel, he said, "O Lord GOD! I have seen the LORD's Angel face to face."

²³The LORD said to him, "Be calm. Don't be afraid. You will not die." ²⁴So Gideon built an altar for the LORD there and gave it the name The-Lord-Is-Peace. Even today it is still in Ophrah, which belongs to Abiezer's clan.

"Tear Down Baal's Altar"

²⁵That night the LORD told him, "Take your father's young bull, the second bull, 7 years old. Tear down your father's altar of Baal and cut down the sacred post of Asherah that is beside it. ²⁶Then build an altar to the LORD your God on top of this fortified place by setting up the stones in proper order. Take the second bull, and with the wood of

the sacred post you cut down burn it as a sacrifice."

²⁷Gideon took 10 of his servants and did what the LORD told him. But he was too afraid of his father's family and the men of the town to do it during the day, so he did it at night. ²⁸When the men of the town got up early in the morning, they saw the altar of Baal torn down, the sacred post beside it cut down, and the second young bull burned as a sacrifice on the altar that had been built. ²⁹"Who did this?" one asked another. When they had searched and inquired, they declared, "Gideon, Joash's son, did this!"

³⁰Then the men of the town told Joash, "Bring out your son. He must die. He has torn down the altar of Baal and cut down the sacred post beside it."

³¹But Joash said to all who stood opposed to him, "Are you fighting for Baal? Or are you going to save him? Anyone who fights for him will be put to death by morning. If he's a god, he should fight for himself because his altar was torn down."

³²So that day Gideon was called Jerubbaal,ⁱ as it was said: "Baal should fight against him—he tore down his altar."

The Fleece

³³All Midian, Amalek, and the people of the east got together, crossed over, and camped in the valley of Jezreel. ³⁴Then the LORD's Spirit came on Gideon, and he blew the horn; Abiezer's clan was called together to follow him. ³⁵He sent messengers through all Manasseh, and they too were called together to follow him. He sent messengers through Asher,

ⁱ "Baal-Should-Fight"

Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they marched to meet them.

³⁶Then Gideon said to God: "If You're really going to save Israel by me as You said, ³⁷then, look, I'm putting a fleece of wool on the threshing floor. If there will be dew only on the fleece while all the ground is dry, then I'll be convinced You will save Israel by me as You said." ³⁸And so it happened. The next morning he got up early, wrung the fleece, and squeezed the dew from the fleece, filling a bowl with water.

³⁹Then Gideon said to God: "Don't get angry with me, and I will ask only this yet: Please let me make only one more test with the fleece. Please let the fleece alone be dry, and let there be dew all over the ground." ⁴⁰And God did that the next night: the fleece alone was dry, but all over the ground there was dew.

7 Jerubbaal, that is, Gideon, and all the people who were with him got up early and camped near the spring of Harod. Midian's camp was north of him at the hill of Moreh, in the valley.

"Too Many People"

¹The LORD said to Gideon: "You have too many people with you for Me to put Midian in their hands; they might boast against Me and say, 'I saved myself.' ²Now announce to the people: 'Anyone who's afraid and trembling should go back and promptly leave Mount Gilead.'" Then 22,000 of the people went back, and 10,000 were left.

³The LORD told Gideon: "There are still too many people. Bring them

down to the water, and let Me test them for you there. If I say to you about a man, 'This one will go with you,' he will go with you. And if I say to you about anyone, 'This one will not go with you,' he must not go."

⁴He took the people down to the water, and the LORD told Gideon: "If anyone licks up water with his tongue as a dog licks, set him apart, and also everyone who kneels down to drink." ⁵Those who licked with their hand to their mouth were 300 men, and all the rest of the people knelt to drink water. ⁶Then the LORD told Gideon, "With the three hundred men who licked up water I will save you and deliver Midian to you; but all the other people should go home." ⁷They took the food for the people with them, and their horns. He dismissed every other man of Israel to his home but kept the 300 men.

The Dream

The camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

¹That night the LORD told him: "Get up, attack the camp; I have put it in your hands. ²But if you're afraid to go, go with your man Purah down to the camp. ³Listen to what is said; after that you will have the courage to attack the camp."

He and his man Purah went down to the outposts of the camp. ⁴Midian, Amalek, and all the people of the east were lying in the valley like so many locusts (their camels couldn't be counted); they were many, like the sand on the seashore.

⁵When Gideon got there, there was a man telling his friend a dream. "I had a dream," he said. "There was a cake of barley bread

¹"Trembling"

tumbling around in the camp of Midian. When it came to this tent, it struck it down, so that it fell, and turned it upside down, so that the tent lay flat."

"That," his friend answered him, "is nothing else than the sword of Gideon, the son of Joash, the Israelite. God has put Midian and the whole camp in his hands."

Gideon Defeats Midian

¹⁵When Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its explanation, he worshiped; then he went back to the camp of Israel and said, "Get up! The LORD has put Midian's camp in your hands."

¹⁶He divided the 300 men into three companies. He put horns in the hands of all of them and empty jugs with torches inside the jugs. ¹⁷"Watch me," he told them, "and do what I do. When I come to the edge of the camp, do exactly as I do. ¹⁸When I blow the horn, all of you with me also blow your horns all around the camp, and call out, 'For the LORD and Gideon!' "

¹⁹So Gideon and his 100 men came to the edge of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just as the guards had been posted, and they blew the horns and smashed the jugs in their hands. ²⁰The three companies blew the horns, shattered the jugs, and holding the torches in their left hands and the horns in their right hands to blow them, they shouted, "A sword for the LORD and Gideon!" ²¹While each man stood at his place around the camp, the whole camp ran in panic, shouting and fleeing. ²²While the 300 kept on blowing the horns, the LORD set the Midianites to

fighting one another in the whole camp; and the army fled as far as Beth-shittah in the direction of Zererah^k and as far as the bank of the stream at Abel-meholah, near Tabbath.

²³Then the men of Israel were called from Naphtali, Asher, and all Manasseh to pursue Midian. ²⁴Gideon also sent messengers into all the hill country of Ephraim, saying: "Go down against Midian, take the fords of the Jordan, so they can't cross, as far as Beth-barah." All the men of Ephraim were called out, and they took the fords of the Jordan as far as Beth-barah. ²⁵They also captured two chiefs of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. They killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb and Zeeb at the winepress of Zeeb. And they kept on pursuing Midian. They brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side of the Jordan.

8 "What did you do to us," the men of Ephraim asked him, "by not calling us when you went to fight against Midian?" They criticized him sharply.

"Now, have I done anything compared with what you've done?" he asked them. "Aren't the grapes Ephraim picked up after the harvest better than Abiezer's entire harvest? ²God put Midian's chiefs, Oreb and Zeeb, in your hands. And is anything I could do as good as what you did?" When he spoke to them like this, they weren't angry with him anymore.

"When Gideon and his 300 men came to the Jordan and crossed over, they were exhausted, yet they kept on pursuing the enemy. ⁵So he asked the men of Succoth, "Please

^kPossibly Zarethan see 1 Kings 4:12

give me loaves of bread for the men who follow me. They're exhausted, and I'm pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, Midian's kings."

"Are the hands¹ of Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hands," the rulers of Succoth answered, "that we should give your army bread?"

"Just for that," Gideon answered, "when the LORD has put Zebah and Zalmunna in my hands, I'll thresh your bodies with thornbushes of the wilderness and with briars."

"From there he went up to Penuel and asked them for the same thing, and the men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had answered him. "Then he also told the men of Penuel, "When I come back safe, I'll tear down this tower."

"Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor with their army, about 15,000 men, all that were left of the whole army of the people of the east, since 120,000 men who drew swords had fallen. "Gideon went up the nomad trail east of Nobah and Jogbehah and defeated the army just when it felt there was no danger. "When Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued them, captured Midian's two kings, Zebah and Zalmunna, and threw the whole army into panic. "Then Gideon, Joash's son, came back from the battle by the ascent of Heres.

"He captured a young man from Succoth and asked him to write down for him the names of the rulers and elders of Succoth, 77 men. "When he came to the men of Succoth, he said, "Here are Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom you mocked me by saying, 'Are the

hands of Zebah and Zalmunna already completely in your hands that we should give your exhausted men bread?' " "He took the elders of the city and thornbushes of the wilderness and briars and taught the men of Succoth a lesson. "He also tore down the tower of Penuel and killed the men of the town.

"What kind of men," he asked Zebah and Zalmunna, "did you kill at Tabor?"

"They were like you," they answered; "each one looked like a king's son."

"They were my brothers, my mother's sons," he said. "By the living LORD, if you had let them live, I wouldn't kill you." "Then he told Jether, his firstborn son, "Go, and kill them." But the boy didn't draw his sword; he was afraid and still only a boy.

"Zebah and Zalmunna said, "You come and strike us, because a man has a man's strength." Then Gideon went and killed Zebah and Zalmunna and took the half-moon ornaments that were on their camels' necks.

"Be Our King"

"Rule over us," the men of Israel told Gideon, "you, then your son, and then your grandson, because you saved us from Midian."

"I will not rule over you," Gideon told them, "nor will my son rule over you. The LORD is ruling over you. "But let me ask you for something," Gideon said to them. "Each of you give me the earrings from his spoils." The enemies had gold earrings because they were Ishmaelites.

"We'll gladly give them," they

¹That is, as trophies of war

answered. And they spread out a garment, and each dropped the earrings from his spoils on it. ²⁶The gold earrings he had asked for weighed 1,700 shekels, besides the half-moons, pendants, and purple clothes worn by the kings of Midian, and also the chains on their camels' necks. ²⁷Then Gideon made a priest's apron of it and placed it in his town of Ophrah. But all Israel came there lusting to worship it, and it became a trap for Gideon and his family.

²⁸So Midian was made subject to Israel, and they never raised their heads again. The land had peace 40 years during Gideon's life.

²⁹Jerubbaal, that is, Gideon, Joash's son, went and lived at home. ³⁰Gideon had 70 sons born to him, because he had many wives. ³¹When his concubine in Shechem also gave him a son, he called him Abimelech.^m ³²Gideon, Joash's son, died at a ripe old age and was buried in the burial place of his father Joash, in Ophrah, the town of the Abiezrites.

³³As soon as Gideon died, Israel went back lusting after the Baals, and they made Baal-berithⁿ their God. ³⁴The Israelites didn't remember the LORD their God, who rescued them from all the enemies around them. ³⁵Nor were they kind to the family of Jerubbaal, that is, Gideon, for all the good things he had done for Israel.

Abimelech

9 Abimelech, Jerubbaal's son, went to his mother's relatives in Shechem and talked to them and the

whole clan of his mother's family. ¹"Please ask all the citizens of Shechem," he said, "Is it better for you to have all seventy sons of Jerubbaal rule over you or to have one man rule over you? And remember I'm your flesh and blood." "

²His mother's relatives repeated all this about him to all the citizens of Shechem, who were persuaded to follow Abimelech because they said, "He's our relative." ³So they gave him 70 shekels of silver from the temple of Baal-berith. With these Abimelech hired worthless and reckless men as his followers. ⁴Then he went to his father's home in Ophrah and killed his brothers, the 70 sons of Jerubbaal, all on one stone. But Jotham, the youngest son of Jerubbaal, stayed alive because he hid himself. ⁵For all the citizens of Shechem and all who lived at the citadel^o got together and went and made Abimelech king at the oak tree with the pillar in Shechem.

Jotham

¹When Jotham was told about it, he went and stood on top of Mount Gerizim and called out loud: "Listen to me, citizens of Shechem," he said to them, "and God will listen to you.

²"The trees went to anoint a king over them. So they told the olive tree, 'Be a king over us.' ³The olive tree answered them, 'Should I stop giving my oil, by which people honor God and men, and go and wave my branches over the trees?'

⁴"Then the trees told the fig tree, 'You come and be a king over us.' ⁵But the fig tree answered them, 'Should I stop giving my sweetness

^m"My-Father-Is-King"

ⁿ"Baal-of-the-Covenant," called El-berith (covenant god) in 9:46

^oPossibly the same as "the tower of Shechem," vv. 46, 49

and my good fruit and wave my branches over the trees?"

¹²"Then the trees told the vine, 'You come and be a king over us.' ¹³The vine answered them, 'Should I stop giving my wine, which makes God and men happy, and go and wave my branches over the trees?'

¹⁴"Then all the trees told the thornbush, 'You come and be a king over us.' ¹⁵The thornbush answered the trees, 'If you're honestly anointing me king over you, then come and take shelter in my shade. But if not, then fire will blaze from the thornbush and burn down the cedars of Lebanon.'

¹⁶"Now then, have you acted honestly and sincerely in making Abimelech king? Have you treated Jerubbaal and his family right and done to him as he deserved? ¹⁷My father fought for you, risked his life, and rescued you from Midian, ¹⁸but today you rose against my father's family and killed his sons, seventy men, on one stone, and made Abimelech, the son of his slave-girl, a king over the citizens of Shechem because he's your brother. ¹⁹If you today treated Jerubbaal and his family honestly and sincerely, then delight in Abimelech, and may Abimelech delight in you. ²⁰But if not, may fire blaze from Abimelech and consume the citizens of Shechem and those who live in the citadel, and may fire blaze from the citizens of Shechem and those who live in the citadel and consume Abimelech."

²¹Jotham ran away and fled. He went to Beer and lived there to avoid his brother Abimelech.

Abimelech Destroys Shechem

²²Abimelech ruled Israel 3 years. ²³Then God sent an evil spirit to

come between Abimelech and the citizens of Shechem, and they treacherously turned against Abimelech, ²⁴so that Abimelech, who killed his brothers, the 70 sons of Jerubbaal, and the citizens of Shechem, who helped him kill his brothers, would be punished for this bloody murder.

²⁵The citizens of Shechem set ambushes for him on top of the mountains, but they robbed all who passed by them on the road; so Abimelech was told about it.

²⁶Then Gaal, Ebed's son, and his relatives came and moved into Shechem, and the citizens of Shechem trusted him. ²⁷They went out into the country, gathered the grapes in the vineyards, and trod them out. Then they had a celebration: they went into the temple of their god, ate, drank, and cursed Abimelech. ²⁸Gaal, Ebed's son, said: "Who is Abimelech, and who are we at Shechem that we should serve him? Didn't Jerubbaal's son and his officer Zebul serve the men of Hamor, Shechem's father? Why then should we serve him? ²⁹I wish these people were under my control; then I'd get rid of Abimelech." So he sent the message to Abimelech: "Increase your army and come out!"

³⁰When Zebul, the ruler of the city, heard what Gaal, Ebed's son, said, he got angry ³¹and sent messengers to Abimelech in Arumah: "Gaal, Ebed's son, and his relatives have come to Shechem and are stirring up the city against you. ³²Now then, you and your men, start out tonight and set an ambush in the fields. ³³And in the morning, when the sun rises, get up early and storm the city. When he and his men go out against you, do to him anything you find you can do."

¹⁴Abimelech and all his men started out at night, and four companies lay in ambushes against Shechem. ¹⁵Gaal, Ebed's son, went out and stood at the entrance of the city gate. Then Abimelech and his men rose from their ambush. ¹⁶When Gaal saw the troops, he said to Zebul, "There are troops coming down from the tops of the mountains."

"The shadows of the mountains," Zebul answered him, "look like men to you."

¹⁷Gaal spoke again: "There are men coming down the hill in the middle of the area, and one company is coming along the road of the Fortune-tellers' Tree."

¹⁸"Where is your loud mouth now," Zebul asked him, "you who said, 'Who is Abimelech that we should serve him?' Aren't these the troops you despised? Do go out now, and fight with them."

¹⁹So Gaal led out the citizens of Shechem and fought against Abimelech. ²⁰But Abimelech chased him, and he ran away from him while many fell wounded all the way to the entrance of the gate. ²¹Abimelech continued to live at Arumah. And Zebul drove away Gaal and his relatives and wouldn't let them live at Shechem.

²²The next day the people went out into the fields, and Abimelech was told about it. ²³So he took his troops, divided them into three companies, and waited in an ambush in the fields. He watched, and when he saw the people coming out of the city, he rose and attacked them. ²⁴Then Abimelech and the leaders with him rushed forward and stood in the entrance of the gate of the city while the other two companies rushed against all who

were in the fields and attacked them. ²⁵All that day Abimelech fought against the city; he took the city and killed the people in it. He tore down the city and sprinkled it with salt.

²⁶All the citizens in the tower of Shechem heard about it and went into the vault of the temple of Elberith. ²⁷When Abimelech was told all the citizens of the tower of Shechem had gathered, ²⁸he and all his men went up Mount Zalmon. Abimelech took the ax he had in his hand, cut off some brushwood, took it up, and laid it on his shoulder. "Hurry and do what you see me do," he told his men. ²⁹Then every one of his men also cut off brushwood and, following Abimelech, laid it against the vault and set it on fire over the people. So also all the men of the tower of Shechem died, about a thousand men and women.

³⁰Then Abimelech went to Thebez, camped against it, and took it. ³¹There was a strong tower inside the town. All the men and women, all the citizens of the town, fled to it and shut themselves in and went up on the roof of the tower. ³²When Abimelech came to the tower, he fought against it and went near the entrance of the tower to burn it down. ³³Then a woman threw an upper millstone on Abimelech's head and crushed his skull. ³⁴He quickly called the young man who carried his weapons. "Draw your sword," he told him, "and kill me, so people will not say about me, 'A woman killed him.'" His man ran him through, and he died. ³⁵When the men of Israel saw Abimelech was dead, everybody went home.

³⁶So God paid back Abimelech for the wrong he did to his father by

killing his 70 brothers. ⁹And God paid back the men of Shechem for all their wrongs, and so the curse of Jotham, Jerubbaal's son, came on them.

Tola and Jair

10 After Abimelech, Tola, the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar, rose to save Israel, and he lived in Shamir in the hill country of Ephraim. ²He ruled Israel as a judge 23 years. Then he died and was buried in Shamir.

³After him came Jair of Gilead and ruled Israel as a judge 22 years. ⁴He had 30 sons who rode on 30 donkeys and had 30 towns that today are still called Tent-Villages-of-Jair; they're in the land of Gilead. ⁵Jair died and was buried in Kamon.

Israel Sins Again

⁶Again Israel did what was wrong before the LORD and served the Baals and the Astartes, the idols of the Arameans, the idols of the Sidonians, the idols of Moab, of Ammon, and of the Philistines. They forsook the LORD and didn't serve Him.

⁷The LORD got angry with Israel and put them in the hands of the Philistines and of the Ammonites. ⁸These began to oppress and crush Israel that year and for 18 years, all of Israel who lived east of the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, in Gilead. ⁹Ammon crossed the Jordan to fight also against Judah, Benjamin, and the tribe of Ephraim, so that Israel was in great trouble.

¹⁰Then Israel cried to the LORD. ¹¹"We have sinned against You," they

said. "Yes, we have forsaken our God and served the Baals."

¹²The LORD said to Israel: "Didn't I save you from the Egyptians and the Amorites, the Ammonites and the Philistines? ¹³When the Sidonians, Amalek, and Maon^P oppressed you and you cried to Me, I saved you from them. ¹⁴But you deserted Me and served other gods; this is why I will not save you again. ¹⁵Go and cry to the gods you've chosen; they should save you when you're in trouble."

¹⁶"We have sinned," Israel told the LORD. "Do to us what You think is right; only save us today." ¹⁷They got rid of the strange gods and served the LORD; and so He couldn't bear to have Israel suffer any longer.

Jephthah

¹⁸Then the Ammonites were called together, and they camped in Gilead. Israel also gathered and camped at Mizpah. ¹⁹Then the leaders of the people of Gilead said to one another, "Whoever starts the fight against the Ammonites shall be the leader of all who live in Gilead."

11 Jephthah, who lived in Gilead, was a brave man but a prostitute's son. Gilead was his father. ²Gilead's wife also had given him sons; and when his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out. "You're not to get a share of the inheritance of our father's family," they told him. "You're the son of another woman." ³Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob. Worthless men gathered around Jephthah and went on raids with him.

^PGk Midian

⁴After some time the Ammonites fought against Israel. ⁵And when they fought against Israel, the elders of Gilead came to get Jephthah from the land of Tob. ⁶"Come and be our captain," they told Jephthah, "and we'll fight against the Ammonites."

⁷"Didn't you hate me," Jephthah asked the elders of Gilead, "and drive me from my father's home? Why do you come to me now when you're in trouble?"

⁸"That is why we've come back to you now," the elders of Gilead told Jephthah. "Go with us and fight against the Ammonites, and you will be the leader of all of us who live in Gilead."

⁹"If you take me back to fight against the Ammonites," Jephthah told the elders of Gilead, "and the LORD delivers them to me, I will be your leader."

¹⁰"The LORD is a witness between us," the elders of Gilead told Jephthah; "we will certainly do what you say." ¹¹Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him their leader and captain. And all he had said Jephthah repeated before the LORD in Mizpah.

¹²Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the Ammonites to say: "What do you have against me that you have come to me to fight against my country?"

¹³The king of the Ammonites answered the messengers: "When Israel came up from Egypt, they took away my land from the Arnon to the Jabbok and to the Jordan. Now give it back in peace."

¹⁴Jephthah again sent messengers to the king of the Ammonites. ¹⁵and they said: "Jephthah says: Israel did not take away the country of

Moab or of the Ammonites. ¹⁶"When Israel came up from Egypt, they went in the wilderness to the Red Sea, then came to Kadesh. ¹⁷Israel sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, 'Please let me go through your country,' but the king of Edom refused to listen. They also sent a message to the king of Moab, and he refused. So Israel stayed at Kadesh.

¹⁸"Then they went in the wilderness around the land of Edom and the land of Moab and came on the east side of the land of Moab and camped on the other side of the Arnon. But they didn't go into Moab's territory, because the Arnon was Moab's border.

¹⁹"Then Israel sent messengers to Sihon, king of the Amorites, being king at Heshbon. Israel asked him, 'Please let us go through your land to our place.' ²⁰But Sihon didn't trust Israel enough to let them go through his territory. Sihon gathered all his people, camped at Jahaz, and fought against Israel. ²¹And the LORD, the God of Israel, put Sihon and all his people in the hands of Israel, who defeated them. Israel took the whole country of the Amorites who lived in that region. ²²They took all the territory of the Amorites from the Arnon to the Jabbok and from the wilderness to the Jordan. ²³And now that the LORD, the God of Israel, drove out the Amorites before His people Israel, should you take it? ²⁴Shouldn't you take what your god Chemosh lets you take, while we take everything the LORD our God has let us take for those we faced? ²⁵Are you so much better than Balak, Zippor's son, king of Moab? Did he fight with Israel or go to war against them? ²⁶Israel has lived in Heshbon and its villages, Aroer and

its villages, and in all the cities beside the Arnon for three hundred years, and why didn't you take these away during that time? "I didn't sin against you, but you're doing wrong to me by fighting against me. May the LORD, the Judge, decide the matter between Israel and Ammon today."

"But the king of the Ammonites didn't listen to the message Jephthah sent him.

"The Spirit of the LORD came on Jephthah, and he went through Gilead and Manasse and to Mizpah in Gilead, and from Mizpah in Gilead to the Ammonites.

Jephthah's Vow

"Jephthah made a vow to the LORD. "If You will deliver the Ammonites to me," he said. "then whoever comes out of the doors of my home to meet me when I come back in peace from the Ammonites will be the LORD's, and I will offer him to the LORD for a burnt offering."

"So Jephthah went against the Ammonites to fight with them, and the LORD put them in his hands. "He struck them down in a very great defeat from Aroer till you come to Minnith, 20 towns, and to Abel-keramim. So the Ammonites were subdued before Israel.

"When Jephthah came to his home in Mizpah, there was his daughter coming out to meet him with tambourines and dancing. She was his one and only child; he had no son or daughter besides her. "When he saw her, he tore his clothes. "Oh, my daughter," he said, "you have crushed me and brought me misery. I made the LORD a promise, and I can't break it."

"My father," she told him, "you promised the LORD. Do to me what you promised, now that the LORD has punished your enemies, the Ammonites, for you." "Then she said to her father, "Let this be done for me: let me alone two months, so that I and my friends may go and walk the hills and mourn that I will never be married."

"Go," he said, and he let her go away 2 months. She and her friends went into the hills and wept that she would never be married. "At the end of 2 months she came back to her father, and he did to her what he vowed; she didn't marry a man. And so it became a custom in Israel, "that for 4 days every year the girls in Israel go to mourn for the daughter of Jephthah, the man of Gilead.

Civil War with Ephraim

12 The men of Ephraim were called to arms, and they crossed over to Zaphon. "Why did you go to fight against the Ammonites without calling us to go with you?" they asked Jephthah. "We're going to burn your house down over you."

"I and my people had a great conflict with Ammon," Jephthah answered them. "And when I called on you for help, you wouldn't save me from them. "When I saw you wouldn't help, I risked my life and went against the Ammonites. But the LORD put them in my hands. Why then did you come up to me today to fight against me?"

"Then Jephthah got all the men of Gilead together and fought against Ephraim. And the men of Gilead defeated Ephraim because they kept saying, "You people of Gilead who

live in Ephraim and Manasseh are just fugitives from Ephraim."

"The men of Gilead took the crossing places of the Jordan against Ephraim. When any men of Ephraim who escaped said, "Let me cross over," the men of Gilead would ask him, "Are you a man of Ephraim?" If he answered, "No," they would tell him, "Say, 'Shibboleth.'" He would say, "Sibboleth"—he couldn't pronounce it right. Then they took him and killed him at the crossing places of the Jordan. There fell at that time 42,000 men of Ephraim.

Jephthah was a judge of Israel 6 years. Then Jephthah, the man of Gilead, died and was buried in his city of Gilead.⁴

Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon

"After him Ibzan from Bethlehem was a judge of Israel. ^{4:5}He had 30 sons. He sent 30 daughters away from home to marry elsewhere and brought in 30 daughters from outside for his sons. He was a judge in Israel 7 years. ^{7:14}Ibzan died and was buried in Bethlehem.

"After him Elon from Zebulun was a judge in Israel. He was a judge in Israel 10 years. ¹²Elon, the man of Zebulun, died and was buried in Aijalon in the land of Zebulun.

"After him Abdon, Hillel's son, from Pirathon was a judge in Israel. ¹⁴He had 40 sons and 30 grandsons, who rode on 70 young donkeys. He was a judge in Israel 8 years. ¹⁵Then Abdon, Hillel's son, from Pirathon, died and was buried in Pirathon in the land of Ephraim in the hill country of Amalek.

⁴Gk: *Heb the cities of Gilead*

Samson's Parents

13 When the Israelites again did what was wrong before the LORD, the LORD put them in the hands of the Philistines 40 years.

²There was a man at Zorah, of the tribe of Dan, whose name was Manoah. His wife was barren and had no children. ³The LORD's Angel appeared to her. "Now you are barren and have no children," he said, "but you will conceive and have a son. ⁴So be careful not to drink wine or liquor or to eat anything unclean, ⁵because you will conceive and have a son. No razor must be used on his head, because the boy from before his birth will be bound to God by a Nazirite vow and will start to free Israel from the Philistines."

¹³
^{4:5} ^{14:1,15}
^{7:14} ^{1:15}

"The woman went and told her husband. "A man of God came to me," she said. "He looked very fearful, like God's Angel. I didn't ask him where he came from, and he didn't tell me his name. ⁷He told me, 'You will conceive and have a son. Now don't drink wine or liquor or eat anything unclean, because the boy will be bound to God by a Nazirite vow from his birth till he dies.'" "

"Manoah prayed to the LORD. "O LORD," he said, "please let the man of God you sent come back to us and teach us what to do for the boy who will be born."

"God did what Manoah asked, and so God's Angel came back to the woman as she sat in the field, but her husband Manoah was not with her. ¹⁰The woman ran quickly to tell her husband. "The man who

came to me the other day has just appeared to me," she told him.

"Manoah got up and followed his wife. When he came to the man, he asked him, "Are you the man who spoke to my wife?"

"Yes," he answered.

"Then Manoah asked, "When what you said comes true, how should the boy live and what should he do?"

"The LORD's Angel answered Manoah, "Your wife must keep away from everything I mentioned to her. "She must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, or drink wine or liquor, or eat anything unclean. She must be careful to do everything I ordered."

"Manoah said to the LORD's Angel, "Please let us keep you here while we prepare a young goat and set it before you."

"But the LORD's Angel answered Manoah, "Even if you keep me here, I will not eat any of your food. But if you will make a burnt offering, offer it to the LORD." Manoah didn't know he was the LORD's Angel.

"What is your name," Manoah asked the LORD's Angel, "so that we may honor you when what you promised comes true?"

"Why do you ask for my name?" the LORD's Angel asked him. "It's too wonderful."

"Manoah took the young goat with the food and offered them on the rock to the LORD, who did a wonderful thing while Manoah and his wife were watching: ²⁰When the flame went up to heaven from the altar, the LORD's Angel went up in the flame of the altar. When Manoah and his wife saw this, they fell down with their faces on the ground.

²¹(The LORD's Angel did not

appear again to Manoah and his wife.) Then Manoah knew this had been the LORD's Angel. ²²So Manoah said to his wife, "We'll certainly die because we've seen God."

"If the LORD meant to kill us," his wife told him, "He wouldn't have accepted a burnt offering with food from us nor let us see or hear things like these just now."

"So the woman had a son and called him Samson. The boy grew up, and the LORD blessed him. ²³The LORD's Spirit began to move him at the Camp of Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

Samson at Timnah

14 Samson went down to Timnah, and there he saw one of the daughters of the Philistines. ²He came back up and told his father and mother about her. "I've seen one of the daughters of the Philistines at Timnah," he said. "Now get her to be my wife."

"Is there no one among the daughters of your relatives or among all our people," his father and mother asked him, "that you must go and marry a woman from the uncircumcised Philistines?"

"Get her for me," Samson told his father. "I think she's the right one." ⁴His father and mother didn't know this was of the LORD, that He was looking for a chance to deal with the Philistines. At that time the Philistines were ruling over Israel.

⁵Samson went with his father and mother down to Timnah. As they came to the vineyards of Timnah, a young lion came roaring at him. ⁶The LORD's Spirit came over him, and although he had nothing in his hand, he tore it apart as you might

tear a young goat. But he didn't tell his father and mother what he had done.

⁷He went down and talked to the woman, and she seemed to him to be the right one. ⁸After a while he went back to marry her. Leaving the path to see the lion's carcass, he found a swarm of bees and honey in the lion's carcass. ⁹He scraped it into his hands and ate it as he walked away. When he came to his father and mother, he gave them some of it to eat but didn't tell them he had scraped the honey out of the lion's carcass.

¹⁰His father went down to the woman, and Samson prepared a feast, since that was what young men used to do. ¹¹When her people saw him, they chose 30 companions to be with him.

¹²"Let me tell you a riddle," Samson said to them. "If you find the answer and tell me in the seven days of the feast, I'll give you thirty lengths of linen and thirty festival garments. ¹³But if you can't tell me the answer, you must give me thirty lengths of linen and thirty festival garments."

"Tell us your riddle," they answered him, "and let us hear it."

¹⁴He said to them:

"From the eater came something to eat, and from the strong one something sweet."

For 3 days they couldn't find the answer. ¹⁵On the fourth day they said to Samson's wife, "Coax your husband to tell us the answer, or we'll burn up you and your father's house. Did you invite us just to make us poor?"

¹⁶Samson's wife wept on his shoulder. "You only hate me," she

said, "and don't love me. You gave the men of my people a riddle and didn't tell me the answer."

"I haven't even told my father and mother," he said to her, "and should I tell you?"

¹⁷But she kept on weeping on his shoulder for the 7 days the wedding was celebrated till finally on the seventh day he told her because she kept pressing him so hard. Then she told her people the answer to the riddle.

¹⁸On the seventh day, before sundown, the men of the town said to him:

"What is sweeter than honey?

And what is stronger than a lion?"

But he answered them:

"If you hadn't plowed with this calf of mine, you wouldn't have guessed this riddle of mine."

¹⁹The LORD's Spirit came over him, and he went down to Ashkelon, where he killed 30 of their men, stripped them, and gave the festival garments to those who had told him the answer to the riddle. Then, blazing with anger, he went up to his father's home. ²⁰But Samson's wife married his companion who had been his best man.

Vengeance on the Philistines

15 After a while, when people were cutting wheat, Samson went to visit his wife, bringing a young goat. "I'm going in to my wife in her room," he said.

But her father didn't let him go in. ²"I really thought you hated her," her father said, "and so I gave her to your companion. Isn't her younger sister better than she? Marry her instead."

¹Gk: Heb seventh

"The Philistines can't blame me this time," he said. "when I do them harm." So Samson went and caught 300 foxes, took torches, and putting two tails together, he fastened a torch between each pair of tails. He lit the torches and chased the animals into the standing grain of the Philistines and burned the sheaves, the standing grain, and also the vineyards and olive trees.

"Who did this?" some Philistines asked.

"Samson," others answered, "the son-in-law of the man at Timnah, because he took his wife and gave her to his companion." So the Philistines went up and burned her and her father.

"If that's what you do," Samson told them, "I swear I'll take vengeance on you before I stop." He struck them down hip and thigh in a great slaughter. Then he went down and lived in the cleft of the rock at Etam.

Samson at Lehi

"Then the Philistines came up and camped in Judah and overran Lehi. The men of Judah asked, "Why did you come up against us?"

"We've come up to tie Samson," they answered, "to do to him as he did to us."

"So 3,000 men from Judah went down to the cleft of the rock at Etam. "Don't you know the Philistines are ruling over us?" they asked Samson. "What did you do to us?"

"I've done to them," he answered, "as they did to me."

"We've come down to tie you," they told him, "to hand you over to the Philistines."

"Swear to me," Samson told them, "you yourselves will not attack me."

"No," they answered him, "we'll only tie you and hand you over to them, but we certainly won't kill you." So they tied him with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock.

"When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came to meet him with shouts of triumph. But the LORD's Spirit came over him, and the ropes on his arms became like flax burnt in the fire: his ropes melted off his hands.

"Finding a donkey's fresh jawbone, he reached for it, grabbed it, and with it struck down 1,000 men. Then Samson said:

"With a donkey's jawbone I piled them in heaps; with a donkey's jawbone I killed a thousand men."

"When he finished saying this, he threw the jawbone away. And so that place was called the Hill of the Jawbone.

"Then he was very thirsty, and he called to the LORD and said, "You have given this great victory to Your servant, but now I'm dying of thirst and will fall into the hands of the uncircumcised."

"So God split open the hollow place that's at Lehi, and water gushed out. He drank it, his spirit was refreshed, and he revived. So it was called the Spring of the Caller; it's still at Lehi today.

"He judged Israel 20 years during the time of the Philistines.

Samson at Gaza

16 Samson went to Gaza and saw a prostitute there and went in to her. When the people of Gaza were told, "Samson has come here," they surrounded the place and lay in an ambush all night at the gate of the city. They kept

quiet all night, saying, "Let's wait till daylight, and then we'll kill him."

⁸Samson lay till midnight. At midnight he got up, and taking hold of the doors of the city gate and its two posts, he pulled them out, bar and all, put them on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill facing Hebron.

Samson and Delilah

⁹Later he loved a woman by the name of Delilah in the valley of Sorek. ¹⁰Then the lords of the Philistines came to her. "Coax him," they told her, "and find out what makes him so strong and how we can overpower him, tie him, and make him helpless. Each of us will give you eleven hundred shekels of silver."

¹¹Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me what makes you so strong and what you can be tied with to make you helpless."

¹²"If I were tied with seven bowstrings," Samson answered her, "that are fresh and haven't been dried, I would be weak and like any other man."

¹³The lords of the Philistines brought her seven bowstrings that were fresh and hadn't been dried, and with these she tied him. ¹⁴She had some men lie hidden in the inner room. Then she said to him, "The Philistines are on you, Samson!" But he snapped the bowstrings as a strand of flax snaps when it gets too near a fire. And nobody found out why he was so strong.

¹⁵"You fooled me," Delilah told Samson, "and told me lies! Please tell me now what you could be tied with."

¹⁶"If I were tied with new ropes

that have never been used," he answered her, "I would be weak and like any other man."

¹⁷So Delilah took new ropes and tied him with them. Then she said to him, "The Philistines are on you, Samson!" while some men lay hidden in the inner room. But he tore them off his arms like a thread.

¹⁸"Till now you've fooled me and told me lies," Delilah told Samson. "Tell me what you could be tied with."

¹⁹"If you would weave the seven braids of hair on my head with the warp of cloth," he answered her, ²⁰"and fasten it with the pin in the wall, then I will be weak and like any other man."

So while he slept, Delilah took the seven braids of his head and wove them into the warp of the cloth, ²¹"tightened it with the pin and said to him, "The Philistines are on you, Samson!" He woke up from his sleep and tore out the pin of the loom and the warp.

²²"How can you say, 'I love you,' " she asked him, "and not tell me your secret? You fooled me three times and didn't tell me what makes you so strong." ²³And so when she continually urged him with her questions and plagued him, he got tired to death ²⁴and told her his whole secret. "No razor has ever been used on my head," he told her, "because I've been bound to God by a Nazirite vow from before my birth. If I were shaved, my strength would leave me, and I would be weak and like any other man."

²⁵When Delilah saw he had told her his whole secret, she sent a man to call the lords of the Philistines, saying, "Come up just once more.

⁸⁻¹⁶Supplied from Gk lacking in Heb

because he has told me his whole secret." The lords of the Philistines came up to her with the money in their hands.

¹⁸She put him to sleep on her knees and, calling a man, had him cut off the seven braids on his head; and so she weakened him, and his strength left him. ¹⁹Then she said, "The Philistines are on you, Samson!" When he woke up from his sleep, he thought, "I'll get away as I've done over and over again and shake myself free." not realizing the LORD had left him. ²⁰The Philistines grabbed him, gouged out his eyes, and took him down to Gaza. They tied him with double chains, and he was grinding at the mill in prison.

Samson's Dying Victory

²¹But as soon as the hair on his head had been cut off, it started to grow again.

²²The lords of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice to their god Dagon and to celebrate. "Our god put Samson, our enemy, in our hands," they said. ²³When the people saw him, they praised their god. They said:

"Our god put our enemy in our hands, him who laid waste our land and killed so many of us!"

²⁴When they were all feeling good, they said, "Call Samson to amuse us."

Samson was called from the prison, and he amused them. They had him stand between the pillars. ²⁵Samson told the young man who held his hand, "Let me feel the pillars the building rests on, so I can lean against them." ²⁶The building was full of men and women, and all

the lords of the Philistines were there. And on the roof there were about 3,000 men and women watching Samson amuse them.

²⁷Then Samson called to the LORD: "Lord GOD, please remember me and, O God, give me strength just once more to take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes." ²⁸Then Samson took hold of the two middle pillars the building rested on, one with his right arm and the other with his left, and pushed against them. ²⁹"Let me die with the Philistines," Samson said, and he bent forward with all his might, so that the building fell on the lords and all the people in it. So, those he killed when he died were more than those he killed during his life.

³⁰Then his relatives and his father's whole family went down, took him, carried him up, and buried him in the burial place of his father Manoah, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

He judged Israel 20 years.

Micah

17 There was a man in the hill country of Ephraim by the name of Micah. ²He told his mother: "The eleven hundred shekels of silver that were taken from you, about which you spoke a curse that I overheard—look, I've got the silver; I took it. So I'm giving it back to you."¹

"The LORD bless my son," his mother said.

³So he gave the 1,100 shekels of silver back to his mother, and she said, "I'm giving this as holy money to the LORD for my son to make a carved image and an idol of cast metal."

¹In Heb this sentence stands at the end of v. 3

When he had given the money back to his mother, she took 200 shekels of it and gave it to the silversmith. He made of it a carved image and an idol of cast metal, and it was in Micah's home. This man Micah had a shrine. And he had made a priest's apron and household gods and ordained one of his sons to be his priest. At that time there was no king in Israel: everybody did what he thought was right.

There was a young man from Bethlehem in Judah, from the tribe of Judah, but he was a Levite who only lived there. This man left the town of Bethlehem in Judah to stay wherever he might find a place, and as he traveled, he came to Micah's home in the hill country of Ephraim.

"Where do you come from?" Micah asked him.

"I'm a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah," he answered him, "and I'm going to stay wherever I can find a place."

"Stay with me," Micah told him, "and be a father and a priest to me. And I'll give you ten shekels of silver a year, a change of clothes, and your living." The Levite followed him. "He agreed to live with the man, and the young man was like one of his sons to him. So Micah installed the Levite, and the young man became his priest and part of his household. "Now I know the LORD will be kind to me," Micah said, "because the Levite has become my priest."

Dan Looks for Land

18 In those days there was no king in Israel. And in those days the tribe of Dan was looking for land to live in, because they had not fallen heir to land allotted to them among the tribes of

Israel. So Dan sent five fighting men from Zorah and Eshtaol, representing their clans, to explore the land and search it. "Go," they told them, "search the country."

And so they came to the hill country of Ephraim and to Micah's home and stayed there for a night. When they were at Micah's house, they recognized the young Levite's voice and turned aside. "Who brought you here?" they asked him. "What are you doing here? What do you have here?"

"This is what Micah has done for me," he answered. "He has hired me to be his priest."

"Please ask God," they said to him, "whether our journey will be successful."

"Go in peace," the priest told them. "The LORD approves of what you're going to do."

The five men left and came to Laish. They saw the people there living without a worry, like the people of Sidon, undisturbed and feeling safe; nobody insulted them or pushed them around. They were far from the people of Sidon and had nothing to do with others.

The men went back to their relatives in Zorah and Eshtaol. "What do you say?" their relatives asked them.

"Come," they answered, "let us go and attack them: we've seen the land, and it's very good. Or are you going to do nothing? Don't be too lazy to leave and go to take the land. When you go, you will come to a people who have no thought of danger, and the land is large. Yes, God has put it in your hands, a place where there is no lack of anything on earth."

So 600 men of the tribe of Dan, armed with weapons of war, left

¹⁸
6 Acts 16:36

Zorah and Eshtaol. ¹²They went up and camped at Kiriath-jearim in Judah. This is why the place, which is west of Kiriath-jearim, is still called Dan's Camp^a today. ¹³From there they went to the hill country of Ephraim and came to Micah's house. ¹⁴Then the five men who had gone to explore the country of Laish asked the other members of their tribe, "Do you know there's a priest's apron in these buildings, household gods, a carved image, and an idol of cast metal? Make up your minds now what you're going to do."

¹⁵So they turned aside there and went into the house of the young Levite, Micah's home, and gave him a friendly greeting. ¹⁶While the 600 men from Dan, armed with their weapons of war, stood at the entrance of the gate, ¹⁷the five men who had gone to explore the country went in there and took the carved image, the priest's apron, the household gods, and the metal idol; the priest was standing at the entrance of the gate with the 600 men armed with weapons of war. ¹⁸When those men went into Micah's home and took the carved image, the priest's apron, the family gods, and the metal idol, the priest asked them, "What are you doing?"

¹⁹"Keep quiet," they told him, "put your hand over your mouth, come with us, and be a father and a priest to us. Is it better for you to be the priest of one man's home or of a tribe and a clan in Israel?"

²⁰The priest was glad, and he took the priest's apron, the household gods, and the carved image and went along in the middle of the people. ²¹So they turned and left, putting the women and children, the

cattle, and the goods ahead of them.

²²When they had gone a distance from Micah's home, Micah and the men who had homes near Micah's got together and caught up with the people of Dan. ²³They called to the people of Dan, who turned to look at them. "What's the matter with you," they asked Micah, "that you've gotten your men together?"

²⁴"You've taken my gods that I made and the priest," he answered. "Then you went away. What do I have left? How can you ask me: 'What's the matter with you?'"

²⁵"Don't let us hear any more from you," the men of Dan told him, "or some of our hot-tempered men will attack you, and you and your family will lose your life." ²⁶Then the people of Dan continued on their way; and since Micah saw they were too strong for him, he turned and went home.

Laish Becomes Dan

²⁷And they took what Micah had made and the priest that belonged to him and went to Laish, where the people lived in peace and without a thought of danger, and they put them to the sword and burned the city. ²⁸There was nobody to save it since it was far from Sidon and had nothing to do with others. It was in the village that belonged to Beth-rehob. They rebuilt the city and lived in it. ²⁹They called the city Dan after their ancestor Dan, Israel's son, but originally the city's name was Laish.

³⁰The people of Dan set up the carved image for themselves, and Jonathan son of Gershom, Moses' son, and his descendants were priests of the tribe of Dan down to

^aHeb Mahaneh-dan

the time the country was taken captive. "So Micah's carved image that he made they set up for themselves during the time God's tabernacle was at Shiloh.

A Levite and His Concubine

19 At that time, when there was no king in Israel, a Levite was staying in the back parts of the hill country of Ephraim. From Bethlehem in Judah he took a woman as a concubine. ¹But his concubine was unfaithful to him^v and left him and went to her father's home in Bethlehem in Judah. When she had been there 4 months, ²her husband started out and went after her to persuade her to change her mind. He took along his servant and a pair of donkeys. She took him into her father's house. When the girl's father saw him, he was glad to meet him. ³His father-in-law, the girl's father, made him stay, and so he lived with him 3 days, eating, drinking, and lodging there.

⁴On the fourth day they got up early in the morning, and he started to go, but the girl's father told his son-in-law, "Refresh yourself with a bite of food, and then go." ⁵So they both sat down and ate and drank together. "Let me persuade you," the girl's father said to the man, "to stay for the night and enjoy yourself." ⁶When the man started to go, his father-in-law urged him, and so he stayed there another night.

⁷In the morning of the fifth day he got up early to go. "Refresh yourself," the girl's father said, and so they lingered till afternoon, and both of them ate. ⁸When the man started to go with his concubine and his servant, his father-in-law, the

girl's father, said to him, "You see, the day is turning into evening. Please stay for the night. The day is half gone now. Stay and enjoy yourself, and tomorrow you can start out early on your way and go home." ⁹But the man refused to stay for the night. He started out and left and came to a place opposite Jebus, which is Jerusalem; and he had with him his pair of donkeys that were saddled and his concubine.

¹⁰By the time they were near Jebus, the day was almost gone. "Come," the servant told his master. "let us turn aside into this city of the Jebusites and stay there for the night."

¹¹"We will not turn aside," his master told him, "into the city of a foreign people, who are not Israelites, but we'll go on to Gibeah. "Come," he told his servant, "let's get on to one or the other of the places and stay in either Gibeah or Ramah for the night."

¹²So they passed by and went on. The sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin. ¹³So they turned aside to stay in Gibeah for the night, and he went in and sat down in the town's public square, but nobody would take them to his home to stay for the night.

¹⁴There was an old man who came in from his work in the field in the evening. The man was from the hill country of Ephraim and staying in Gibeah, but the people who lived there were Benjaminites. ¹⁵When he locked up, he saw the traveler in the town's public square. "Where are you going?" the old man asked. "And where do you come from?"

¹⁶"We're on our way from

^vGk was angry with him

Bethlehem in Judah to the distant parts of the hill country of Ephraim." he answered him. "I came from there and went to Bethlehem in Judah, and I'm going to the LORD's tabernacle.* but nobody will take me into his home. "We have straw and fodder for our donkeys and bread and wine for myself, the woman, and the young man with us. We don't lack anything."

"A friendly greeting to you," the old man said. "but let me take care of anything you need. Only don't spend the night in the public square." "So he took him into his home and gave the donkeys a mixed fodder; and after they washed their feet, they ate and drank.

Crime of the Men of Gibeah

"While they were enjoying themselves, the men of the city, who were evil, surrounded the house and kept pounding on the door. "Bring out the man who came into your home," they told the old man, the master of the house, "so we may have intercourse with him."

"The master of the house went out to them. "No, fellow Israelites," he told them. "please don't do such a wrong. Now that this man has come into my home, don't do such a shameful thing. "There's my daughter, a virgin, and his concubine. Please let me bring them out. Ravish them, and do with them what you like, but don't do such a shameful thing to this man."

"But the men refused to listen to him. Then the man took hold of his concubine and brought her outside to them, and they had intercourse with her and abused her all night till

morning, and at the coming of the dawn they let her go. "At the dawn of day the woman came and fell down at the door of the man's house where her master was, and there she was till it was light.

"Her master got up in the morning, opened the doors of the house, and was going out in order to leave, and there was his concubine lying at the entrance of the house with her hands on the threshold. "Get up!" he told her. "and let us go." But she didn't answer. Then he took her on the donkey and left for home.

Israel Is Horrified

"When he got into his home, he took his knife and, taking hold of his concubine, cut her limb by limb in 12 pieces and sent her to all sections of Israel. "Everyone who saw it said: "Never has such a thing happened or been seen from the time Israel came up from Egypt till today. Think it over and decide what to do."

20 Then all Israel came out, and from Dan to Beersheba and also from Gilead the whole community gathered like one man before the LORD at Mizpah. "And the leaders of all the people, of all the tribes of Israel, stood in their places in the assembly of God's people, 400,000 foot soldiers who could draw a sword. "The people of Benjamin heard Israel had come up to Mizpah.

Then Israel said: "Tell us, how was this crime done?"

"The Levite, the husband of the murdered woman, answered: "I and my concubine came to Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin, to stay there for the night. "And the

*at Shiloh; Gk to my home as in vv. 28-29

citizens in Gibeah came to attack me. At night they surrounded the house where I was. They meant to kill me, and they raped my concubine, so that she died. ⁶I took my concubine, cut her in pieces, and sent her to all the parts of the territory of Israel, because they did a shameful and ungodly thing in Israel. ⁷All of you are here, Israel; so speak and give your advice."

⁸All the people rose like one man. "None of us will go to his tent," they said, "or leave to go home. ⁹Now, this is what we'll do to Gibeah. We'll draw lots to go against it. ¹⁰We'll take ten of every hundred men of all the tribes of Israel, a hundred of every thousand, and a thousand of every ten thousand, to get food for the army, in order that when the people go, they may do to Gibeah according to the wicked thing it has done in Israel." ¹¹So all the men of Israel got together and united as one man against the city.

Benjamin Sides with Gibeah

¹²The tribes of Israel sent men to all the tribe of Benjamin. "What is this crime that was done among you?" they asked. ¹³"Now then, hand over those evil men in Gibeah so we can execute them and get rid of evil in Israel."

But the Benjaminites refused to listen to their fellow Israelites. ¹⁴And the men of Benjamin gathered from the towns to Gibeah to go out and fight against the men of Israel. ¹⁵That day there came from the cities of Benjamin a total of 26,000 men who drew swords, besides 700 picked men who lived in Gibeah: ¹⁶of all these people 700 picked men were left-handed, and every one of them could sling a stone at a hair without missing.

¹⁷The men of Israel, not counting Benjamin, totaled 400,000 men who drew swords, all of them fighting men.

¹⁸The people of Israel proceeded to Bethel to ask God. "Who should lead us in going up to fight with Benjamin?" they inquired.

"Judah should lead," the LORD answered.

¹⁹Israel got up early and camped against Gibeah. ²⁰So the men of Israel went out to fight with Benjamin and arranged their men in battle order against Gibeah. ²¹But the men of Benjamin came out of Gibeah and on that day struck down 22,000 men of Israel and left them on the battleground.

²²But the people, the men of Israel, rallied and again formed the battle line in the same position it had been the first day. ²³And Israel went up and wept before the LORD till evening. "Should we go again and fight with our brother Benjamin?" they asked the LORD.

"Attack him," the LORD answered.

²⁴The second day the men of Israel went against the men of Benjamin. ²⁵Also on the second day Benjamin came out of Gibeah to meet them, and again they struck down 18,000 men of Israel and left them on the battleground, all of them men who drew swords. ²⁶Then all the men of Israel, the whole army, went up and came to Bethel and sat there weeping before the LORD and went without food that day till evening, and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.

²⁷And the men of Israel consulted the LORD—the ark of God's covenant was there at that time. ²⁸and Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, was serving before Him at

the time—and they asked: “Should we go out again to fight with our brother Benjamin, or should we stop?”

“Attack,” the LORD said: “tomorrow I’ll put them in your hands.”

²⁹Israel set men in ambushes around Gibeah. ³⁰On the third day Israel went up against Benjamin and arranged its men in battle order against Gibeah as they did before. ³¹Then men of Benjamin went out against their army—and so were drawn away from the town—and as they did before, started by killing about 30 of the Israelite people on the roads, one of which went up to Bethel, the other over the open field to Gibeah. ³²“They’re defeated,” the men of Benjamin said, “as they were before.”

“Let us flee,” the men of Israel said, “and draw them from the city to the roads.” ³³And so the main body of Israel’s men left their place and took a position at Baal-tamar while the men in the ambush rushed from their places on the exposed side of Gibeah. ³⁴Then 10,000 men, picked from all Israel, came to a place before Gibeah, and the fighting was fierce; the men of Benjamin didn’t know disaster was overtaking them. ³⁵The LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel, and that day Israel struck down 25,100 men of Benjamin, all of whom drew swords. ³⁶Then Benjamin saw it was defeated.

Israel had given ground to Benjamin because it depended on the ambush it set behind Gibeah. ³⁷The men in the ambush quickly rushed out against Gibeah, moved in, and with the sword annihilated the whole city. ³⁸Israel had arranged with the men in the

ambush to give a signal by having a big column of smoke rise from the city, ³⁹and then the men of Israel would turn back to fight. Benjamin started by killing about 30 Israelites. “Yes,” they said, “they’re thoroughly defeated as in the first battle.”

⁴⁰But when the column of smoke started to rise as a signal from the city, Benjamin looked back and saw the whole city going up in flames reaching to the sky. ⁴¹Then the men of Israel turned, and the men of Benjamin were terrified, realizing disaster had overtaken them. ⁴²They retreated from Israel along the road to the wilderness, but the battle was at their heels, and men from the city were among them, cutting them down. ⁴³They surrounded the men of Benjamin, pursued them to places where they were stopping to rest, and overtook them due east of Gibeah. ⁴⁴And 18,000 men of Benjamin died, all of them brave men. ⁴⁵The others turned and fled into the wilderness to the rock of Pomegranates, but the Israelites cut down 5,000 of the stragglers on the roads, closely pursuing them till they had cut off and struck down 2,000 more of them. ⁴⁶The total of the men of Benjamin that fell that day was 25,000 men who drew swords, all of them brave men.

⁴⁷But 600 men turned and fled into the desert to the rock of Pomegranates and stayed there 4 months.

⁴⁸But the men of Israel went back and put to the sword the rest of the Benjaminites in the towns, both people and animals, as many as could be found, and they also set on fire all the towns they came to.

“One Tribe Missing”

21 The men of Israel had sworn at Mizpah: “None of us will

give his daughter as wife to anyone of Benjamin."

⁷When the people came to Bethel, they sat there before God till evening and raised their voices and wept bitterly. ⁸"LORD God of Israel," they said, "why has this happened in Israel, that today one tribe is missing in Israel?"

⁹The next day the people got up early and built an altar there and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. ¹⁰"Is there anyone from all the tribes of Israel," they asked, "who didn't come up for the meeting before the LORD?" According to their solemn oath, anyone who had not come up before the LORD at Mizpah must certainly be killed. ¹¹But Israel felt sorry for his brother Benjamin. "Now one tribe is cut off from Israel!" they said. ¹²"What are we going to do to get wives for the men who are left after we swore by the LORD not to give them any of our daughters as wives? ¹³Is there anyone from the tribes of Israel who didn't come up before the LORD at Mizpah?" they asked. Now, no one from Jabesh in Gilead had come to the assembly in the camp. ¹⁴When the people were counted, none of those who lived in Jabesh in Gilead was there.

¹⁵So the community sent 12,000 of their courageous men. "Go," they ordered them, "and put to the sword those who live in Jabesh in Gilead, even the women and the children. ¹⁶And do this: destroy every man and every woman who is not a virgin.

¹⁷Among the people who live in Jabesh in Gilead they found 400 virgin girls, who had not known a man by lying with him, and they brought them to the camp at Shiloh in Canaan.

¹⁸Then the whole community sent messengers to the men of Benjamin at the rock of Pomegranates and offered them peace. ¹⁹So Benjamin came back at that time, and the men were given the women of Jabesh in Gilead who had been kept alive; but not enough had been found for them.

²⁰The people felt sorry for Benjamin because the LORD had made a gap in the tribes of Israel. ²¹"What are we going to do to get wives for the men that are left," the elders of the community asked, "since the women in Benjamin have been killed?"

²²"There must be a heritage for those of Benjamin who escaped," was the answer, "and no tribe must be eliminated from Israel. ²³But we can't give them any of our daughters as wives," because Israel had sworn: "Cursed is anyone that gives Benjamin a wife."

²⁴Then they said, "Every year there is the LORD's festival at Shiloh." This is north of Bethel, east of the highway going from Bethel up to Shechem, and south of Lebonah. ²⁵"Go," they ordered the men of Benjamin, "and lie in an ambush in the vineyards. ²⁶and watch to see when the girls of Shiloh come out to dance in the dances. Then come out of the vineyards, and each of you catch a girl from Shiloh to be his wife, and go home to Benjamin. ²⁷When their fathers or brothers come to complain to us, we'll tell them, 'Kindly let us have them, because we didn't get a wife for each man in the battle, nor should you have offered them, because then you would be guilty.'"

²⁸The men of Benjamin did that: from those who were dancing they took wives for all their single men

and carried them off. They went back to their land, rebuilt the towns, and lived in them.

²⁴Then the men of Israel separated, everyone according to

his tribe and clan, leaving and going to the land he owned.

²⁵In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what he thought was right.

RUTH

Naomi and Ruth

1 In the days when the judges were ruling, there was a famine in the land. Then a man from Bethlehem in Judah went to stay in the country of Moab, he, his wife, and his two sons. ²The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's was Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah, they came to the country of Moab and stayed there.

³Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left alone with her two sons. ⁴These married two women of Moab, one named Orpah, the other named Ruth. They lived there about 10 years. ⁵Then both Mahlon and Chilion died too, and Naomi was left alone, without her two sons and without her husband.

⁶Then she and her daughters-in-law started on the way back from the country of Moab, because while still in Moab she heard the LORD had blessed His people and given them food. ⁷So she left the place where she had been, and her daughters-in-law went with her.

They were walking along the road back to the land of Judah ⁸when Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Please go back, each of you to her mother's home. The LORD be kind to you as you were kind to the dead and to me. ⁹The LORD help each of you find security in a home with a husband!"

When she kissed them good-bye, they burst into loud weeping. ¹⁰"No," they told her, "we're going with you to your people."

"Go on back, my daughters," Naomi said. "Why should you go with me? Do I have any more sons in my womb who could marry you?" ¹¹"Go on back, my daughters, go! I'm too old to be a man's wife. Even if I did say, 'I still have hope,' even if I were a man's wife tonight and gave birth to sons, ¹²would you then wait till they grew up and stay single for them? Don't do it, my daughters, because I feel very sorry for you that the LORD has sent me so much trouble."

"Again they burst into loud weeping. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye. But Ruth clung to her. ¹³"See," Naomi said, "your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and her god. You go back too! Follow your sister-in-law!"

"Don't urge me to leave you, to go back and not be with you," Ruth answered. "I will go where you go and stay where you stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. ¹⁴I will die where you die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD punish me if anything but death separates you and me!"

"When Naomi saw she was determined to go with her, she didn't say any more to her. ¹⁵So the two went on till they came to Bethlehem. When they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was excited about them.

"Is this Naomi?" the women asked.

"Don't call me Naomi."^a she answered them. "Call me Mara,^b because the Almighty has made life bitter for me. ²¹I went away full, but the LORD brought me back empty. Why do you call me Naomi when the LORD has testified against me and the Almighty has hurt me?"

"So Naomi came back from the country of Moab, and Ruth, her Moabite daughter-in-law, came with her. They came to Bethlehem when people were starting to harvest the barley.

Boaz' Kindness

2 Naomi's husband had a relative, a wealthy man of Elimelech's family; his name was Boaz.

"Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the field and glean heads of grain after someone who'll be kind to me."

"Go, my daughter," she told her.

"So she went; she came and gleaned in the field after the reapers. She happened to be in the field that belonged to Boaz, who was of Elimelech's family.

"Just then Boaz came from Bethlehem. "The LORD be with you!" he said to the reapers.

"The LORD bless you!" they answered him.

"Whose girl is this?" Boaz asked his servant in charge of the reapers.

"She's a Moabite girl who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab," the servant in charge of the reapers answered. "She said, 'Please let me glean and gather among the bundles after the reapers.' She came and has been on her feet ever since daybreak; she

has just sat down a bit in the shelter."

"Then Boaz said to Ruth: "You hear me, don't you, my daughter? Don't go to glean in any other field or leave this one. Stay here with my women. ⁹Keep your eyes on the field my men are reaping, and follow the women. I will order the servants not to touch you. And when you're thirsty, go to the jars and drink some of the water the servants draw."

"She bowed down to the ground. "Why are you so kind to me as to be interested in me?" she asked him. "I'm only a foreign woman."

"I was told about everything you did for your mother-in-law after your husband died," Boaz answered her. "how you left your father, your mother, and the country where you were born and came to a people you didn't know before. "The LORD reward you for what you've done! May you get a full reward from the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you've come for shelter!"

"You're kind to me, my lord," she said; "you comfort me and encourage your maidservant, although I'm not even one of your own maidservants."

"When it was time to eat, Boaz told her, "Come here and have some food, and dip your pieces into the sour wine."

So she sat beside the reapers. He handed her roasted grain. And she ate all she wanted and still had some left over.

"When she got up to glean, Boaz ordered his servants, "Let her glean even among the bundles, and don't embarrass her. ¹⁶Yes, even pull some grain out of the bundles for

^a Pleasant" ^b Bitter"

her, let them lie for her to glean, and don't criticize her for it."

¹⁷She gleaned in the field till evening. Then she beat out what she gleaned; it was almost a bushel of barley. ¹⁸She took it and went into the town. Her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. Ruth also took out what she had left after eating all she wanted, and she gave it to Naomi.

¹⁹"Where did you glean today?" her mother-in-law asked her. "And where did you work? Blessed be the man who was concerned about you!"

She told her mother-in-law whom she had worked with: "The name of the man I worked with today is Boaz."

²⁰Naomi told her daughter-in-law, "May the LORD, who hasn't stopped being kind to the living and to the dead, bless him! The man is our relative," Naomi told her. "He's next to our nearest relative."^c

²¹"Let me add," Ruth the Moabite told her, "that he said to me, 'Stay near my servants till they've finished cutting all my grain.'"

²²"It is best, my daughter," Naomi told Ruth, her daughter-in-law, "that you go out with his women. Then you'll not be in a strange field where you may be mistreated."

²³She stayed with the women of Eljazz and gleaned till all the barley and the wheat had been harvested. And she lived with her mother-in-law.

3 "My daughter," Naomi, her mother-in-law, asked her, "shouldn't I try to find a home for you and make you happy? ²And

now, you've been with the women servants of Boaz, and isn't he our relative? You know he's going to winnow barley on the threshing floor tonight. ³Wash and anoint yourself, put your garment on, and go down to the threshing floor. Don't let the man know you're there till he finishes eating and drinking. ⁴When he lies down, notice the place where he lies down. Then go in, uncover the place at his feet, and lie down there. He'll tell you what to do."

⁵"I'll do everything you say," she answered her.

⁶She went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law directed her. ⁷When Boaz had eaten and drunk and was feeling content, he went and lay down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she went in secretly, uncovered a place at his feet, and lay down.

⁸At midnight the man was disturbed. Turning over, he saw a woman lying at his feet. ⁹"Who are you?" he asked.

"I am Ruth, your servant," she said. "Spread your garment over your servant,^d because you are a relative who can redeem^e us."

¹⁰"The LORD bless you, my daughter," he said. "This last kindness, that you didn't go after the young men, whether they were poor or rich, is better than the first. ¹¹And now, my daughter, don't be afraid. I'll do for you everything you say. Everybody in our town knows you're a good woman. ¹²But now, as a matter of fact, I'm really not the nearest relative, but there's another relative who is the nearest relative, one closer than I. ¹³Stay here tonight. In the morning, if he will

^cHeb kinsman redeemer ^dthis means "Marry me"

^ethat is, marry Ruth, whose son would then get Naomi's property

redeem you, good, let him redeem you. But if he doesn't want to redeem you, then, as the LORD lives, I will redeem you. Lie down till morning."

"So she lay at his feet till morning. But she got up before you could recognize anyone. "Don't let anyone know," he said, "that a woman came to the threshing floor."

"Let me have the mantle you're wearing," he asked, "and you hold it." As she held it, he measured out six measures of barley, laid it on her, and then went into the town.

"When she came to her mother-in-law, she asked, "What happened to you, my daughter?"

She told her everything the man had done for her. "These six measures of barley he gave me," she said; "and he told me, 'Don't go empty-handed to your mother-in-law.'"

"Wait here, my daughter," Naomi answered, "till you know how the matter turns out. The man will not rest but will settle this thing today."

Boaz Arranges to Marry Ruth

4 Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there. Then he saw the relative he mentioned passing by. "You there," Boaz said, "come over and sit down here." He came and sat down. Then he took 10 elders of the town and said, "Sit down here." And they sat down.

"Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab," he said to the other relative, "is selling the piece of land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. 'And I thought I'd tell you about it and say, 'Buy it in the presence of these men sitting here and before the elders of my people.' If you want to redeem it, redeem it.

But if you don't want to redeem it, tell me, so that I'll know, because you're the only one to redeem it except me, and I'm after you."

"I'll redeem it," he said.

"The day you buy the field from Naomi," Boaz said, "you'll also be getting Ruth, the Moabite widow of the dead man, in order that the dead man's name may continue with his inheritance."

"I can't redeem it for myself," the other relative said. "If I did, I'd ruin my own inheritance. You take over my right to redeem it, because I can't redeem it."

Formerly, when any redemption or exchange was to be confirmed in Israel, it was done this way, that a man took off his shoe and gave it to the other person. This was the way of testifying in Israel. "So when the relative said to Boaz, "You take it," he took off his shoe.

Then Boaz told the elders and all the people: "You are witnesses today that I've bought from Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon. "I'm also marrying Ruth, Mahlon's Moabite widow, in order that the dead man's name may continue with his inheritance, so that his name will not be cut off from his relatives and from the gate of his hometown. You are witnesses today!"

"All the people who were at the gate and the elders said: "We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman who's coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built the family of Israel. May you be mighty in Ephrath and famous in Bethlehem. "From the children God will give you through this young woman may your family grow like

the family of Perez, whom Tamar bore for Judah."

Boáz Marries Ruth

¹¹Then Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. He lay with her, and the LORD had her conceive, and she gave birth to a son.

¹²Then the women said to Naomi: "Blessed is the LORD, who today hasn't left you without a relative to redeem you. Let the child's name be proclaimed in Israel. ¹³He'll renew your life and nourish you in your old age. He's the child of your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons."

¹⁴Naomi took the child, laid him on her lap, and became his nurse. ¹⁵The neighbor women gave him a name. "A son is born to Naomi," they said, and they called him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, David's father.

¹⁶This is how he descended from Perez: Perez was Hezron's father; ¹⁷Hezron was Ram's father; Ram was Amminadab's father; ¹⁸Amminadab was Nahshon's father; Nahshon was Salmon's father; ¹⁹Salmon was Boáz' father; Boaz was Obed's father; ²⁰Obed was Jesse's father; and Jesse was David's father.

SAMUEL

Samuel's Birth

1 There was a man of Ramah in the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Elkanah. He was the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, who lived in Ephraim. ²He had two wives, one named Hannah, the other named Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. ³This man used to go up from his town every year to worship and sacrifice to the LORD of armies at Shiloh. There Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests of the LORD.

⁴Elkanah gave his wife Peninnah and all her sons and daughters food portions. ⁵and he also gave Hannah one portion^a because he loved her even though the LORD had closed her womb. ⁶Her rival used to provoke her to make her angry, because the LORD had closed her womb. ⁷And so it happened year after year: whenever Hannah went up to the LORD's house, she would provoke her. One day, when Elkanah sacrificed, she wept and wouldn't eat. "Hannah," her husband Elkanah asked her, "why are you crying, why don't you eat, and why do you feel so bad? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?"

⁸After they had eaten and drunk in Shiloh, Hannah got up. Eli was sitting on his chair by the doorpost of the Lord's temple. ⁹Feeling bitter, she wept much and prayed to the LORD. ¹⁰She made this vow:

"LORD of armies, if You will look at Your servant's misery and remember me and not forget Your servant but give Your servant a boy, then I will give him to the LORD as long as he lives, and no razor will be used on his head." ¹²She was praying a long time before the LORD while Eli was watching her mouth. ¹³Hannah was praying silently—only her lips were moving; she couldn't be heard. So Eli thought she was drunk.

¹⁴"How long are you going to be drunk?" Eli asked her. "Get rid of your wine."

¹⁵"No, my lord," Hannah answered, ¹⁶"I'm miserable. I've drunk neither wine nor liquor but am pouring out my heart to the LORD. ¹⁷Don't judge me to be a wicked woman. I've prayed long because I'm so troubled and grieved."

¹⁸"Go in peace," Eli answered her, "and may the God of Israel give you what you asked Him for."

¹⁹"May you continue to be kind to your servant," she said. Then the woman went her way and ate and she was no longer sad.

²⁰Early in the morning they worshiped before the LORD and then went home to Ramah. Elkanah had relations with his wife Hannah, and the LORD remembered her. ²¹As the months went by, Hannah conceived and had a boy, and she called him Samuel—"because," she said, "I asked the LORD for him."

^aHeb difficult

²¹The man Elkanah went up again with all his family to make the annual sacrifice to the LORD and to pay his vow. ²²But Hannah didn't go. "I'll wait till the boy is weaned," she told her husband. "Then I'll take him to appear before the LORD, and he will stay there always."

²³"Do what you think is best," her husband Elkanah told her. "Wait till you've weaned him. Only may the LORD keep His promise." The woman stayed and nursed the boy till she weaned him. ²⁴When she had weaned him, she took him with her, bringing three bulls, an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine. She took him to the LORD's house at Shiloh while he was still a small boy.

²⁵When the bull had been butchered, the child was brought to Eli. ²⁶"O my lord," she said, "as sure as you live, I'm the woman who stood near you here, praying to the LORD. ²⁷I prayed for this child, and the LORD gave me what I asked Him for. ²⁸In return I give him to the LORD. As long as he lives, he's given to the LORD."

So they worshiped the LORD there.

Hannah's Song

2 Hannah prayed:
 "My heart delights in the LORD;
 my head^b is lifted up by the LORD;
 my mouth proclaims victory over my enemies.
 How glad I am You are the One who can save.
²There is no one holy like the LORD;
 there's no one besides You,
 there is no rock like our God.

^bHeb horn

⁹Don't go on and on talking proudly;
 don't speak so boldly,
 because the LORD is a God of knowledge,
 the One who weighs actions.

¹⁰The bows of heroes are broken,
 but the feeble are girded with strength.

¹¹The well-fed sell themselves for a piece of bread,
 but those who were hungry are now plump.

And now the childless woman is a mother of seven,
 but the mother of many children languishes alone.

¹²The LORD kills, and He makes alive;
 He sends people down to the grave and brings them up again.

¹³The LORD makes some poor, and others rich;
 He lowers some, and others He lifts up.

¹⁴He raises the poor from the dust;
 He lifts up the needy from the rubbish heap
 and has them sit with princes,
 so they inherit thrones of glory.
 The pillars of the earth are the LORD's.

He has set the world on them.
¹⁵He will guard the feet of His devout people;
 the wicked perish in darkness
 because a man can't succeed by his strength.

¹⁶Those who oppose the LORD are broken in pieces;
 the Most High thunders on them from the sky.
 The LORD judges the farthest parts of the world;

²
¹ Lk 1:46-47

He gives strength to His king
and *makes His anointed mighty.*"

"Then Elkanah went home to Ramah. But the boy served the LORD under Eli the priest.

Eli's Sons

"Eli's sons were wicked; they didn't know the LORD. "This is what they used to do to the people: Whenever anyone offered a sacrifice, while the meat was boiling, the priest's servant would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand. "He would stick this into the pan, kettle, caldron, or pot, and whatever the fork picked up the priest would take for himself. This is what they did in Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. "Even before the fat was burned, the priest's servant would come and say to the man making the sacrifice, "Give me roasting meat for the priest. He doesn't want to get boiled meat but raw meat from you."

"If the man told him, "First the fat has to be burned; then take what you want," he would tell him, "No, give it to me now, or I'll take it by force." "So the sin of the young men was very great before the LORD because the men despised the sacrifices made to the LORD.

"Meanwhile Samuel was serving before the LORD. The boy had a linen priestly apron fastened around him. "His mother would make him a little robe and take it to him every year when she went up with her husband to make the annual sacrifice.

"Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife. "The LORD give you children from this woman," he would say, "to replace the one you got from the LORD." Then they would go home. "The LORD did

bless Hannah, so that she conceived and had three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile the boy Samuel was growing up before the LORD.

"Eli was very old. When he continued to hear everything his sons did to all Israel and how they lay with the women who worked at the gate of God's tabernacle, "he asked them, "Why do you do such things? I hear all these people telling me about your evil ways. "Don't do it, my sons; the report I hear the LORD's people spreading isn't good. "When you sin against another man, God will settle the matter for you; but when you sin against the LORD, who will plead for you?" But they wouldn't listen to their father, since the LORD wanted to kill them.

¹⁰ 1 SA 1:69
²⁶ 1 SA 2:52

"The boy Samuel kept on growing and being well thought of by the LORD and the people.

"A man of God came to Eli and said to him: "The LORD asks, 'Didn't I reveal Myself to your father's family when they were under Pharaoh's dynasty in Egypt?' "Didn't I choose him from all the tribes of Israel to be My priest, to walk up to My altar to burn incense and to wear the priestly apron before Me? And didn't I give your father's family the sacrifices the Israelites make by fire?' "Why do you kick at the sacrifices and food offerings that I ordered to be made at My dwelling? And why do you honor your sons more than Me, fattening yourselves on the best of all the sacrifices of My people Israel?' "Therefore the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'I thought your family and your father's family would always live before Me.' But now the LORD says, 'Certainly not, because I will honor those who honor Me, and

those who despise Me will be despised. "The time is coming when I will cut off your strength and the strength of your father's family, so that in your family you will look with envy on all the good the Lord is doing to Israel, and no man in your family will get to be old. "Anyone of you whom I will not cut off from serving at My altar will despair and languish, and all who are born in your family will die in their manhood. "What will happen to your two sons Hophni and Phinehas should convince you: both of them will die the same day. "Then I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest, who will do exactly what I want. I will build him a lasting family, and he will always live before Me as My anointed one. "Then anyone who is left of your family will come and bow down before him to get a bit of silver or a loaf of bread. He will say, "Let me do some work as a priest so I can get a piece of bread to eat." "

3 The boy Samuel was serving the LORD under Eli. The LORD rarely spoke in those days; a vision didn't happen often. "At this particular time Eli was lying down at his place. His eyes had begun to grow dim, so that he couldn't see. "God's lamp hadn't gone out yet, and Samuel was asleep in the house of the LORD where God's ark was kept.

God Calls Samuel

"Then the LORD called Samuel. "Here I am," he answered. "Here I am." "Here I am," he said. "You called me."

"I didn't call you," he answered.

"Lie down again." So he went and lay down.

"The LORD called Samuel again. Samuel got up and went to Eli. "Here I am," he said. "You called me."

"I didn't call you, my son," he answered. "Lie down again." "Samuel didn't know the LORD in this way yet, because God hadn't spoken to him yet.

"The LORD called Samuel a third time. He got up and went to Eli. "Here I am," he said. "You did call me."

Then Eli realized the LORD was calling the boy. "Go, lie down," Eli told Samuel. "And now when you're called, say, 'Speak, LORD. Your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down at his place.

"The LORD came and stood there and called as He did before: "Samuel! Samuel!" So Samuel answered, "Speak. Your servant is listening."

"I am going to do something in Israel," the LORD said, "that will make both ears of everyone who hears it tingle. "On that day I will do to Eli everything I said about his family, from the first to the last. "And you shall tell him I will condemn his family forever for his guilt: He knew his sons were cursing God^c and didn't restrain them. "This is why I swear to Eli's family that no sacrifice or offering will ever wipe out the guilt of Eli's family."

"Samuel lay there until the morning. Then he opened the doors of the LORD's house. But Samuel was afraid to tell Eli about the vision.

^cGk

"Then Eli called Samuel. "Samuel, my son!" he said.

"Here I am," he answered.

"What did He tell you?" he asked. "Please don't hide it from me. May God punish you if you hide from me anything He told you."

"So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him.

He answered, "He is the LORD. May He do what He thinks is right."

"Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and didn't let any of his words go unfulfilled. ²⁰All Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew Samuel was the LORD's appointed prophet. ²¹The LORD continued to appear in Shiloh, since the LORD by His word revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh.

4 And Samuel spoke to all Israel.

The Philistines Defeat Israel

Israel went out to fight against the Philistines and camped near Ebenezer, while the Philistines were in a camp at Aphek. ²The Philistines arranged their men to meet Israel in battle. As the battle spread, the Philistines defeated Israel and struck down from their ranks about 4,000 men in the field.

"The people came into the camp. "Why has the LORD allowed us to be defeated today by the Philistines?" the elders of Israel asked. "Let us get the ark of the LORD's covenant from Shiloh so that He^d may come among us and save us from our enemies." "The people sent men who brought from that place the ark of the covenant of the LORD of armies, who is enthroned on the cherubim. Eli's two sons

Hophni and Phinehas were there with the ark of God's covenant. ⁵When the ark of the LORD's covenant came into the camp, all Israel shouted so loud the earth resounded.

"The Philistines heard the shouting. "What is this loud noise in the camp of the Hebrews?" they asked. And they found out the ark of the LORD's covenant had come into the camp. ⁷Then the Philistines were frightened because they thought God had come into the camp. They said, "Woe to us—nothing like this ever happened before. ⁸Woe to us! Who can save us from the power of these mighty gods? These are the gods who defeated the Egyptians, totally destroying them in the wilderness. ⁹Be strong and be men, Philistines, or you will be the slaves of the Hebrews as they were your slaves. Be men and fight."

¹⁰The Philistines fought and defeated Israel, and everyone fled to his home. It was a very great defeat in which 30,000 foot soldiers of Israel fell. ¹¹God's ark was taken, and both of Eli's sons Hophni and Phinehas died.

¹²A man of Benjamin ran from the battle and came to Shiloh that day. His clothes were torn, and there was earth on his head. ¹³When he came, Eli was sitting on his chair by the road watching because he was inwardly trembling about God's ark. The man went into the town to tell the news. Then the whole town cried out. "Hearing the cry, Eli asked, "What is this confused noise?" So the man came quickly and told Eli. ¹⁵Eli was 98 years old, and his eyes were set so that he couldn't see.

^dOr it [the ark]

¹⁶"I'm the one who came from the battle," the man told Eli. "I fled from the battle line today."

"What happened, my son?" he asked.

¹⁷"Israel fled from the Philistines," the messenger answered. "There was also a great slaughter of the army. Your two sons Hophni and Phinehas also are dead, and God's ark was taken."

¹⁸When he mentioned God's ark, Eli fell from his chair backwards by the gate. His neck was broken, and he died—the man was old and heavy. He had been a judge in Israel 40 years.

¹⁹His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant and near delivery. When she heard the news that God's ark was taken and her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bent over and gave birth to a child, because her pains came on her suddenly. ²⁰When she was dying, the women tending to her said, "Don't be afraid. You've given birth to a son," but she didn't answer and wasn't interested.

²¹She called the boy Ichabod,^e saying, "The glory is taken away from Israel," because God's ark was taken and because of her father-in-law and her husband. ²²"The glory is taken away from Israel," she said, "because God's ark has been captured."

"What Shall We Do with the Ark?"

5 The Philistines had captured God's ark, and they took it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. ²They brought it into the temple of Dagon and set it up beside Dagon. ³When the people of Ashdod got up early

the next day, there was Dagon—he had fallen forward on the ground before the LORD's ark. They took Dagon and put him back in his place. ⁴But when they got up the next morning, there was Dagon—he had fallen forward on the ground before the LORD's ark, but his head and his two hands were cut off and lying on the threshold; only his body was left. ⁵This is why the priests of Dagon or any other people who come into his temple in Ashdod don't step on the threshold of Dagon to this day.

⁶The LORD's hand came down heavily on the people of Ashdod; He destroyed them, striking Ashdod and its territory with tumors. ⁷When the men of Ashdod saw how it was, they said, "The ark of the God of Israel must not stay with us, because His hand is heavy on us and on our god Dagon." ⁸They sent and gathered all the lords of the Philistines together there. "What should we do with the ark of the God of Israel?" they asked. "The ark of the God of Israel must be taken to Gath," they said. So they took the ark of the God of Israel there. ⁹But after they took it there, the LORD's hand put the city into a great panic: He struck everybody in the city, great and small, so that tumors broke out on them. ¹⁰Then they sent God's ark to Ekron. But when God's ark came to Ekron, the people of Ekron cried out, saying, "They brought the ark of the God of Israel to us to kill us and our people." ¹¹So they sent men to gather all the lords of the Philistines. "Send the ark of the God of Israel away," they said, "and let it go back to its place, or it will kill us and our people." For

^e"No-Glory"

there was a panic of death in the whole city. God's hand was very severe there. "The people who didn't die were plagued with tumors, and the cry of the city went up to heaven.

6 The LORD's ark was in Philistine territory seven months. ²The Philistines called for priests and fortune-tellers. "What should we do with the Lord's ark?" they asked. "Tell us how we should send it to its proper place."

"They answered: "If you're sending the ark of the God of Israel away, don't send it away empty, but pay Him a guilt offering. Then you will be healed, and you will know why His hand would not let you alone."

"What kind of guilt offering should we pay Him?" they asked.

"Five gold tumors and five gold mice," they answered, "according to the number of the lords of the Philistines, because all of you and your lords suffered from the same plague. ³Make images of your tumors and images of your mice that are damaging the country, and give glory to the God of Israel. Perhaps He will no longer be so hard on you, your gods, and your country. "Why should you act stubborn just like the Egyptians and Pharaoh? After He handled them like a toy, didn't they send the people away and let them go? ⁴Now take and prepare a new cart and two cows that have never been under a yoke, and hitch the cows to the cart; take their calves away, and leave them in their stall. ⁵Take the Lord's ark and put it on the cart, and put the objects of gold, which you pay Him as a guilt offering, in a box beside it. Send it on its way. ⁶Then watch—if it goes

up on the road to its own country, to Beth-shemesh, then this calamity of ours is His doing; but if not, we'll know it isn't His hand that struck us but what happened to us was an accident."

"The men did so. They took two cows, hitched them to a cart, and shut up the calves in the stall. "They put the LORD's ark on the cart, and the box with the gold mice and the images of their hemorrhoids. "The cows went straight on the road to Beth-shemesh. Continually mooing, they stayed on the road and didn't turn right or left. The lords of the Philistines followed them to the border of Beth-shemesh.

The Ark Returns to Judah

"The people of Beth-shemesh were harvesting wheat in the plain. When they looked up and saw the ark, they were delighted to see it. "The cart came into the field of Joshua, a man of Beth-shemesh, and stopped where there was a large rock. The men cut up the wood of the cart and sacrificed the cows as a burnt offering to the LORD. "The Levites had taken down the Lord's ark and the box that was with it and that contained the objects of gold, and they put them on the large rock. The men of Beth-shemesh offered burnt offerings and sacrifices to the LORD that day. "When the five lords of the Philistines saw this, they went back to Ekron that day. "These are the gold hemorrhoids the Philistines sent back as a guilt offering to the LORD: one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Ashkelon, one for Gath, and one for Ekron; ¹⁸and as many gold mice as there were cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords, including walled cities and unwalled villages.

and the great stone on which they put the ark of the LORD is a witness; it is still there today in the field of Joshua, the man of Beth-shemesh. ¹⁹But because ^fthe men of Beth-shemesh looked at the ark,^f the LORD struck down 70 men of the people of Beth-shemesh (there were 50,000 men). The people mourned because the LORD struck down so many of them. ²⁰"Who can stand before the LORD, this holy God?" the men of Beth-shemesh asked. "And to whom will He go when He leaves us?" ²¹They sent messengers to the people living at Kiriath-jearim. "The Philistines have brought back the LORD's ark," they said.

7 "Come down and take it up to you." ¹The men of Kiriath-jearim came and took the LORD's ark up and brought it into Abinadab's home on the hill, and they sanctified his son Eleazar to guard the LORD's ark.

The Stone of Help

²A long time passed after the day the ark came to stay at Kiriath-jearim; it was 20 years, and all the people of Israel were yearning for the LORD.

³"If with all your heart you are returning to the LORD," Samuel told all the people of Israel, "get rid of the foreign gods, including the images of Astarte, be loyal to the LORD, and serve Him alone, and He will rescue you from the Philistines."

"So the Israelites got rid of the

idols of Baal and Astarte and served only the LORD.

⁵Then Samuel said, "Have all Israelites come together at Mizpah, and I will pray to the LORD for you." ⁶So all were brought together at Mizpah. They drew water and poured it out before the LORD and fasted that day. "We have sinned against the LORD," they said there. So Samuel was judging Israel in Mizpah.

⁷When the Philistines heard the Israelites had gathered at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines came up to attack Israel. The Israelites heard of it and were afraid of the Philistines. ⁸"Don't stop calling to the LORD our God for us," the Israelites asked Samuel, "that He might save us from the Philistines."

⁹Then Samuel took a sucking lamb and offered it as a whole burnt offering to the LORD; Samuel cried to the LORD for Israel, and the LORD answered him. ¹⁰While Samuel was offering the burnt offering, the Philistines came to fight against Israel, but that day the LORD thundered loud against the Philistines and threw them into such a panic they were defeated before Israel. "The men of Israel left Mizpah, pursued the Philistines, and struck them down till they were beyond Beth-car.

¹¹Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Jeshanah^g and called it Ebenezer,^h saying, "Until now the LORD has helped us."

¹²So the Philistines were subdued and didn't again come into Israel's

^fGk adds the sons of Jeconiah did not rejoice with the men of Beth-shemeth when they saw the ark

^gGk and other versions see 2 Chron 13:19 Heb Shen ^h"Stone-of-Help"

territory. The LORD was against the Philistines as long as Samuel lived. "The cities the Philistines took from Israel were restored to Israel from Ekron to Gath; the territory of these cities Israel freed from Philistines control. There was also peace between Israel and the Amorites.

"Samuel ruled Israel as judge as long as he lived. "Once a year he used to go around to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah and serve as judge in Israel in all these places. "Then he would come back to Ramah because he lived there. There too he served as the judge in Israel, and there he built an altar for the LORD.

"Appoint a King"

8 When Samuel was old, he made his sons judges over Israel. "The name of his first son was Joel; the name of his second, Abijah. They were judges in Beer-sheba. "His sons didn't live like him but left the right way to make money. They took bribes and were unjust.

"Then all the elders of Israel got together and came to Samuel at Ramah. "'You're old," they told him, "and your sons don't live like you. Now appoint a king for us to rule over us; all the other nations have one."

"But Samuel didn't like it that they said, "Give us a king to rule over us," and Samuel prayed to the LORD. "'Obey the people," the LORD told Samuel, "in everything they tell you; they haven't rejected you but Me from being their King. "They're doing to you just as they've done from the time I took them out of Egypt until now, leaving Me and worshipping other gods. "Obey them now, but warn them and tell them

about the rights of a king who rules over them."

"Then Samuel told the people, who had asked him for a king, everything the LORD had said. "He added: "These are the rights of a king who rules over you: He will take your sons and appoint them to be his men on his chariots and horses and to run ahead of his chariots. "He will appoint them to be his captains of thousands and of fifties, to plow his ground and harvest his crops, to make arms and equipment for his chariots. "He will take your daughters and have them make perfumes, cook, and bake. "He will take the best of your fields, vineyards, and olive orchards and give them to his servants. "He will take a tenth of your grain and wine and give it to his officers and servants. "He will take your male and female servants, the best of your young men, and your donkeys and use them for his work. "He will take a tenth of your flocks. And you will be his servants. "When you finally cry out on account of your king whom you have chosen, then the LORD will not answer you."

"But the people refused to listen to Samuel. "No," they said, "we must have a king over us. "Then we'll be like all the other nations. Our king will rule over us. He'll lead us and fight our battles."

"When Samuel heard everything the people said, he reported it to the LORD. "'Obey them," the LORD told him, "and give them a king."

Then Samuel told the men of Israel, "Each of you, go to your city."

Saul Looks for Donkeys

9 There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish. He was

a son of Abiel, a son of Zeror, a son of Becorath, a son of Aphiah, a descendant of Benjamin. He was a wealthy man. ²He had a son whose name was Saul, a vigorous man and handsome. No man in Israel was handsomer than he. He was a head taller than other people.

³Once some female donkeys of Kish, Saul's father, were lost. "Take one of the servants with you," Kish told his son Saul, "and go and look for the donkeys."

⁴He went through the hills of Ephraim and through the region of Shalisha without finding them. Then they went through the region of Shaalim, but they weren't there. They went through the region of Benjamin but didn't find them. ⁵They came to the region of Zuph. "Come, let's go back," he told his servant who was with him, "or my father will worry about us instead of the donkeys."

Saul Meets Samuel

⁶"There's a man of God in this city whom people honor," the servant answered him. "Everything he says really happens. Let's go there. Perhaps he'll tell us which way we should go."

⁷"Suppose we go," Saul asked his servant, "what should we bring the man—the food in our sacks is gone? There's no present we can bring the man of God. What do we have?"

⁸"Look, here! I have a quarter shekel of silver," the servant again answered Saul. "I will give it to the man of God. Then he'll tell us where to go."

⁹(Formerly in Israel, when a man went to ask God, he would say, "Come, let us go to the seer." A man we now call a prophet was then called a seer.)

¹⁰"A good idea!" Saul told his servant. "Come, let's go." They went to the town where the man of God was.

¹¹As they went up the hill to the town, they met girls coming out to get water. "Is the seer here?" they asked them.

¹²"He's there ahead of you," they answered them. "He just came into the town today. The people are having a sacrifice on the high place today. ¹³As you come into the town, you can find him before he goes up to the high place to eat, because the people will not eat till he comes, since he blesses the sacrifice. Then those who are invited, eat. Now, go up; this is the time you will find him."

¹⁴They went up to the town. As they came into the town, there was Samuel coming out toward them to go up to the high place. ¹⁵Now the LORD had told Samuel the day before Saul came: ¹⁶"Tomorrow about this time I will send you a man from the region of Benjamin. Anoint him to lead My people Israel. He will deliver My people from the Philistines because I've seen My people and their cry has come to Me." ¹⁷When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD told him, "There's the man I told you about; this one should govern My people."

¹⁸Saul came near Samuel within the gate. "Please tell me," he asked, "where is the home of the seer?"

¹⁹"I am the seer," Samuel answered Saul. "Go up ahead of me to the high place. You will eat with me today, and in the morning I will let you go after telling you all that is on your mind. ²⁰Don't trouble yourself about your donkeys that were lost three days ago; they've been found. Who will have all that is desirable in

Israel? Will it not be you and all your father's family?"

"Am I not a man of Benjamin," Saul asked him, "from the smallest tribe of Israel, and isn't my family the smallest of the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Then why do you tell me such a thing?"

"Samuel took Saul and his servant and brought them to the banquet hall and had them sit at the head of the guests—about 30 persons. "Samuel said to the cook, "Bring me the meat I gave you and about which I said: 'Keep it for a special purpose.'" "So the cook picked up the leg and what went with it and laid it before Saul. "This was kept to be laid before you," Samuel said to Saul. "Eat it; when I said I would invite the people to the feast, it was reserved for you." So Saul ate with Samuel that day.

"Then they went down from the high place to the town, and blankets were spread for Saul on the roof, and he lay down.ⁱ

Samuel Anoints Saul

"About dawn Samuel called Saul on the roof: "Get up and I will send you away." Saul got up, and both he and Samuel went outside. "As they were going down near the town limits, Samuel said to Saul, "Tell the servant to go ahead of you" (and he went ahead) "but you stand here now, and I will tell you what God says."

10 Samuel took a flask of olive oil, poured it on his head, and kissed him, saying, "The LORD anoints you leader of His people Israel. You shall rule His

people and save them from their enemies. This shall be the sign that the LORD has anointed you¹ as a prince over his heritage: "When you leave me today, you will find two men at Rachel's grave on the border of Benjamin at Zelzah; they'll tell you, 'We found the donkeys you went looking for, and your father has dropped the matter of the donkeys and is worried about you. "What should I do for my son?"' he's asking." "From there move on till you come to the terebinth at Tabor, and there you will meet three men going up to worship God at Bethel: one will be carrying three young goats, another three loaves of bread, and the third a skin of wine. "They will greet you as friends and give you two loaves of bread, which you will accept from them. "After that you will come to the Hill of God, where the Philistines have a garrison, and when you come there to the town, you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place, led by men playing a lute, a tambourine, a flute, and a lyre, and they will be prophesying. "Then the LORD's Spirit will come on you mightily, and you will be a prophet with them and change to another man. "When these signs happen to you, do what you must, because God is with you. "Go down ahead of me to Gilgal. Then I will come down to you to offer burnt sacrifices and make peace offerings. Wait seven days till I come to you and tell you what to do."

"When Saul turned around to leave Samuel, God gave him a new heart and changed his attitude. That day all these signs happened. "When they came to Gibeah, a

ⁱFollows Gk ¹Supplied from Gk; lacking in Heb

group of prophets came to meet him, and God's Spirit came on him mightily, and he acted as a prophet among them. "When all who had known him before saw how he prophesied with the prophets, the people asked one another, "What has happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?"¹² But a man from that place asked, "Who is their father?" So it became a proverb: "Is Saul also among the prophets?"¹³ And when he had finished prophesying, he came to the high place.

¹⁴ Saul's uncle asked him and his servant, "Where did you go?"

"To look for the donkeys," he answered, "and when we saw nothing of them, we went to Samuel."

¹⁵ "Please tell me," Saul's uncle said, "what Samuel told you."

¹⁶ "He told us clearly the donkeys had been found," Saul answered his uncle. But he didn't tell him what Samuel said about his being king.

"Long Live the King"

¹⁷ Samuel called the people to come before the LORD at Mizpah. ¹⁸ "The LORD, the God of Israel, says," he told them, "I took Israel out of Egypt and rescued you from the Egyptians and all the kingdoms that oppressed you. ¹⁹ But now you have rejected your God, who Himself saved you from all your troubles and distresses, and you say, 'No, appoint a man to be king over us.' Now then, stand before the LORD by your tribes and clans."

²⁰ When Samuel had all the tribes of Israel come forward, the tribe of Benjamin was taken. ²¹ When he had the tribe of Benjamin come forward by families, the family of Matri was taken. Then Saul, the son

of Kish, was taken. They looked for him but couldn't find him. ²² Again they asked the LORD, "Is there still someone else?"

"He's hiding there among the baggage," the LORD answered.

²³ They ran and got him from there and had him stand among the people—he was a head taller than all the other people. ²⁴ "Do you see," Samuel asked the people, "whom the LORD has chosen? There is no one like him among all the people." Then all the people shouted: "Long live the king!"

²⁵ Samuel told the people the laws of the kingdom, and he wrote them on a scroll which he laid before the LORD. Then Samuel dismissed all the people, each one to his home. ²⁶ Saul also went home to Gibeah. With him went some fighting men whose hearts God had touched. ²⁷ But some worthless fellows asked, "How can this one save us?" They despised him and wouldn't bring him a present. But he acted as though he couldn't hear them.

Saul Saves Jabesh-gilead

11 Then Nahash the Ammonite came up and besieged Jabesh-gilead. "Make a treaty with us," all the men of Jabesh told Nahash, "and we'll serve you."

"This is the condition," Nahash the Ammonite answered them, "on which I will make a treaty with you: I will pierce all your right eyes and so bring disgrace on all Israel."

"Give us seven days," the elders of Jabesh told him, "so we can send messengers into all the territory of Israel. And if there's no one to save us, we'll surrender to you."

"The messengers came to Saul's town, Gibeah. When they told the people the news, they cried out

loud. ³Just then Saul was coming from the field behind some oxen. "Why are these people weeping?" Saul asked. So they told him what the men of Jabesh said. ⁴When he heard what they said, God's Spirit came mightily on Saul, and he got very angry. ⁵He took a pair of oxen, cut them in pieces, and sent them by messengers into all the territory of Israel with the message: "This is what will be done to the oxen of anyone who doesn't come out to go with Saul and Samuel." So the LORD terrified the people, and they came out like one man. ⁶They were counted at Bezek: there were 300,000 men of Israel and 30,000 men of Judah. ⁷They told the messengers who had come, "Tell the men of Jabesh in Gilead: 'Tomorrow, when the sun is hot, you will be rescued.'" The messengers went and told the men of Jabesh, and they were glad.

⁸The men of Jabesh said, "Tomorrow we will surrender to you, and you may do to us anything you think is right."

⁹The next day Saul arranged the army in three companies. They came into the camp in the morning watch and continued to defeat the Ammonites till it got hot that day. Those who were left were scattered so that no two of them were left together.

¹⁰"Who was it that said, 'Should Saul rule over us?'" the people asked Samuel. "Let us have the men and we'll kill them."

¹¹But Saul said, "No one will be killed today, because today the LORD won a victory in Israel."

¹²"Come," Samuel told the people, "let us go to Gilgal and there renew

the kingdom." ¹³Then all the people went to Gilgal, and there before the LORD in Gilgal they made Saul their king. There they offered peace offerings before the LORD, and there Saul and all the men of Israel were very happy.

Samuel's Farewell

12 Then Samuel said to all Israel, "I did everything you told me and appointed a king over you. ²And now the king will be leading you. I am old and gray, and my sons are with you. I have lived before you from my youth until today. ³Here I am. Testify against me before the LORD and before His anointed king: Did I take anyone's ox? Did I take anyone's donkey? Did I cheat or oppress anyone? Did I take a bribe from anyone to blind my eyes? If so, I will give it all back to you."

"You didn't cheat us," they answered, "or oppress us or take anything from anyone."

"The LORD is a witness among you," he told them, "and His anointed king is a witness today that you've found nothing in my hands."

"They are witnesses," they answered.

"The LORD is a witness,"^k Samuel told the people, "He who appointed Moses and Aaron and brought your fathers out of Egypt. ²Now stand up while I bring you to trial before the LORD and cite all the righteous things the LORD did to you and your fathers. ³When Jacob came to Egypt, your fathers cried to the LORD, and the LORD sent Moses and Aaron to bring your fathers out of Egypt and have them live in this place. ⁴But they forgot the LORD

^kAs in Gk

their God. So He put them in the hand of Sisera, the captain of the army of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philistines and of the king of Moab, who fought against them. ¹⁰Then they cried to the LORD. 'We have sinned,' they said. 'We have forsaken the LORD and served the Baals and the Astartes. But now rescue us from our enemies so we may serve You.'

¹¹"Then the LORD sent Jerubbaal, Barak,¹ Jephthah, and Samuel and delivered you from your enemies all around so you could live without fear of danger. ¹²But when you saw Nahash, king of the Ammonites, coming to attack you, you told me, 'No, a king should rule over us,' while the LORD your God was your King.

¹³"Now here is the king you chose and asked for. The LORD has put a king over you. ¹⁴If you stand in awe ¹² ²⁷ ^{no} ¹¹ ¹⁻² of the LORD, serve Him and obey Him, and don't rebel against what the LORD says—if you and the king who rules over you will follow the LORD your God—good. But if you don't obey the LORD, if you rebel against the LORD, then the LORD will be against you and your fathers. ¹⁵Now then, stand up and watch this great thing the LORD is going to do. ¹⁷Isn't the wheat being harvested today? I will call on the LORD, and He'll send thunder and rain, so you will know and realize what a wicked thing you did before the LORD when you asked for a king."

¹⁶Then Samuel called on the LORD, and the LORD sent thunder and rain that day so that all the people feared the LORD and Samuel very much.

¹⁹"Pray to the LORD your God for your servants," all the people asked Samuel, "to keep us from dying, because we added to all our sins the evil of asking for a king."

²⁰"Don't be afraid," Samuel told the people. "You did do all this evil. Yet don't turn away from the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart. ²¹Don't turn away to follow meaningless idols that can't help or rescue, because they're nothing. ²²For the sake of His great name the LORD will not reject His people, because the LORD wants to make you His people. ²³As for me, far be it from me to sin against the LORD by failing to pray for you; and I will go on teaching you the way that is good and right. ²⁴Only revere the LORD and serve Him sincerely with all your heart. Consider the great things He did for you. ²⁵But if you insist on doing wrong, both you and your king will be wiped out."

War with the Philistines

13 Saul was^m years old when he became king, and he was king of Israel^m and two years.

²Saul chose 3,000 men of Israel; 2,000 of these were with Saul at Michmash and in the hill country of Bethel, and 1,000 were with Jonathan in Gibeah in Benjamin. But the rest of the people he sent home.

³Jonathan defeated the garrison of the Philistines at Geba, and the Philistines heard about it. Then Saul blew the horn throughout the whole land, saying, "Let the Hebrews listen." "All Israel heard the news that Saul had defeated the garrison of the Philistines and also that Israel stunk among the Philistines, and so

¹Gk: Heb Bedan ^mNumbers are omitted in Heb; Gk omits entire verse

the people were called together to follow Saul to Gilgal.

⁵The Philistines also gathered to fight against Israel: 30,000 chariots, 6,000 horsemen, and foot soldiers as many as the sand of the seashore. They went up and camped at Michmash, east of Beth-aven. ⁶The men of Israel saw they were in trouble, because the people were hard pressed; then the people hid in caves, thorny thickets, rocks, vaults, and cisterns. ⁷Some Hebrews went over the Jordan into the land of Gad and Gilead, but Saul was still in Gilgal, and all the people who followed him trembled.

Samuel Breaks with Saul

⁸He waited seven days, the time set to meet Samuel, yet Samuel had not come to Gilgal. The people were leaving him and scattering. ⁹Then Saul said, "Bring me the animals for the burnt sacrifice and the peace offerings." And so he offered the burnt offering. ¹⁰Just as he finished offering the burnt offering, Samuel came, and Saul went out to meet him and greet him.

"What have you done?" Samuel asked.

"I saw the people leaving me and scattering, and you didn't come within the days that were set, and the Philistines were gathering at Michmash. ¹²So I said, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal before I've tried to get the LORD's goodwill.' So I was bold and offered the burnt offering."

"You did a foolish thing," Samuel told Saul. "You didn't do what the LORD your God ordered. Otherwise the LORD would have made your kingdom over Israel last

forever. ¹³But now your kingdom will not last. The LORD will look for a man who pleases Him in every way, and the LORD will appoint him to lead His people, because you didn't do what the LORD ordered."

¹⁴Samuel left Gilgal. ¹⁵The rest of the people followed Saul to meet the men of war; they left Gilgalⁿ and went up to Gibeah in Benjamin, where Saul counted the people who were still with him, about 600 men. ¹⁶Saul and his son Jonathan and the people who were with him stayed at Gibeah in Benjamin while the Philistines camped at Michmash.

Philistine Pressure

¹⁷A company of raiders went out from the camp of the Philistines in three columns: one column went on the road toward Ophrah to the region of Shual, ¹⁸another column went on the road to Beth-horon, and the third went on the road toward the region that overlooks the valley of Zeboim and the wilderness.

¹⁹No blacksmith could be found in the whole land of Israel. The Philistines saw to this, so that the Hebrews could make no swords or spears. ²⁰Everyone in Israel used to go down to the Philistines to sharpen his plowpoint, ax, mattock, or sickle. ²¹And the price was two thirds of a shekel of silver for plowpoints and axes, and a third of a shekel to sharpen a mattock or set an oxgoad. ²²So on that day of battle no sword or spear could be found among all the people who were with Saul and Jonathan, but Saul and his son Jonathan had them.

²³Now a garrison of Philistines went out to the pass at Michmash.

ⁿFrom Gk; lacking in Heb

Jonathan Attacks the Philistines

14 One day Saul's son Jonathan said to the servant who carried his armor, "Come, let us go over to the garrison of the Philistines on the other side." But he didn't tell his father about it. ³Saul was staying on the outskirts of Gibeah, under a pomegranate at Migron. He had with him about 600 men.

⁴Ahijah, the son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, the Lord's priest at Shiloh, was wearing the priestly apron.

The people didn't know Jonathan had left. ⁵Between the ravines where Jonathan searched for a way to cross over to attack the Philistines, there was a crag on one side and another crag on the other side. The name of that one was Bozez, the name of the other Seneh. ⁶The one crag stood like a pillar on the north facing Michmash, the other stood south facing Geba.

"Come," Jonathan said to the servant who carried his armor, "let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised people. Perhaps the LORD will work for us—nothing can keep the LORD from giving victory by a few men as well as by many."

"Do whatever you want to do," his armor-bearer answered him. "Go ahead! I'm with you in what you're planning."

"We're going over to the men," Jonathan said, "and we'll tell them we are there. ⁹If they answer us, 'Stand still till we come to you,' we'll stand where we are and not go up to them. ¹⁰But if they say, 'Come up to us,' we'll go up, because that will

be the sign that the LORD has put them in our hands."

"So both of them showed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines. The Philistines said, "Look, some Hebrews are coming out of the holes they were hiding in."

"Come up to us," the men of the garrison answered Jonathan and his armor-bearer. "We have something to show you."

"Follow me," Jonathan told his armor-bearer; "the LORD has put them in Israel's hands."

¹³Jonathan crawled up on hands and feet, and his armor-bearer followed him. Jonathan struck down the Philistines, and his armor-bearer, following him, finished killing them. ¹⁴In their first slaughter Jonathan and his armor-bearer killed about 20 men within about half the length of a furrow in an acre of land. ¹⁵There was panic among the army in the field; all the people of the garrison and the raiding party too were terrified. The earth quaked. And so this became a terror sent from God.

¹⁶Saul's watchmen in Gibeah in Benjamin could see the crowd melting away as they ran back and forth.

"Look carefully," Saul told the people who were with him, "and see who has left us." They looked and found that Jonathan and his armor-bearer were not there.

¹⁷Then Saul said to Ahijah, "Bring ¹⁸the priest's apron, because he carried the apron that day before Israel. ¹⁹While Saul was talking to the priest, the tumult in the camp of the Philistines grew greater and greater. Then Saul said to the priest, "Withdraw your hand." ²⁰Saul and all the people with him got together and went

⁹Gk: Heb Bring God's ark

into the battle, where the enemy soldiers in wild confusion were striking each other with swords. ²¹The Hebrews who had been with the Philistines before this and had come up with them and were distributed in the camp now also joined the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan. ²²When all the men of Israel who had been hiding in the hill country of Ephraim heard the Philistines were fleeing, they also pursued them in the battle. ²³So the LORD saved Israel that day, and the battle passed beyond Beth-aven.

Jonathan Violates Saul's Oath

²⁴The men of Israel were driven hard that day, because Saul had put the people under oath, saying, "Cursed is anyone who eats anything before the evening comes and I've finished taking vengeance on my enemies." So no one had tasted any food. ²⁵When all the people^P went into the woods, there was honey on the ground. ²⁶When they entered the woods, the honey was flowing, but no one put his hand to his mouth, because the people were afraid of violating the oath.

²⁷Since Jonathan hadn't heard his father bind the people with an oath, he stretched out the tip of the staff he had in his hand and dipped it in the honeycomb. When he put his hand to his mouth, his eyes became bright. ²⁸"Your father," one of the people told him, "bound the army with a solemn oath, saying, 'Cursed is anyone who eats any food today.'" Now the army was exhausted.

²⁹"My father disturbs the country," Jonathan answered. "See how my eyes have brightened

because I tasted a little of this honey. ³⁰Now if the people had eaten heartily today of the enemies' spoils they found, wouldn't the defeat of the Philistines have been all the greater?"

³¹That day they struck down the Philistines from Michmash to Aijalon, and the army was thoroughly exhausted. ³²So the people pounced on the spoil, took sheep, cows, and calves, and butchered them on the ground; and the people ate the meat with the blood in it. ³³Saul was told, "The people are sinning against the LORD by eating meat with the blood."

"You have acted treacherously," he said. "Roll a large stone over to me now." ³⁴Then Saul said, "Scatter among the army and tell them, 'Everyone of you, bring me your ox and your sheep, and butcher them here, and eat. Don't sin against the LORD by eating meat with the blood in it.'"

So everyone of the people brought his ox with him that night, and they butchered them there.

³⁵Then Saul built an altar for the LORD; it was the first altar he built for the LORD.

³⁶"Let us go down after the Philistines tonight," Saul said, "and take spoils from them till morning dawns, and let's not leave any of them."

"Do whatever you think best," they answered.

But the priest said, "Let us consult God here."

³⁷Then Saul asked God, "Should I go down after the Philistines? Will You put them in Israel's hands?" But he got no answer that day.

³⁸"Come here, all you leaders of

^PHeb reads all the land

the people," Saul said. "Find out and see where this sin was done today. ³⁹As the LORD lives, who saves Israel, even if my son Jonathan is guilty, he must die." But not one of the people answered him.

⁴⁰"You stand on one side," he told all Israel, "and I and my son Jonathan will be on the other side."

"Do whatever you think best," the people answered Saul.

⁴¹Then Saul said to the LORD, the God of Israel,^g "Why didn't You answer Your servant today? If this sin is in me or my son Jonathan, LORD God of Israel, give Urim; but if it is in Your people Israel,^g give Thummim." Jonathan and Saul were taken by lot, and the people were free.

⁴²"Cast lots between me and my son Jonathan," Saul said. Then Jonathan was taken.

⁴³"Tell me," Saul asked Jonathan, "what did you do?"

Then Jonathan told him, "I tasted a little honey at the tip of the staff I had in my hand. And for that I am to die?"

⁴⁴"May God punish me if I'm not right," Saul said. "You must die, Jonathan!"

⁴⁵"Should Jonathan die," the people asked Saul, "after he won this great victory in Israel? Far from it! As the LORD lives, not one hair of his head will fall to the ground, because he has worked with God today." So the people rescued Jonathan from dying.

⁴⁶Then Saul stopped pursuing the Philistines, and the Philistines also went home.

⁴⁷When Saul had taken over the

kingdom of Israel, he fought against his enemies all around, against Moab, the Ammonites, Edom, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines; and wherever he turned, he was victorious. ⁴⁸He did valiantly and defeated Amalek and rescued Israel from those who robbed them.

⁴⁹Saul's sons were Jonathan, Ishyo,^f and Malchishua. The name of the older of his two daughters was Merab, and the name of the younger daughter was Michal. ⁵⁰The name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam, the daughter of Ahimaaz. The name of the captain of his army was Abner the son of Ner, the uncle of Saul. ⁵¹Kish, Saul's father, and Ner, Abner's father, were the sons of Abiel.

⁵²There was a fierce war against the Philistines as long as Saul lived. Whenever any warrior, any man with courage, came to Saul's attention, he would have him join him.

Saul Disobeys God

15 Samuel told Saul, "The LORD sent me to anoint you king of His people Israel. Now listen to what the LORD says. ¹The LORD of armies says, 'I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel because he opposed Israel on the way when he came up from Egypt.' ²Now go and defeat Amalek, destroy all he has, and don't spare him, but kill man and woman, infant and suckling, cow and sheep, camel and donkey."

³Saul called the people, and he counted them at Telaim: 200,000 foot soldiers and 10,000 men of Judah. ⁴Saul went to the city of Amalek and

^g^gSupplied from Gk; lacking in Heb

^fGk; Heb Ishvi; both mean "man of the LORD"; in 1 Chron 8:33 he is called Ishbaal, "man of Baal," and in 2 Sam 2:8 etc. also Ishbosheth, "man of shame"

laid an ambush in the valley. "Then Saul told the Kenites, "Go and leave; get down from among the Amalekites so I will not destroy you with them, because you were kind to all the Israelites when they came up from Egypt." So the Kenites went away from the Amalekites.

"Saul defeated the Amalekites from Havilah to Shur, east of Egypt. "He took Agag, king of the Amalekites, alive but annihilated all the people with the sword. "But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cows, the fat animals, the lambs, and all the best. They refused to destroy them. But everything that was worthless and weak they destroyed.

God Rejects Saul

"Then the LORD told Samuel, "I'm sorry I made Saul king—he turned away from Me and didn't do what I told him." Samuel was angry, and he cried to the LORD all night. "Early in the morning he got up to meet Saul. "Saul has gone to Carmel," he was told. "to set up a monument for himself, but then he turned from there and went on down to Gilgal."

"Samuel came to Saul. "The LORD bless you," Saul told him. "I did what the LORD told me."

"But what is this bleating of sheep that comes to my ears," Samuel asked. "and the lowing of cows that I hear?"

"The army brought them from the Amalekites," Saul answered; "they spared the best of the sheep and cows to sacrifice them to the LORD your God, but the rest they destroyed."

"Stop," Samuel told Saul, "and let me tell you what the LORD told me last night."

"Speak," he told him.

"Though you thought little of yourself," Samuel said, "were you not the head of the tribes of Israel? The LORD anointed you king of Israel. "And the LORD sent you on a mission. 'Go,' He said, 'and destroy those sinners, the Amalekites. Fight with them till they're wiped out.' "Why did you refuse to obey the LORD, and why have you pounced on the spoil and done what the LORD condemns?"

"But I did obey the LORD," Saul told Samuel. "I went where the LORD sent me and brought Agag, king of the Amalekites, with me, and I destroyed the Amalekites. "The people took some of the spoil, sheep and cows, the best of what was to be destroyed, in order to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal."

"Then Samuel said:

"Is the LORD as delighted in burnt offerings and sacrifices as He is when you obey the LORD? You see, to obey is better than to sacrifice, and to listen is better than to give the fat of rams.

"Rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft, and arrogance is as wicked as idolatry. Because you rejected what the LORD told you, He rejects you from being king."

"I have sinned," Saul said to Samuel, "because I didn't do what the LORD and you told me to do. I was afraid of the people and listened to them. "Now please forgive my sin, come back with me, and let me worship the LORD."

"I will not go back with you," Samuel told Saul. "because you rejected what the LORD told you, and the LORD rejects you from being king of Israel." "When Samuel turned to leave, Saul took hold of the end of his garment, and it

tore. ²⁸“The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you today,” Samuel told him, “and has given it to your neighbor who is better than you. ²⁹Moreover, the Glory of Israel does not lie or change His mind, because He is not a man that He should change His mind.”

³⁰“I have sinned,” he said. “Now please honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel. Go back with me and let me worship the LORD your God.” ³¹Then Samuel turned and followed Saul, and Saul worshipped the LORD.

³²“Bring me Agag, king of the Amalekites,” Samuel said.

Agag came to him trembling. “Surely the bitterness of death is gone,” Agag said.

³³“As your sword made women childless,” said Samuel, “so your mother will be made childless among women.” And Samuel cut Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal.

³⁴Then Samuel went to Ramah, and Saul went up to his home at Gibeah. ³⁵Samuel didn’t go to see Saul again till the day he died, but Samuel mourned over Saul. And the LORD was sorry He made Saul king of Israel.

David Selected to Be King

16 “How long are you going to grieve over Saul,” the LORD asked Samuel, “now that I have rejected him from being king of Israel? Fill your horn with olive oil and go. I’m sending you to Jesse in Bethlehem because I’ve selected one of his sons to be My king.”

¹“How can I go?” Samuel asked. “When Saul hears about it, he’ll kill me.”

“Take a heifer with you,” the LORD said, “and say, ‘I’ve come to sacrifice to the LORD.’” ²Call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will tell you what to do. You will anoint for Me the one I point out to you.”

“Samuel did what the LORD told him. When he came to Bethlehem, the elders of the city who came to meet him were trembling with fear. “Did you come for a friendly purpose?” they asked.

³“Yes,” he answered, “I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Purify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” He purified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. ⁴When they came, he saw Eliab and thought, “Certainly here before the LORD is the one He wants to anoint.”

⁵“Don’t look at his appearance,” the LORD told Samuel, “or how tall he is, because I have rejected him. ⁶God does not see as man sees,⁵ because a man looks at outward appearance, but the LORD looks into the heart.”

“Then Jesse called Abinadab and brought him before Samuel. But he said, “The LORD also has not chosen this one.”

⁷Then Jesse had Shammah come before him. “The LORD also has not chosen this one,” he said. ⁸So Jesse had seven of his sons come before Samuel, but Samuel told Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen these. ⁹Are these all the sons you have?” Samuel asked Jesse.

“There’s still the youngest one,” he answered. “He’s watching the sheep.”

“Send someone to get him,” Samuel told Jesse. “We won’t sit down till he gets here.”

⁵⁻⁶Gk: *Heb Because not what man sees*

"He sent someone who got him. He was ruddy, with beautiful eyes, and good-looking. "Go ahead," the LORD said, "and anoint him. This is the one." "Samuel took the horn of olive oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the LORD's Spirit came mightily on David and stayed on him from that day onward. Then Samuel left and went to Ramah.

David Plays His Lyre for Saul

"The LORD's Spirit had left Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD terrified him. "You see," Saul's servants told him, "an evil spirit from God is terrifying you. "Why doesn't our master command us who serve you to look for a man who can play a lyre? When the evil spirit from God is on you, he'll play with his hand, and you'll be well again."

"Please find me a man who can play well," Saul told his servants, "and bring him to me."

"One of the young men answered, "I saw a son of Jesse in Bethlehem who can play. He's a man of courage; he can fight and knows how to speak well; he is handsome, and the LORD is with him."

"Saul sent messengers to Jesse. "Send me your son David," he said, "who is with the sheep."

"Jesse took a homer of bread, and a skin of wine and a young goat, and sent them with his son David to Saul. "David came to Saul and stood before him. Saul loved him very much. So David became his armor-bearer. "Saul sent men to Jesse to say, "Please let David stay with me because I like him."

"When the spirit from God came on Saul, David took the lyre and played with his hand, and Saul felt

relieved and was well again, and the evil spirit left him.

Goliath Terrifies Israel

17 The Philistines gathered their armies for war. They came together at Socoh, which belongs to Judah, and camped between Socoh and Azekah at a place called Ephes-dammim. "Saul and the men of Israel also gathered and camped in the valley of Elah and got their men ready for battle against the Philistines. "The Philistines were stationed on a hill on one side, the Israelites were stationed on a hill on the other side, and the ravine was between them.

"A champion came out of the camp of the Philistines. His name was Goliath. He was from Gath. He was approximately 10 feet tall. "On his head he had a bronze helmet, and he wore a coat of bronze plates weighing 5,000 shekels. "On his legs he had bronze greaves and on his back a bronze javelin. "The shaft of his spear was like the beam used by weavers. The head of his spear was made of 600 shekels of iron. The man who carried his shield went ahead of him. "He stood and called to the army of Israel. "Why do you come out to get ready for battle?" he asked them. "Am I not a Philistine, and aren't you Saul's servants? Choose a man and let him come down to me. "If he can fight with me and he kills me, then we will be your slaves. But if I defeat him and kill him, then you will be our slaves and serve us. "I defy the army of Israel today," the Philistine added; "give me a man so we can fight." "When Saul and all Israel heard what the Philistine said, they lost their courage and were terrified.

¹²David was the son of that Ephrathite from Bethlehem in Judah whose name was Jesse. He had eight sons, and in Saul's days he was an elder among the people. ¹³Jesse's three oldest sons followed Saul into battle: Eliab, the firstborn; next to him was Abinadab; and the third was Shammah. ¹⁴David was the youngest. The three oldest followed Saul. ¹⁵but David went back and forth from Saul to take care of his father's flock at Bethlehem.

¹⁶The Philistine came forward and stood there in the morning and in the evening for 40 days.

¹⁷"Take this ephah of parched grain to your brothers," Jesse told his son David, "and these 10 loaves of bread, and bring them quickly to your brothers in the camp. ¹⁸Take also these 10 cheeses to the captain of the regiment, see how your brothers are, and get some assurance they're well. ¹⁹Saul and they and all the men of Israel are in the valley of Elah fighting with the Philistines."

²⁰David got up early and had someone else take care of the sheep. Then he took the load and went as Jesse told him to do. He came to the encampment as the army was going out to the battle line shouting their war cry. ²¹Israel and the Philistines drew up their battle lines facing each other. ²²David left the supplies in the hands of the quartermaster and ran to the battle line. When he came there he greeted his brothers. ²³While he was talking to them, the champion, the Philistine from Gath whose name was Goliath, came up from the ranks of the Philistines and spoke as before, and David heard him. ²⁴When all the men of Israel saw the man, they fled from him and were

terrified. ²⁵"Did you see that man coming up?" the men of Israel said. "He keeps coming up to defy Israel. The king will make the man very rich who kills him. He will give his daughter to him and make his father's family exempt from service in Israel."

²⁶"What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and frees Israel from disgrace?" David asked the men who were standing near him. "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

²⁷The people repeated what had been said, saying, "So will the man be treated who kills him."

²⁸When Eliab, his oldest brother, heard him say this to the men, Eliab got very angry with David. "Why did you come down," he asked him, "and with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know how headstrong and insolent you are. You came down just to see the battle."

²⁹"What have I done now?" David asked him. "Didn't I merely ask a question?" ³⁰He turned away from him to another man and asked the same question, and the other people gave him the same answer.

³¹When others heard what David said, they reported it to Saul. He had David brought to him. ³²"No one should feel discouraged," David told Saul. "Your servant will go and fight with this Philistine."

³³"You can't go and fight with this Philistine," Saul answered David. "You're a young man, and he's been a warrior from his youth."

³⁴"Your servant is a shepherd of his father's sheep," David answered Saul. "When a lion or a bear comes and takes a sheep from the flock. ³⁵I go after him, strike him

down, and snatch it from his jaws. If he attacks me, I take hold of his beard, strike him, and kill him. "Your servant has struck down lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like them because he has defied the army of the living God." The LORD," David added, "who saved me from the lion and the bear, will save me from this Philistine."

"Go," Saul told David, "and the LORD be with you."

"Saul had David put on the royal garment; he put a bronze helmet on his head and had him wear some armor. "With a belt David fastened Saul's sword over his garment and made a vain attempt to walk, but he had never tried it before. "I can't walk in these," David told Saul; "I've never tried it before." So David took them off.

David Fights Goliath

"He took his stick in his hand, picked out five smooth stones from the bed of the brook, and put them in his shepherd's bag, his pouch. With his sling in his hand he went toward the Philistine. "The Philistine, with the man carrying his shield ahead of him, was coming closer and closer to David. "When the Philistine looked and saw David, he despised him, because he was a boy with ruddy complexion and good looks. "'Am I a dog," the Philistine asked David, "that you come to me with sticks?" The Philistine cursed David by his gods. "'Come on," the Philistine told David, "and I'll give your body to the birds in the air and the animals in the field."

"You come to me with sword and

spear and javelin," David told the Philistine, "but I come to you in the name of the LORD of armies, the God of the ranks of Israel, whom you insult. "Today the LORD will put you in my hands: I will strike you down, cut off your head, and this very day give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines to the birds in the sky and the animals on the ground, so that the whole world will know Israel has a God. "Then this whole assembly will know the LORD can save without sword or spear, because this is the LORD's battle, and He will put all of you in our hands."

"When the Philistine started out and was coming to meet David, David hurried and ran toward the opposing battle line to meet the Philistine. "Then David reached into his bag, took out a stone, hurled it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell to the ground on his face. "So David defeated the Philistine with a sling and a stone, struck down the Philistine, and killed him. But David didn't even have a sword in his hand. "David ran and stood over the Philistine. He took Goliath's sword, pulled it out of its scabbard, and killed him, cutting off his head with it.

When the Philistines saw their hero was dead, they ran away. "Then the men of Israel and Judah started out with a shout, pursued the Philistines to the entrance of Gath¹ and to the gates of Ekron. Wounded Philistines lay on the road from Shaaraim to Gath and Ekron. "When the Israelites came back from their hot pursuit of the Philistines, they took all the goods in

¹Gk: Heb Gai

their camp. ⁴David took the Philistine's head and brought it to Jerusalem, but his armor he kept in his tent.

⁵When Saul saw David going out against the Philistine, he asked Abner, the captain of the army, "Abner, whose son is this young man?"

"As you live, King," Abner answered, "I don't know."

⁶"Find out whose son the young man is," the king said.

⁷When David came back from killing the Philistine, Abner took him and brought him before Saul—he had the Philistine's head in his hand.

⁸"Whose son are you, young man?" Saul asked him.

"The son of your servant Jesse of Bethlehem," David answered.

Saul Is Jealous of David

18 When David had finished talking to Saul, Jonathan became a warm friend of David, and Jonathan loved him like himself. ²From that day Saul kept him and didn't let him go back to his father's home. ³Jonathan made a pledge of friendship with David because he loved him like himself. ⁴Jonathan took off the mantle he had on and gave it to David and also his military garment with his sword, his bow, and his belt. ⁵So David went out; wherever Saul sent him, he was successful, so that Saul put him in charge of the fighting men, and all the people and Saul's officers approved.

⁶Once, as they arrived when David had returned from defeating the Philistines, the women from all of Israel's towns came to meet King Saul, singing and dancing, with tambourines, shouts of joy, and

musical instruments. ⁷As the women sang to one another and celebrated, they said:

Saul struck down his thousands
but David his ten thousands!

⁸Saul got very angry and didn't like this. "To David they give ten thousands," he said, "but to me only thousands. What more can he do but be the king?" ⁹From that day Saul kept his eye on David.

¹⁰The next day an evil spirit from God seized Saul, and he was prophesying in his house. While David was playing the lyre with his hand as he did every day, there was a spear in Saul's hand. ¹¹Saul raised the spear, thinking, "I'll pin David to the wall." But David got away from him twice.

¹²Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him and had left Saul. ¹³And Saul kept him away from him and made him commander of a regiment. So he led the people out on campaigns and back again. ¹⁴David was successful in everything he undertook, the LORD being with him. ¹⁵Saul noticed how very successful he was and dreaded him. ¹⁶Everyone in Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and back in their presence.

¹⁷Then Saul said to David, "Here is my oldest daughter Merab. I will give her to you as your wife. Just show me you have courage, and fight the LORD's battles." Saul thought, "I must not lay hands on him, but the Philistines must do it."

¹⁸"Who am I?" David asked Saul. "Or who are my relatives or my father's family in Israel that I should be the king's son-in-law?"

¹⁹But when the time came to give Saul's daughter Merab to David, she was given as wife to Adriel from Meholah. ²⁰But Saul's

daughter Michal fell in love with David. When Saul was told about it, he approved. ²¹"I'll give her to him," Saul thought, "so she will be a snare to him and the Philistines will get him." So he said to David a second time, "You will now be my son-in-law."

²²"Talk to David in private," Saul ordered his officers. "Tell him, 'The king likes you, and all his officers are fond of you. Now, become the king's son-in-law.'" ²³When Saul's officers said this to David, David asked, "Do you think it's that easy for a poor and unimportant person like me to be the king's son-in-law?"

²⁴When Saul's officers told him, "This is what David said," ²⁵Saul replied, "Tell David the king doesn't want any bride price but a hundred foreskins of the Philistines, in order to take vengeance on the king's enemies." Saul planned to have the Philistines get rid of David. ²⁶When his servants told David this, he agreed to become the king's son-in-law. Before the time was up, ²⁷David and his men went out and struck down 200 Philistines. David brought their foreskins, and they delivered all of them to the king, so that he might become the king's son-in-law. Then Saul gave him his daughter Michal as his wife. ²⁸Saul came to the realization that the LORD was with David, and Saul's daughter Michal loved him. ²⁹Then Saul was still more afraid of David, and after this Saul was always David's enemy.

³⁰The princes of the Philistines made their raids, but as often as they made them, David was more successful than any others of Saul's servants, and people thought very highly of him.

Saul Still Tries to Kill David

19 Saul told his son Jonathan and all his officers he meant to kill David. ²But Jonathan, Saul's son, liked David very much. "My father Saul is trying to kill you," Jonathan told David. "Now please be careful tomorrow, stay out of sight, and hide. ³I'll go out and stand beside my father in the field where you'll be, and I'll talk to my father about you. And anything I can find out I'll tell you."

⁴Jonathan spoke well of David to his father Saul. "The king should not harm his servant David," he told him. "He hasn't harmed you but has done some very fine things for you. ⁵He risked his life, struck down the Philistine, and the LORD gave all Israel a great victory. You were delighted to see it. Why then should you become guilty of murdering an innocent man by killing David without a reason?"

⁶Saul listened to Jonathan, and so he swore. "As the LORD lives, he must not be killed." ⁷Jonathan called David and told him everything that happened. Then Jonathan took David to Saul, and he was with him as before.

⁸Again there was war, and David went out to fight the Philistines, and he won a great victory so that they fled from him. ⁹Then an evil spirit from the LORD came on Saul while he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand and David was playing the lyre. ¹⁰And Saul tried to pin David to the wall with his spear, but he slipped away from Saul. Saul's spear plunged into the wall, and David fled and escaped that night.

¹¹Saul sent messengers to David's home to watch it and kill him in the

morning. But Michal, David's wife, told him about it. "If you don't save your life tonight," she said, "you'll be dead tomorrow!"¹² So Michal let David down through a window, and he ran away and escaped.¹³ Then Michal took an idol, laid it in the bed, put a blanket of goat's hair at its head, and covered it with a garment.

"When Saul sent messengers to get David, she said, 'He's sick.'¹⁴ Then Saul sent the messengers to see David, saying, 'Bring him up to me in his bed so I can kill him.'¹⁵ The messengers came, and there in the bed they found the idol and the blanket of goat's hair at its head.

"Why did you cheat me like this," Saul asked Michal, "and send my enemy away and let him escape?"

Michal answered, "He told me, 'Help me get away, or I'll kill you.'"

David ran away and escaped. He came to Samuel at Ramah and told him everything Saul had done to him. So he and Samuel went and stayed at Naioth.

"When Saul was told, 'David is at Naioth in Ramah,'²⁰ Saul sent messengers to get David. But when these saw the group of prophets prophesying, with Samuel standing as their leader, God's Spirit came on Saul's messengers, so that they also prophesied.²¹ When Saul heard the news, he sent other messengers, but they also prophesied. Saul sent a third group of messengers, but they also prophesied.²² Then he himself went to Ramah. He came to the great cistern that is in Secu. "Where are Samuel and David?" he asked.

"There they are at Naioth in Ramah," he was told.²³ As he went toward Naioth in Ramah, God's

Spirit came on him too, and he went on, prophesying till he came to Naioth in Ramah.²⁴ He even stripped off his clothes as he too prophesied before Samuel and lay there stripped all that day and all that night. This is why people say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

Jonathan Helps David

20 David fled from Naioth in Ramah and came to Jonathan. "What have I done?" he asked. "What am I guilty of? What sin does your father find in me that he should try to kill me?"

"Don't think that way," he answered him. "You won't die! My father does nothing without telling me. Why should my father hide this from me? Isn't that so?"

But David insisted, and on the strength of a solemn oath he said, "Your father certainly knows you're kind to me, and he is determined you mustn't know about this or it will result in grief for you. But as the LORD lives and you live, there's only a step between me and death."

"What do you ask for?" Jonathan said to David. "I'll do it for you."

"Tomorrow is the new moon," David told Jonathan, "when I should sit and eat with the king. But let me go and hide in the country till the day after tomorrow in the evening. If your father really misses me, tell him, 'David begged me to let him run to Bethlehem, his hometown, because all his relatives have the annual sacrifice there.' If he says, 'Good!' then it is well with your servant. But if he gets angry, then it should be clear to you he has decided to harm me. Now be kind to your servant because you had me enter the LORD's covenant with you. If I'm guilty of anything,

kill me yourself. Why should you take me to your father?"

⁹"Don't think that way!" Jonathan answered. "If I actually found out my father has decided to harm you, wouldn't I tell you about it?"

¹⁰"Who will tell me," David asked Jonathan, "whether or not your father gives you a harsh answer?"

¹¹"Come, let's go out into the country," Jonathan said to David. So both went out into the country.

¹²"By the LORD, the God of Israel!" Jonathan said to David. "I'll find out how my father feels about you tomorrow or the day after. If he feels kindly toward you, then I will send someone to you and tell you. ¹³May the LORD punish me again and again if my father wants to harm you and I fail to tell you and send you away, so that you can leave in peace. May the LORD be with you as He used to be with my father. ¹⁴Only while I'm living, show me the LORD's kindness, and when I die, ¹⁵never stop being kind to my family. When the Lord has wiped David's enemies from the face of the earth, ¹⁶if Jonathan's name^u is cut off from David's family, then may the LORD punish David's house.^v ¹⁷Once again Jonathan swore a solemn oath to David because of his love for him, for he loved him like himself.

¹⁸"Tomorrow is the new moon," Jonathan told him, "and you will be missed because your seat will be empty. ¹⁹On the third day you will be missed even more,^w so go to the place where you hid on that other occasion, and stay by that mound. ²⁰Then I will shoot three arrows

toward it as if to hit a mark. ²¹And then I will send my boy to go and find the arrows. If I tell the boy, 'The arrows are here on this side of you; get them,' then you can come, for all is well for you and there's no trouble, as the LORD lives. ²²But if I say to the boy, 'The arrows are on the other side of you,' then you must go, because the LORD sends you away. ²³In regard to the promises you and I have made to each other, the LORD is witness between us forever."

²⁴So David hid outside the city. When the new moon came, the king sat down to eat the meal. ²⁵The king sat in his usual seat by the wall. Jonathan sat opposite him,^x and Abner sat down beside Saul, but David's place was empty. ²⁶Saul didn't say anything that day, thinking, "Something has happened to him, and he's unclean; yes, he must not be clean." ²⁷But on the second day of the month David's place was still empty.

"Why hasn't Jesse's son come to the meal either yesterday or today?" Saul asked his son Jonathan.

²⁸"David begged me to let him go to Bethlehem," Jonathan answered Saul. ²⁹"Please let me go," he said. "Our family has a sacrifice in the town, and my brother ordered me to be there. And now if you will be so kind to me, please let me slip away and see my brothers." This is why he hasn't come to the king's table."

³⁰Then Saul got angry with Jonathan. "Son of a crooked and rebellious woman!" he called him.

^uGk: name lacking in Heb

^vHeb punish David's enemies, a euphemism for punish David's house

^wGk: Heb obscure ^xGk: Heb Jonathon got up

"Don't I know you're a companion of Jesse's son to bring disgrace on yourself and on your mother's nakedness?"³¹ As long as Jesse's son lives on earth, neither you nor your right to be king is secure. Now then, send men and bring him to me; he must die."

³²Jonathan answered his father Saul by asking, "Why should he be killed? What has he done?"

³³Saul raised his spear to strike him. Then Jonathan knew his father had decided to kill David. ³⁴Jonathan got up from the table very angry and ate nothing that second day of the month. He felt sorry for David because his father had insulted him.

³⁵In the morning Jonathan went out into the open country to the place he and David had agreed on, and he had a young boy with him. ³⁶"Run," he told the boy, "please find the arrows I shoot."

The boy ran, and Jonathan shot the arrow over him. ³⁷When the boy reached the place where Jonathan shot the arrow, Jonathan called after him: "Isn't the arrow on the other side of you?" ³⁸"Be quick!" Jonathan called after the boy: "Hurry. Don't stand still." Jonathan's boy gathered the arrows and came to his master. ³⁹The boy had no idea what was going on, but Jonathan and David understood. ⁴⁰Then Jonathan gave the boy his weapons. "Go," he told him, "take them into town."

"When the boy had left, David came out of his place behind the mound and bowed down three times with his face on the ground. Then they kissed and wept together till David wept out loud.

"Go in peace!" Jonathan told David. "We have both sworn in the LORD's name, saying, 'The LORD shall be witness between me and you and between my descendants and your descendants forever.'"

David Comes to the Priest

So David left and went away, and Jonathan went into the town.

21 David came to the priest Ahimelech at Nob. Ahimelech was trembling as he met David. "Why are you alone," he asked him, "and nobody with you?"

²²"The king ordered me to do something," David answered the priest Ahimelech, "and he told me, 'No one must know anything about this mission I'm sending you on.' I've sent my young men to a certain place. ²³Now, what do you have? Give me five loaves of bread or anything that is here."

"I don't have any ordinary bread," the high priest answered David. "But there is holy bread—if the young men have kept away from women."

²⁴"Certainly!" David answered the priest. "Women have been kept away from us as usual when I go on a mission; the young men's bodies are kept holy even on ordinary campaigns; how much more then will their bodies be holy today?"

²⁵So the priest gave him holy bread because only the bread that was before the LORD was there; he gave him the bread that was taken from before the LORD when fresh bread was put in its place.

²⁶That same day one of Saul's servants was there, detained before the LORD. His name was Doeg. He

²¹
5 Mt 12:4
Mk 2:26
Lk 6:3-4

^yGk behind the mound, here and in v. 19, is a better text than the Heb

was an Edomite and one of Saul's strongest runners.

"Don't you have a spear or a sword here?" David asked Ahimelech. "I didn't take my spear or any other weapon; what the king wanted had to be done quickly."

"The sword of Goliath, the Philistine, whom you killed in the valley of Elah, is here," the high priest answered. "It is wrapped in a garment, behind the priest's apron. If you want to take it, take it—there's no other one here."

"There's none like it," David said. "Give it to me."

David Goes to the Philistines

"That day David left and, still fleeing from Saul, came to Achish, king of Gath. "Isn't this David, the king of his country?" Achish's officers asked him. "Isn't he the one they used to sing about in the dances:

'Saul struck down his thousands but David his ten thousands?'"

"When David seriously thought over what they said, he was very much afraid of Achish, king of Gath. "So he changed his behavior in public and acted insane in full view of them; he scribbled on the doors of the gate and let his spit run down his beard.

"There you see a crazy man," Achish said to his officers. "Why do you bring him to me? "Do I need crazy people that you bring this fellow and have him inflict his crazy ways on me? Must he come into my home?"

David Gathers a Band of Men

22 So David left that place and escaped to the cave at Adullam. When his brothers and all his father's family heard about it,

they went down there to him. "Then everyone who was in trouble or who had a debt, and everyone who felt bitter gathered around him, and he became their commander; there were about 400 men with him.

"From there David went to Mizpah in Moab. "Please let my father and mother come and be with you," he asked the king of Moab, "till I know what God is going to do for me." "He brought them before the king of Moab, and they stayed with him as long as David was living in his fortification.

"Don't stay in your fortification," the prophet Gad told David. "Leave and come to the land of Judah." So David left and went to the forest of Hereth.

Saul Destroys the Priests at Nob

"Saul heard David and his men had been discovered. Saul was staying in Gibeah under the tamarisk tree on the high place, with his spear in his hand, and all his officers were standing around him. "'Men of Benjamin," Saul said to his officers standing around him, "please listen. Will Jesse's son give everyone of you fields and vineyards? Will he make you all commanders of regiments and battalions? "All of you have conspired against me, and nobody tells me when my son is in league with Jesse's son. Nobody feels sorry for me and tells me my son has stirred up my servant to plot against me as he is doing now."

"Then Doeg the Edomite, standing with Saul's officers, answered him: "I saw Jesse's son when he came to Ahimelech, Ahitub's son, in Nob. "He prayed to the LORD for him and gave him food and the sword of Goliath the Philistine."

"Then the king sent men to call the priest Ahimelech, Ahitub's son, and all his father's family, the priests who were in Nob, and all of them came to the king. ¹²"Son of Ahitub," Saul said, "listen!"

"Yes, my lord!" he answered.

¹³"Why did you and Jesse's son conspire against me," Saul asked him, "by giving him bread and a sword and praying to God for him so that he can rise against me and lie in an ambush as he's doing now?"

¹⁴"But whom among all your officers can you trust like David?" Ahimelech asked the king. "He's the king's son-in-law, a commander of your guard, and he is honored by your household. ¹⁵Did I just now begin to pray to God for him? Not at all! The king shouldn't put the blame on me or on all my family for this; your servant knew nothing at all about this."

¹⁶"You must die, Ahimelech," Saul said, "you and all your family."

¹⁷"Turn and kill the LORD's priests," the king said to the runners standing around him. "They're with David. When they knew he was fleeing, they didn't tell me." But the king's men refused to become guilty of attacking the LORD's priests.

¹⁸"You turn," the king then said to Doeg, "and attack the priests." Doeg the Edomite turned and attacked the priests, and that day he killed 85 men who wore the linen priestly apron. ¹⁹And with the sword he also killed the people of Nob, the city of the priests, men and women, children and infants, cows, donkeys, and sheep.

²⁰But one son of Ahimelech, Ahitub's son, escaped. His name

was Abiathar. He fled and followed David. ²¹Abiathar told David Saul had murdered the LORD's priests.

²²"I knew that day," David told Abiathar, "when Doeg the Edomite was there, he would certainly tell Saul. I am guilty of the lives² of all your father's family. ²³Stay with me. Don't be afraid; he who's trying to kill me is trying to kill you. With me you will be carefully protected."

David Escapes from Keilah

23 "The Philistines are fighting against Keilah," David was told, "and are robbing the threshing floors."

²"Should I go and attack these Philistines?" David asked the LORD.

"Go," the LORD told David, "attack the Philistines, and save Keilah."

³"We're afraid while we live here in Judah," David's men told him: "how much more then if we go to Keilah against the army of the Philistines?"

⁴David asked the LORD again, and the LORD answered him. "Start out," He said, "and go down to Keilah. I will put the Philistines in your hands."

⁵David and his men went to Keilah, fought with the Philistines, drove off their cattle, and inflicted a great defeat on them. And so David rescued the people who lived in Keilah.

⁶Now when Abiathar, Ahimelech's son, fled to David at Keilah, he carried a priest's apron with him as he went down.

⁷When Saul was told that David went to Keilah, Saul said, "God has delivered him into my hands, for he has shut himself in by going into a

²Gk: *Heb I have caused the death of all your father's family*

town with a double gate and bars." "So Saul called all the people to fight, go down to Keilah, and besiege David and his men.

"When David learned that Saul was planning evil against him, he told Abiathar the priest, "Bring the priestly apron." "LORD, God of Israel," David said, "Your servant has heard Saul is trying to come to Keilah and destroy the town on account of me. "Will the citizens of Keilah hand me over to them? Will Saul come down as Your servant had heard? LORD, God of Israel, please tell Your servant."

"He will come down," the LORD answered.

"Will the citizens of Keilah hand me and my men over to Saul?" David asked.

"They will hand you over," the LORD answered.

"So David and his men, who were about 600, started out. Leaving Keilah, they went wherever they could go. Then Saul was told, "David has escaped from Keilah!" So he gave up the campaign. "David stayed in the strongholds in the hills of the wilderness of Ziph. Saul was always searching for him, but God didn't let him catch him.

Jonathan Visits David

"David realized Saul had come out to kill him. David was at Horesh in the wilderness of Ziph. "Jonathan, Saul's son, left and came to David at Horesh and encouraged him in GOD. "Don't be afraid," he told him, "my father Saul will not find you. You will be king of Israel, and I will be next to you. My father Saul also knows this is so." "Both of them made a covenant before the LORD. David stayed in Horesh, and Jonathan went home.

"Then the men of Ziph went up to Saul in Gibeah. "Isn't David hiding with us," they said, "in the strongholds at Horesh on the hills of Hachilah, south of the badlands? "Come down, then, king, whenever you want to, and it will be our duty to hand him over to the king."

"The LORD bless you," Saul answered, "because you feel sorry for me! "Please go, get still more definite information, find out where he goes and who has seen him there, for I'm told he's very clever. "Watch and learn about all the hiding places where he may be hiding, and come back to me with the facts. Then I'll go with you, and if he's in the country, I'll search for him among all the clans of Judah."

"They went on to Ziph ahead of Saul. David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon, in the Arabah, in the southern part of the badlands. "When Saul and his men came to look for him, David was told the news. So he went to his mountain stronghold in the wilderness of Maon. Saul heard about it and pursued David into the wilderness of Maon. "Saul went on one side of the mountain, and David and his men on the other side of the mountain. David was hurrying to get away from Saul, and Saul and his men were closing in on David and his men to capture them. "Then a messenger came to Saul. "Come quickly," he said. "The Philistines are raiding the country."

"Saul returned from pursuing David and went to meet the Philistines. So that place was called the Slippery Crag. "From there David went up and stayed in the strongholds of En-gedi.

David Spares Saul's Life

24 When Saul came back from following the Philistines, he was told, "David is in the wilderness of En-gedi." ²Then Saul took 3,000 men chosen from all Israel and went to search for David and his men on the Rocks of the Wild Goats. ³And he came to some sheepfolds along the road. A cave was there, and Saul went in to relieve himself while David and his men were sitting in the inner recesses of the cave.

"David's men told him, "This is the day the LORD told you about: 'I'm putting your enemy in your hands; now you can do to him what you think is right.' "

David quietly got up and cut off the border of Saul's robe. ⁵But afterward David's conscience troubled him because he had cut off the border of Saul's robe. ⁶"The LORD forbid," he told his men, "that I should do this to my lord, whom the LORD anointed, that I should raise my hand against him since he's the one the LORD anointed." ⁷So David stopped his men by saying this to them and didn't let them attack Saul.

Saul left the cave and went along the road. ⁸Later David also got up and left the cave and called after Saul, "My lord and king!" When Saul looked back, David bowed down with his face to the ground and honored him. ⁹David asked Saul, "Why do you listen to others who say, 'David is trying to harm you'? ¹⁰Today you see how the LORD put you in my hands in the cave, and although I was told to kill you, I spared you, saying, 'I will not raise my hand against my master—the LORD anointed him.' ¹¹Now look, my father, yes, see the

border of your robe in my hand. Since I cut off the border of your robe and didn't kill you, you should understand and see I mean no harm or rebellion. I haven't sinned against you, and yet you plot to kill me. ¹²May the LORD act as judge between me and you, and may the LORD avenge me on you, but I will not raise my hand against you. ¹³It is like the saying of people long ago: 'Wickedness comes from the wicked.' But my hand will not be against you. ¹⁴For whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom are you pursuing? A dead dog! A flea! ¹⁵So the LORD must judge and decide between me and you, and watch and defend me, and set me free from you."

¹⁶When David finished saying this to Saul, Saul asked, "Is this your voice, my son David?" and Saul wept out loud. ¹⁷"You are more righteous than I," he told David: "you acted kind to me while I did evil to you. ¹⁸You have shown today how kind you've been to me: When the LORD put me in your hands, you didn't kill me. ¹⁹When a man finds his enemy, does he send him away with kindness? The LORD will richly repay you for what you did to me today. ²⁰And now, I know you will certainly be king and in your hands the kingdom of Israel will endure. ²¹Swear to me, then, by the LORD that you will not destroy my descendants or wipe out my name from my father's family."

²²So David swore to Saul. Then Saul went home, and David and his men went up to the stronghold.

Samuel Dies

25 Samuel died, and all Israel gathered and mourned for

him. they buried him at his home in Ramah.

Abigail

Then David left and went down to the wilderness of Paran.

²There was a man in Maon whose work was in Carmel. The man was very rich. He had 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats, and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. ³The man's name was Nabal, and his wife's name was Abigail. The woman had good sense and was beautiful, but the man was unkind and evil in his ways. He was a descendant of Caleb.

⁴David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep. ⁵So David sent 10 young men. "Go up to Carmel," he told the young men, "and visit Nabal and greet him for me. ⁶Tell him this: 'May you, your home, and all you have be happy and prosperous! ⁷And now, I hear you have shearers. Your shepherds have been with us. We have not insulted them, and nothing of theirs has been missing as long as they've been in Carmel. ⁸Ask your young men and let them tell you. So be kind to these young men since we come on a festive occasion. Please give your servants and your son David anything you can give.'"

⁹When David's young men came to him, they spoke for David to Nabal as they were told, and then they waited.

¹⁰"Who is David?" Nabal answered David's servants. "And who is Jesse's son? So many slaves nowadays are running away from their masters. ¹¹Should I take my bread and water and my meat that I butchered for my shearers and give them to men about whom I don't

even know where they're from?"

¹²David's young men turned about, came again, and told him all this.

¹³"Fasten your swords, each of you!" David told his men. And everyone, including David, fastened his sword. About 400 men followed David while 200 men stayed with the goods.

¹⁴But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, about it. "David sent messengers from the wilderness with best wishes for our master," he said, "but he flew at them like a vulture. ¹⁵The men were very good to us. They didn't insult us, and we didn't lose a thing as long as we went with them when we were in the fields. ¹⁶They were a wall to protect us day and night as long as we were watching the sheep near them. ¹⁷And now consider what you should do, because our master and his whole household is doomed, and he's such a worthless fellow nobody can talk to him."

¹⁸Then Abigail quickly got 200 loaves of bread, 2 skins of wine, 5 dressed sheep, 5 measures of parched grain, 100 clusters of raisins, and 200 cakes of pressed figs and loaded them on donkeys. ¹⁹"Go on ahead," she told her young men, "and I'll follow you." She didn't tell her husband Nabal about it.

²⁰As she was riding on her donkey down a hidden mountain path, David and his men also were coming down toward her so that she met them. ²¹Now David had thought, "It was certainly for nothing that I protected all this fellow's goods in the wilderness, so that nothing he had was missing. Yet he has paid me back evil for good. ²²May God

punish me^a more and more if I leave till morning one male of all he has."

²³When Abigail saw David, she quickly got down from her donkey and bowed down with her face to the ground before David to honor him. ²⁴As she lay at his feet, she said, "Let me be responsible for the wrong done, my lord. Please let your maid talk to you, and listen to what your maid says. ²⁵My lord shouldn't take this worthless person, Nabal, seriously. We can see from his name what he is: he's called a fool,^b and he's foolish. But I, your maid, didn't see my lord's young men whom you sent. ²⁶Now, then, as the LORD lives and you live, the LORD has kept you from murder and from paying back a wrong by your own action. And now may your enemies and those who are trying to harm my lord be like Nabal. ²⁷Then may this gift your maid brings my lord be given to the young men that follow my lord. ²⁸Please forgive the wrong of your maid. The LORD will certainly make my lord's family a strong one, because my lord is fighting the LORD's battles and no fault has been found in you as long as you have lived. ²⁹Even though someone may undertake to pursue you and take your life, my lord's life is wrapped securely in the bundle of life under the care of the LORD your God; but the life of your enemies He will hurl like stones from a sling. ³⁰When the LORD does to my lord all the good He promised and makes you a prince over Israel, ³¹then this must not hurt my lord or trouble his conscience, that my lord killed without a reason and paid back a wrong done to him. When the LORD

has given success to my lord: remember your maid."

³²"Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who sent you today to meet me," David said to Abigail, "and may you be blessed for your fine judgment and for keeping me today from bloody murder and from taking vengeance with my own hand. "But as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives who has kept me from harming you if you hadn't come quickly to meet me, by morning there certainly wouldn't be left to Nabal as much as one man."

³³So David accepted from her what she brought him and told her "Go home in peace. See, I'm following your advice and doing for you what you ask."

³⁴When Abigail came to Nabal, he was celebrating like a king at his home. He was feeling good and was very drunk, so she didn't tell him anything at all till the morning. ³⁵But in the morning, when the effect of the wine on Nabal had worn off, his wife told him these things; his heart suffered a stroke and he was like a stone. ³⁶About 10 days later the LORD struck Nabal, and he died.

³⁷When David heard Nabal was dead, he said, "Blessed be the LORD, who defended me against the insults of Nabal and kept his servant from doing wrong; the LORD has punished Nabal for the wrong he did."

Then David sent men to propose to Abigail that she become his wife. ³⁸When David's servants came to Abigail at Carmel, they told her, "David has sent us to you to take you to him to be his wife."

³⁹She got up and bowed down with her face on the ground. "Here is

^aHeb David's enemies ^b'Nabal' means stupid

your maid," she said, "ready to be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord." "Then Abigail quickly got up and rode on a donkey with five of her girls following her. So she went with the messengers of David and became his wife.

"David also had married Ahinoam of Jezreel, and both of them were his wives. "But Saul had given his daughter Michal, David's wife, to Palti, Laish's son, who was from Gallim.

David Sparing Saul Again

26 The men of Ziph came to Saul at Gibeah. "Isn't David hiding at the hill of Hachilah, which overlooks the wilderness?" they asked.

"Saul left and went down to the wilderness of Ziph with 3,000 chosen men from Israel to search for David in the wilderness of Ziph. "Saul camped by the road at the hill of Hachilah, which overlooks the wilderness, while David was staying in the wilderness. When he saw that Saul had come into the wilderness for him, "David sent spies and learned it was true that Saul had come.

"Then David left and came to the place where Saul camped, and David saw the place where Saul and Abner, Ner's son, the commander of his army were lying. Saul was lying within the barricade, and the troops were camped around him.

"Who will go down with me to Saul in the camp?" David asked Ahimelech the Hittite, and Abishai, Zeruah's son, Joab's brother.

"I will go down with you," Abishai answered.

"David and Abishai went among the troops at night. And there was

Saul lying asleep within the barricade with his spear stuck into the ground near his head. Abner and the soldiers were lying around him. "Today God has put your enemy in your hands," Abishai said to David, "and now please let me pin him to the ground with one blow of the spear, and I won't have to strike him a second time."

"Don't kill him," David told Abishai. "Can anyone lay his hands on the LORD's anointed and be innocent? "As the LORD lives," David added, "the LORD must strike him, or his time will come when he will die naturally, or he will go down into battle and be swept away. "The LORD forbid I should lay my hand on the one the LORD anointed; but please take the spear that's near his head and the jar of water, and let us go."

"David took the spear and the jar of water from Saul's head, and they left. Nobody saw it or knew about it or woke up—all were sleeping; the LORD had made them fall into a deep sleep.

"David went over to the other side and stood on top of a mountain some distance away with a wide space between them. "Then David called to the men and to Abner, Ner's son. "Won't you answer, Abner?" he asked.

"Who are you, calling the king?" Abner asked.

"Aren't you a man?" David asked Abner. "Is there anyone like you in Israel? Then why didn't you guard your lord, the king? One of the men came to destroy your lord the king. "What you've done isn't good. As the LORD lives, you men deserve to die, because you didn't guard your master, whom the LORD anointed. And now, see where the

king's spear is and the jar of water that was near his head."

"Saul recognized David's voice. "Is that your voice, my son David?" he asked.

"It is my voice, my lord the king," David answered. "Why is my lord pursuing his servant?" he added. "What have I done? What harm could I be planning?" "Now my lord the king should listen to what his servant says. If the LORD has stirred you up against me, may He be satisfied with an offering; but if human beings, the LORD's curse be on them because they have driven me out now so that I can't share in the LORD's heritage. 'Go and serve other gods,' they tell me. "Now then, my blood should not fall on the ground away from the presence of the LORD. The king of Israel has come out to search for a single flea, like somebody hunting a partridge in the hills."

"My son David," Saul said, "I have sinned. Come back. I will not harm you again, because you valued my life highly today. I've been a fool and made a very big mistake."

"Here's the king's spear," David answered. "One of the young men should come over and get it. "The LORD will reward any man who is upright and loyal, since the LORD delivered you to me today, but I refused to lay my hand on the one the LORD anointed. "Just as I valued your life highly today, may the LORD value my life highly and rescue me from all trouble."

"Blessed are you, my son David," Saul said. "You will certainly succeed in all the things you do."

So David went his way, while Saul went home.

David Lives Among the Philistines

27 "One of these days," David thought, "Saul will destroy me. I can't do any better than escape to the country of the Philistines. Then Saul will give up looking for me anywhere in Israel, and I'll escape from him." "David came with his 600 men to Achish, Moach's son, king of Gath. "So David and his men stayed with Achish in Gath; each one had his family, and David had his two wives, Ahinoam from Jezreel and Abigail from Carmel, who had been Nabal's wife. "When Saul heard David fled to Gath, he didn't search for him anymore.

"If you will be kind to me," David said to Achish, "let me have a place in one of the country towns so I can live there. Why should your servant live in the royal city with you?" "Then Achish gave him Ziklag. This is why Ziklag still belongs to the kings of Judah today.

"David stayed in the territory of the Philistines for a year and four months. "Then David and his men went up and raided the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites. These lived in the country from Telaim^c as far as Shur and Egypt. "When David made an attack in the country, he left no man or woman alive, took sheep, cattle, donkeys, camels, and clothing, then came back to Achish.

"Whom did you raid today?" Achish would ask.

"The Negeb of Judah," David would answer, or "the Negeb of the

^cGk (see 15:4); Heb from long ago

Jerahmeelites," or "the Negeb of the Kenites." "He kept no man or woman alive to bring them to Gath. He thought, "I don't want them to tell about us and say, 'That's what David did.'" This was what he used to do all the while he lived in Philistine territory. "And Achish believed David. He thought, "He's made his people Israel abhor him. Now he'll always be my servant."

28 At that time the Philistines gathered their army for war to fight against Israel. Then Achish said to David, "You should know you and your men must go with me into battle."

"Very well," David answered Achish, "you will then learn what your servant can do."

"Very well," Achish told David, "I will make you my bodyguard for life."

Saul Goes to a Medium

"Samuel was dead, and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in Ramah, his own town.

Saul had rid the land of mediums and wizards.

"The Philistines gathered and camped in Shunem; Saul also gathered all Israel, and they camped at Gilboa. "When Saul looked at the army of the Philistines, he was really afraid and terrified. "He prayed to the LORD, but the LORD didn't answer him either by dreams, by the Urim, or by prophets. "Find me a woman medium." Saul told his servants. "Then I'll go to her and find out something from her."

"There is a woman medium at Endor," his servants told him.

"Disguising himself by putting on other clothes, Saul left with two men and came to the woman at night and

said to her, "Please get me information by a spirit, and bring up someone whom I will tell you."

"Now you know what Saul did," the woman told him, "how he rid the land of mediums and wizards. Why are you laying a trap for me to kill me?"

"But Saul swore by the LORD: "As the LORD lives, you will not be punished for this!"

"Whom should I bring up for you?" the woman asked.

"Bring up Samuel for me," he answered.

"When the woman saw Samuel, she cried out aloud. "Why did you deceive me?" the woman asked Saul. "You are Saul!"

"Don't be afraid," the king told her. "What do you see?"

"I see a god rising from the ground," the woman answered Saul.

"What form does it have?" he asked her.

"An old man is coming up," she answered, "and he's dressed in a robe." Then Saul knew it was Samuel. He bowed down with his face on the ground to honor him.

"Why did you trouble me and bring me up?" Samuel asked Saul.

"I'm in great trouble," Saul answered. "The Philistines are fighting against me, and God has left me and doesn't answer me anymore, either by the prophets or by dreams. So I've called you to tell me what to do."

"Why do you ask me," Samuel asked, "when the LORD has left you and become your enemy? "The LORD has done to you what He told you by me: The LORD has torn the kingdom from you and given it to your neighbor, David. "Because you didn't listen to the LORD or execute His blazing anger on

Amalek, the LORD does this to you today. ¹⁹The LORD will also put Israel and you in the hands of the Philistines. Tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. The LORD will also put the army of Israel in the hands of the Philistines."

²⁰Immediately Saul fell full-length to the ground, he was so frightened by what Samuel said. He also had no strength in him, because he hadn't eaten anything all day and all night. ²¹When the woman came to Saul, she saw he was terrified. "Now, your maid listened to you," she told him, "and I took my life in my hands when I did as you told me. ²²Now please, you also listen to your maid: I will serve you something to eat; then eat so you will have strength when you leave."

²³But he refused. "I don't want to eat," he said. But his servants and the woman kept urging him till he listened to them. He got up from the ground and sat on the couch.

²⁴The woman had a fattened calf in her house. She butchered it quickly, and she took flour, kneaded it, and with it baked bread without yeast. ²⁵Then she served it to Saul and his servants. They ate and got up and left that night.

Must David Fight Against Israel?

29 The Philistines gathered their whole army at Aphek, and Israel was camping at the Spring in Jezreel. ²The Philistine lords were marching by in battalions and regiments. David and his men were marching in the rear with Achish.

³"What are these Hebrews doing here?" the Philistine officers asked.

"Isn't this David," Achish asked the Philistine officers, "the servant

of Saul, king of Israel, who has been with me now for a year or two, and I've found nothing in him from the day he deserted till now?"

"But the Philistine officers were angry with him. "Send the man back," the Philistine officers told him, "and return him to the town you assigned to him. He shouldn't go down with us into battle; he may turn against us in the fighting. How would this fellow try to regain his master's favor? Wouldn't he do it with the heads of our men? 'Isn't this David of whom people sing in dances: 'Saul killed his thousands, but David his ten thousands'?"

"Then Achish called David. "As the LORD lives," he told him, "you are dependable, and I consider your campaigning with me a good thing, because I've never found anything wrong in you from the day you came to me till now. But the lords don't approve of you. 'Go back, then, and leave peacefully, without doing anything to displease the Philistine lords."

"What have I done?" David asked Achish. "Or what did you find in your servant as long as I've been with you till now, that I shouldn't go and fight the enemies of my lord the king?"

"I admit in my judgment you're as good as God's angel," Achish answered David. "but the Philistine officers say: 'He shouldn't go up into battle with us.' ¹⁰Get up then, early in the morning with your master's servants who came with you, ¹¹and go to the town I assigned to you. Don't feel bad, because I still approve of you. ¹²So get up in the

^dSupplied from Gk; lacking in Heb

morning, and leave when it's light enough."

"So David and his men got up early in the morning to return to the country of the Philistines, while the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

Amalekites Raid Ziklag

30 When David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day, the Amalekites had raided the Negeb, including Ziklag; they had captured Ziklag and burned it. They had taken captive the women who were there, young and old. Without killing anyone, they had taken them and gone away. When David and his men came to the town, there were the burnt ruins, and their wives, sons, and daughters had been taken captive. Then David and his men cried loud and wept till they couldn't weep anymore. David's two wives also were captives, Ahinoam from Jezreel and Abigail, who had been the wife of Nabal of Carmel. David was in great danger—the people threatened to stone him because they all felt bitter, everyone thinking of his sons and daughters; but David found courage in the LORD his God.

"Please bring me the priest's apron," David told Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son. Abiathar brought David the apron.

"Then David asked the LORD, "Should I pursue this band? Will I catch up with them?"

"Pursue them," the LORD told him, "because you will certainly catch up with them and rescue the captives."

"So David and his 600 men went and came to the valley of Besor, where some stayed who were left behind. David and 400 men went in pursuit while 200 men stayed

behind; they were too exhausted to cross the valley of Besor.

David's men found an Egyptian in the open country and took him to David. They gave him food to eat and a drink of water. They gave him a slice of a fig cake and two bunches of raisins. When he had eaten, he revived. He had eaten no food and drunk no water for three days. "To whom do you belong?" David asked him. "And where do you come from?"

"I'm an Egyptian servant," he answered, "the slave of an Amalekite, but my master left me behind because I got sick three days ago. We raided the Negeb of the Cherethites, the territory of Judah, and the Negeb of Caleb, and we burned Ziklag."

"Will you bring me down to this band?" David asked him.

"Swear to me by God," he answered, "you won't kill me or hand me over to my master, and I'll bring you to this band."

When the Egyptian brought him down, there they were spread out all over the land, eating, drinking, and celebrating because they had taken so much spoil from the country of the Philistines and the territory of Judah. From dawn of the next day till evening David struck them down, and no one escaped except 400 young men who got away riding on camels. David rescued all the Amalekites had taken and also his two wives. There was nothing lost, young or old, sons or daughters, or of the spoil, or of anything they had taken with them. David brought back everything. David took all the sheep and the cows. His men drove the cattle ahead of him and said, "This is David's spoil."

David came to the 200 men who

had been too exhausted to go with him, who had made them stay at the valley of Besor. They came out to meet David and the people with him. When David came near the people, he greeted them. ²²Then every wicked and worthless man of those who had gone with David said, "Since they didn't go with us, they should be given none of the spoils we rescued, but each one should take only his wife and children and leave."

²³"Don't do that, my men, with what the LORD has given us," David said. "He has protected us and put the band that attacked us in our hands. ²⁴And who will listen to you in this matter? Surely the share of those who go down into battle must be like the share of those who stay with the baggage. They will share alike." ²⁵He made this a rule and a custom in Israel ever after till this day.

²⁶When David came to Ziklag, he sent a part of the spoils to his friends, the elders of Judah, saying, "Here is a present for you from the spoils of the LORD's enemies." ²⁷He sent it to those in Bethel, Ramoth in the Negeb, Jattir, ²⁸Aroer, Siphmoth, Eshtemoa, ²⁹Carmel,^e the cities of the Jerahmeelites, the cities of the Kenites, ³⁰Hormah, Borashan, Athach, ³¹Hebron, and to all the places where David and his men used to travel.

Saul Is Killed

31 When the Philistines were fighting against Israel, the men of Israel fled from the Philistines and left their dead on Mount Gilboa. ²The Philistines were after Saul and his sons, and the Philis-

tines struck down Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, Saul's sons. ³The brunt of the fighting was against Saul. When the archers got him in their range, he was badly wounded by them.

"Draw your sword," Saul told his armor-bearer, "and stab me, or these uncircumcised men will come, stab me, and mock me." But his armor-bearer refused; he was too afraid to do it. Then Saul took the sword and fell on it. ⁴When his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too fell on his sword and died with him. ⁵So Saul, his three sons, and his armor-bearer, and also all his men died together that day.

⁶When the men of Israel on the other side of the valley and on the west bank of the Jordan saw the men of Israel had fled and Saul and his sons were dead, they left their towns and fled; and the Philistines came and lived in them.

⁷The next day, when the Philistines came to strip the dead, they found Saul and his three sons lying on Mount Gilboa. ⁸They cut off his head, stripped off his armor, and sent men around the country of the Philistines to tell the news to their idols^f and to the people. ⁹They put his armor in the temple of Astarte and fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan.

¹⁰When the people of Jabesh in Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, ¹¹many brave men started out, walked all night, took the bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall of Beth-shan, came back to Jabesh, and burned them there. ¹²They took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh. Then they fasted 7 days.

^eGk; Heb *Rachal* ^fGk; Heb *the temple of their idols*

SAMUEL

David Hears of Saul's Death

1 After Saul died and David returned from defeating the Amalekites. David stayed in Ziklag two days. ²On the third day a man came from Saul's army; his clothes were torn, and he had dirt on his head. When he came to David, he bowed down on the ground to honor David.

³"Where did you come from?" David asked him.

"I escaped from the camp of Israel," he answered.

⁴"What happened?" David asked him. "Please tell me."

"The army has fled from the battle," he answered, "and many of the soldiers have fallen and died. Saul and his son Jonathan are dead too."

⁵"How do you know Saul and his son Jonathan are dead?" David asked the young man who brought him the news.

⁶"I just happened to be on Mount Gilboa," the young man who brought him the news answered, "and there was Saul leaning on his spear, and the chariots and horsemen were overtaking him. ⁷When he looked back and saw me, he called to me, and I said, 'Yes.'

⁸"Who are you?" he asked me.

"I'm an Amalekite," I told him.

⁹"Please stand over me," he told me, "and kill me. I'm still alive, but I'm in the agony of death."

¹⁰"So I stood over him and killed him, since I knew he couldn't live after he had fallen. And I took the crown that was on his head and the

armlet that was on his arm and brought them here to my master."

¹¹Then David took hold of his own clothes and tore them. All the men with him did the same. ¹²They mourned loud and wept and fasted till evening for Saul and his son Jonathan, for the LORD's soldiers, and for Israel because the sword had cut them down.

¹³"Where are you from?" David asked the young man who brought him the news.

"I'm a foreign resident, an Amalekite," he answered.

¹⁴"How was it," David asked him,

"that you weren't afraid to raise your hand to kill the one the LORD anointed?" ¹⁵Then David called one of the young men. "Go," he told him, "and attack him." He struck him so that he died. ¹⁶as David said to him, "You are responsible for this bloody deed, because you testified against yourself when you said, 'I killed the one the LORD anointed.'" "

David's Song of Mourning

¹⁷David wrote this song of mourning for Saul and his son Jonathan. ¹⁸as he said, "To teach the men of Judah the bow." It is written in the Book of Jashar:

¹⁹Your glory, Israel, lies dead on your hills.

How the warriors have fallen!

²⁰Don't tell the news in Gath; don't tell about it in the streets of Ashkelon,

or the daughters of the Philistines will be glad,

and the daughters of the uncir-

cumcised will be triumphant.

- ²¹Hills of Gilboa,
may there be no dew or rain on
you,
no fields producing firstfruits,
because warriors' shields were
soiled there.
No olive oil anointed Saul's
shield
- ²²but blood of the slain and the fat
of warriors.
Jonathan's bow would not turn
back,
nor Saul's sword come back
empty.
- ²³Saul and Jonathan, we loved
them both
and were delighted with them
while they were living;
they were not separated when
they died.
They were swifter than eagles
and stronger than lions.
- ²⁴Women of Israel, weep for Saul,
who dressed you in scarlet and
luxuries
and put gold ornaments on your
clothes.
- ²⁵How the warriors have fallen in
battle!
On your hills Jonathan lies slain!
- ²⁶I grieve over you, my brother
Jonathan.
You were my great delight.
To me your love was more won-
derful than the love of women.
- ²⁷How the warriors have fallen!
How the weapons of war have
failed!

David Becomes King of Judah

2 After this, David asked the
LORD, "Should I go up to one
of the cities of Judah?"

"Go up," the LORD answered
him.

"Where should I go?" David
asked.

"To Hebron," He answered.

²David went up there with his two
wives, Ahinoam from Jezreel and
Abigail, who had been the wife of
Nabal of Carmel. ³David took his
men with him, each one with his
family, and they settled in the towns
around Hebron. ⁴Then the men of
Judah came, and there they
anointed David to be king over the
people of Judah.

David was told, "The men of
Jabesh in Gilead were the ones who
buried Saul." ⁵So David sent
messengers to the men of Jabesh in
Gilead. "The LORD bless you," he
told them, "because you did this
kindness to your master Saul and
buried him. ⁶And now, the LORD
be kind and faithful to you. I too will
be good to you because you did this.
⁷Be strong, then, and courageous;
now that your master Saul is dead,
the people of Judah have anointed
me to be their king."

Abner Fights Against Joab

⁸Abner, Ner's son, captain of
Saul's army, took Ish-bosheth,^a
Saul's son, brought him over to
Mahanaim, ⁹and made him king of
Gilead, the Ashurites, Jezreel,
Ephraim, and Benjamin—that is, of
all Israel. ¹⁰Ish-bosheth, Saul's
son, was 40 years old when he

^aAccording to the versions and 1 Chron 8:33 his real name was Eshbaal. Substituting "bosheth" (shame) for "baal" (lord) represents a Hebrew attitude toward this word which forms the name of the Canaanite deity Baal.

started to rule over Israel and was king for two years.

But the people of Judah followed David. "David was king in Hebron over the people of Judah for seven years and six months.

"Abner, Ner's son, and the men of Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, went from Mahanaim to Gibeon. "Joab, Zeruiah's son, and David's men also went out. They met at the pool of Gibeon, where they sat down, one group on one side of the pool, the other on the other side of the pool.

"Please let the young men have a contest before us," Abner said to Joab.

"Let them start," Joab answered.

The men moved forward and were counted as they passed by: 12 from Benjamin for Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, and 12 of David's men. "Then each one grabbed his opponent by the head, stuck his sword into his side, and they fell down together. That place in Gibeon is called the Field of Flint Blades. "Very fierce fighting broke out that day, and David's men defeated Abner and the men of Israel.

"Zeruiah's three sons were there: Joab, Abishai, and Asahel. Asahel was fast on his feet like a gazelle in the field.

"Asahel pursued Abner, refusing to turn right or left as he went after Abner. "So Abner looked back. "Are you Asahel?" he asked.

"Yes," Asahel answered.

"Turn right or left," Abner told him; "catch one of the young men, and take his belt."

But Asahel refused to turn away from him. "So Abner spoke again to Asahel. "Quit following me," he said. "Why should I strike you to the ground? How could I look your

brother Joab in the face again?"

"But he refused to go away. So Abner struck him with the butt end of the spear. The spear went into his belly and came out behind. He fell down there and died on the spot. And everybody who came to the place where Asahel fell and died stopped there.

"But Joab and Abishai pursued Abner. When the sun went down, they came to the hill of Ammah, which is opposite Giah on the road from Gibeon to the wilderness. "The men of Benjamin rallied behind Abner, banding together and taking their position on the top of a certain hill.

"Then Abner called to Joab. "Should the sword devour forever?" he asked. "Don't you know this will come to a bitter end? How long will it be before you will call back your men from pursuing their relatives?"

"By the living God," Joab answered, "if you had not spoken, the men would not have withdrawn from pursuing their relatives till morning." "So Joab blew the horn, and all the men stopped and didn't pursue Israel or fight anymore.

"Abner and his men walked all that night through the Jordan valley; they crossed the Jordan, and passing through the whole valley, they came to Mahanaim.

"Joab returned from pursuing Abner. When he had gathered all the men, 19 of David's men and Asahel were missing. "David's men had struck down 360 of the men of Benjamin who followed Abner. "They took Asahel and buried him in his father's burial place at Bethlehem. Then Joab's men marched all night, and day dawned when they arrived at Hebron.

3 As the conflict between Saul's family and David's family dragged on, David got stronger and stronger, and Saul's family got weaker and weaker.

David's Family

¹While David was in Hebron, the following sons were born to him: His firstborn son was Amnon, the son of Ahinoam from Jezreel. ²The second was Chileab, the son of Abigail, who had been the wife of Nabal of Carmel. The third was Absalom, the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur. ⁴The fourth was Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith. The fifth was Shephatiah, whose mother was Abital. ⁵The sixth was Ithream, the son of David's wife Eglah. These sons of David were born in Hebron.

Abner Confers with David

⁶While Saul's family was fighting David's family, Abner made himself a powerful person in Saul's family. ⁷Saul had had a concubine; her name was Rizpah, and she was Aiah's daughter. Ish-bosheth asked Abner, "Why did you have intercourse with my father's concubine?"

⁸Ish-bosheth's question made Abner very angry. "Am I chief of Judah's dogs?" he asked. "Up to now I've been so kind to the family of your father Saul, to his relatives and friends, and haven't put you in David's hands. So now you fault me because of this woman. ⁹May God punish me if I don't do for David what the LORD promised him with an oath: "to transfer the kingdom from Saul's family and set up David's throne over Israel as well as Judah, from Dan to Beersheba."¹⁰ Ish-bosheth couldn't answer him a

single word, because he was afraid of him.

¹¹Then Abner sent messengers to David to speak for him. "To whom does a country belong?" he asked. "Come to an agreement with me," he said; "then I will support you and bring all Israel to you."

¹²"Good!" David answered. "I will come to an agreement with you. But one thing I'm asking you to do. When you come to me, you can't see me unless you bring Michal, Saul's daughter."

¹³David also sent messengers to Ish-bosheth, Saul's son. "Give me my wife Michal," he said, "whom I got as my wife for the price of a hundred foreskins of the Philistines."

¹⁴So Ish-bosheth sent men to get her from her husband Paltiel son of Laish. ¹⁵Her husband went with her, weeping after her all the way to Bahurim. "Go back," Abner told him; and so he went back.

¹⁶Abner had talked with the elders of Israel. "For some time in the past," he said, "you've been trying to get David as your king. ¹⁷Do it now, because the LORD made this promise about David: 'By the hand of My servant David I will save my people Israel from the Philistines and all their other enemies.'¹⁸ Abner also talked to the people of Benjamin.

Then Abner also went to tell David in Hebron everything Israel and the whole tribe of Benjamin had approved. ¹⁹So Abner came with 20 men to David in Hebron, and David gave a dinner for Abner and his men.

²⁰"I must get up and go," Abner told David, "so I can bring all Israel together to my master, the king. They will make a covenant with you,

and you will be king over all whom you want to rule." So David dismissed Abner, and he left peacefully.

Abner Is Killed

²²Then David's men and Joab came home from a raid and brought much plunder with them. Abner was no more with David in Hebron, since he had dismissed Abner and he had left peacefully. ²³When Joab and the whole army with him came back, Joab was told, "Abner, Ner's son, came to the king, but he dismissed him, and he left peacefully."

²⁴Then Joab went to the king. "What did you do?" he asked. "Here Abner has come to see you. Why did you dismiss him and let him get away? ²⁵Don't you know that Abner, Ner's son, came to deceive you, to find out about your movements and learn everything you're doing?"

²⁶When Joab had left David, he sent messengers after Abner, and they brought him back from the cistern of Sirah without David knowing about it. ²⁷When Abner had come back to Hebron, Joab took him aside to the middle of the gateway as if to talk to him privately, and there he stabbed him in the belly. So he died for killing Joab's brother Asahel.

²⁸Later when David heard about it, he said: "I and my kingdom are forever innocent before the LORD of the murder of Abner, Ner's son. ²⁹May the blame fall on the head of Joab and all of his family. May there always be in Joab's family people who are sick and diseased, and people who can only work a spindle, and people who die by the sword or beg bread!" ³⁰Joab and his brother Abishai killed

Abner because in the battle at Gibeon he killed their brother Asahel.

³¹"Tear your clothes," David told Joab and all the people with him, "fasten your sackcloth with a belt and mourn out loud before Abner." King David followed the open casket. ³²They buried Abner in Hebron. The king wept out loud at Abner's grave, and all the people wept. ³³And the king sang a funeral song for Abner:

Should Abner die like a fool?

³⁴Your hands were not tied,
nor were your feet in chains.

You fell as one falls when struck
by violent men.

And all the people continued to weep over him.

³⁵Then all the people tried to get David to eat some food while there was still daylight. But David pledged with an oath: "May God punish me severely if I taste any bread or anything else before the sun goes down." ³⁶Then all the people understood and approved of this, just as all the people approved of everything the king did. ³⁷That day all the people of all Israel knew the king wasn't behind the killing of Abner, Ner's son. ³⁸The king said to his men, "Don't you know that today a prince and a great man has fallen in Israel? ³⁹And now I'm weak, though I'm the anointed king. These men, Zeruiah's sons, are too cruel for me. May the LORD repay him who did this wicked thing, as he deserves."

Ish-bosheth Is Killed

4 When Saul's son heard that Abner had died in Hebron, he lost courage, and all Israel was alarmed. ²Saul's son had two men who were the captains of raiding bands. The name of the one was

Baanah, and the name of the other was Rechab. They were men of Benjamin, the sons of Rimmon from Beeroth. Now Beeroth was considered a part of Benjamin; but the people of Beeroth had fled to Gittaim, and they continue to live there until this day.

Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son with crippled feet. When he was 5 years old, the news of Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel, and his nurse took him and fled. She was in a hurry to get away. So he fell and became lame. His name was Mephibosheth.

Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon from Beeroth, came at the hottest time of the day to the home of Ish-bosheth while he was getting his midday rest. They came into the house as though they were going to get wheat and stabbed him in the belly.^b Rechab and his brother Baanah had slipped in and had come into the house while Ish-bosheth was sleeping on his bed in his bedroom, where they struck him and killed him and cut off his head. They took his head and walked all night along the road in the Jordan valley.

They brought Ish-bosheth's head to David at Hebron. "Here is the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, your enemy," they told the king. "He tried to take your life. Today the LORD has given my lord the king vengeance on Saul and his descendants."

David answered Rechab and his brother Baanah, the sons of Rimmon from Beeroth: "As the LORD lives, who has saved me from every trouble. When a man told me, 'Saul

has died,' and he thought he was bringing good news, I took him and killed him in Ziklag—to give him a reward for his news. 'How much more when wicked men kill an innocent man in his home, on his own bed! Must I not, then, punish you for his murder and rid the land of you?' "So David gave his order to the young men, and they killed them, cut off their hands and feet, and hanged them by the pool in Hebron. But they took Ish-bosheth's head and buried it in Abner's grave in Hebron.

David Becomes King of Israel

5 Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron. "We are your flesh and blood," they said. "Even in the past when Saul was our king, you led Israel in campaigns and brought them home again. The LORD has told you, 'You shall be shepherd of My people Israel and you shall be leader of Israel.'" King David made a covenant before the LORD at Hebron with all the elders of Israel, who had come to the king at Hebron. And they anointed David king of Israel. David was 30 years old when he started to rule and was king for 40 years. He was king of Judah in Hebron for 7 years and 6 months; then he was king for 33 years in Jerusalem over all Israel and Judah.

Jerusalem Captured and Enlarged

Then the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, who lived in the country. They told David, "You will not get in here

^bGk adds *The woman who watched the door had been sifting wheat, and she had grown drowsy and had fallen asleep.*

unless you drive away the blind and the lame," meaning that David could never get in there. ⁷But David conquered the fortress of Zion, that is, the city of David. ⁸That day David said, "Anyone who wants to defeat the Jebusites must reach the lame and the blind despised by me by using the water shaft."^c So there is a saying: "The blind and the lame! He will not get into the house." ⁹David lived in the fortress and called it the city of David. And David built it up all around from the Millo^d and inward. ¹⁰David grew more and more powerful, the LORD, the God of armies, being with him.

¹¹Then Hiram, king of Tyre, sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, carpenters, stonecutters for walls, and they built a palace for David. ¹²So David realized the LORD had established him as king of Israel and exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people Israel.

¹³David took more concubines and wives at Jerusalem after he had come there from Hebron, and more sons and daughters were born to David. "These are the names of the children he had in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon. ¹⁴Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, ¹⁵Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

Philistines Defeated

¹"When the Philistines heard David had been anointed king of Israel, they all came up to search for David. David heard about it and went down to the fortress. ²The Philistines had come and overran the valley of Rephaim.

³"David asked the LORD, "Should I go up against the Philistines? Will You put them in my hands?"

"Go up," the LORD told David, "because I will certainly put the Philistines in your hands."

⁴David came to Baal-perazim, and David defeated them there. "The LORD has broken my enemies before me," he said, "like a flood breaking through." That is why that place is called Baal-perazim.^e ⁵They left their idols there, and David and his men took them away.

⁶The Philistines again came up and overran the valley of Rephaim. ⁷When David asked the LORD, He said, "Don't go up now but go around behind them and come at them from opposite the balsam trees. ⁸When you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, act quickly because the LORD is leading you to defeat the army of the Philistines." ⁹David did as the LORD ordered him, and he defeated the Philistines from Gibeon^f as far as Gezer.

David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem

6 David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, 30,000 men. ²David and all the people with him started out from Baalah of Judah and went to bring up from there God's ark that bore the name of the LORD of armies who sits enthroned over the cherubim. ³They put God's ark on a new wagon and took it from Abinadab's home on the hill. ⁴And they carried it from Abinadab's home on the hill; Uzzah and Ahio, Abinadab's sons, were

^cOr must reach them by using the grappling iron

^dPart of the city filled in to level the ground

^e"Master-of-the-Breakthrough" ^fGk: cf 1 Chron 14:16; Heb: Geba

driving the new wagon with God's ark; Ahio was walking ahead of the ark. ⁵David and all Israel were celebrating before the LORD with all kinds of wooden instruments and with lyres, lutes, tambourines, castanets, and cymbals.

⁶But when they came to the threshing-floor of Nacon, Uzzah, reached for God's ark and held it, because the oxen stumbled. ⁷The LORD got very angry with Uzzah and God struck him down there for his fault. So he died beside the sacred ark.

⁸David felt angry because the LORD had attacked Uzzah. That place is still called Attack-of-Uzzah today. ⁹That day David was afraid of the LORD. "How can the LORD's ark come to me?" he asked. ¹⁰And so David didn't want to bring the LORD's ark with him to the city of David but took it aside to the home of Obed-edom, who was from Gath. ¹¹The ark stayed at the home of Obed-edom from Gath for three months, and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and his whole family.

¹²King David was told, "The LORD has blessed Obed-edom's home, and everything he has on account of God's ark." Then David went to bring up the sacred ark with joy from Obed-edom's home to the city of David. ¹³When those who carried the LORD's ark had gone six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. ¹⁴And David danced before the LORD with all his might, wearing a linen priestly apron fastened by a belt. ¹⁵So David and all Israel brought up the LORD's ark with shouts of joy and the blowing of horns.

¹⁶When the LORD's ark came to the city of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, was looking out of a

window, and she saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD and felt contempt for him. ¹⁷They brought the LORD's ark and set it in its place inside the tent David had put up for it, and David sacrificed burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. ¹⁸When David finished offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of armies. ¹⁹He also distributed to all the people, to the whole crowd of Israelites, to each man and woman, one loaf of bread, a piece of meat, one cake of raisins; and then all the people went home.

²⁰When David returned to bless his family, Michal, Saul's daughter, came out to meet David. "What honor did Israel's king get himself today," she asked, "exposing himself today before the eyes of his servants' maids as only one of the vulgar fellows would strip himself?"

²¹"I danced before the LORD," David answered Michal. "He chose me rather than your father and all his family, and He appointed me leader of Israel, the LORD's people. I will celebrate before the LORD, ²²and I will abase myself even more than this. And even if I am considered low in your eyes, the slave girls of whom you speak will hold me in honor."

²³Michal, Saul's daughter, had no child till the day she died.

The Lord's Promise to David

7 After the LORD gave the king rest from fighting his enemies all around him and he was settled at home, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, "Look, I'm living in a cedar palace, while God's ark is lodged within the curtains of a tent."

“Go.” Nathan told the king, “do everything you have in mind, because the LORD is with you.”

“But that night the LORD spoke to Nathan. “Go.” He said, “tell My servant David, the LORD says this: ‘Should you build Me a temple to live in? ‘I haven’t lived in a temple from the day I took Israel out of Egypt till now, but I moved from place to place in a tent or a tabernacle. ‘In any of the places where I moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to anyone of the judges⁸ of Israel whom I ordered to shepherd My people Israel: Why haven’t you built Me a cedar temple?’ “But now, say this to My servant David: ‘The LORD of armies says this: I took you from the pasture where you followed the sheep that you should be a leader in charge of My people Israel. “I was with you wherever you went and destroyed all your enemies before you, and I will make your name as great as the name of the greatest men on earth. “I will make a place for My people Israel and plant them so they will live in their own place and not be troubled anymore. The wicked will no more oppress them as they used to do “from the time I appointed judges over My people Israel. But I will give you rest from fighting all your enemies. The LORD also tells you He will build a house for you. “When your time is up, and you lie down with your ancestors, I will give you a Descendant who will come from you, and I will establish His kingdom. “He will build a temple for My name, and I

will make the throne of His kingdom stand forever. “I will be His Father, and He will be My Son. If He sins, I will punish Him with the rod of men and with blows inflicted by men. “But I will not stop being kind to Him as I did to Saul whom I put out of your way. “Your royal house will stand firm before Me⁹ forever, and your throne will stand firm forever.’” “Nathan told David everything he heard and saw.

David’s Response

“King David went in and sat down before the LORD. “Who am I, Lord GOD,” he asked, “and who is my family that You have brought me as far as this? “And even this isn’t enough for You, Lord GOD, and You have gone on to talk about Your servant’s descendants in the distant future, and this is what you teach me about the Man,¹ Lord GOD. “What then can David still tell You, since You know Your servant, Lord GOD? “Because of Your promise and according to Your will, You will do this great thing, and so You tell Your servant about it. “That is why You, Lord GOD, are great. There is no one like You, and there is no other god beside You according to all that we ourselves have heard. And who is like Your people Israel? “Is there another nation on earth whom God came to redeem to make them His people, to make them famous,¹ and to do for them great and awful things? You have driven out from before Your people, whom You redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, the nations and their gods. “And You established Your

⁸Heb tribes ^hGk; Heb before you

¹Heb literally this is the law of the man

¹Gk to make Yourself a name. Cf. 1 Chron 17:21

7
8 2 Co 6:18
12 Jn 7:42
13 Lk 1:32-33
14 2 Co 5:18;
Heb 1:5;
Rv 21:7
16 Lk 1:32-33

people Israel to be Your people forever, and You, LORD, became their God. ²³And now, LORD God, forever keep the promise You made in regard to Your servant and his descendants, and do just as You promised. ²⁴Your name will be great forever when people say, 'The LORD of armies is the God of Israel': and the descendants of Your servant David will stand firm before You ²⁵because You, LORD of armies, the God of Israel, have revealed it to Your servant by saying, 'I will build your family.' And so Your servant has found the courage to pray this prayer to You. ²⁶And now, my Lord GOD, You are God, You tell the truth, and You promised Your servant this good thing. ²⁷Now then, please bless Your servant's family that they may be forever before You, because You, Lord GOD, have promised it, and with Your blessing Your servant's family will be blessed forever."

David's Wars

8 After this David defeated the Philistines and made them his subjects and took from them the control of their capital city, Gath.^k

²He defeated Moab, made the Moabites lie down on the ground, and measured them with a line. He measured two lines of them to be killed, and one whole line to be kept alive. The Moabites became David's subjects and brought tribute.

³When David went to set up his monument by the Euphrates, he also defeated Hadadezer, Rehob's son, king of Zobah. ⁴David took from him 1,700 horsemen and 20,000 footmen,

and David cut the leg tendons of all the chariot horses, leaving only 100 of them. ⁵When the Aramaeans of Damascus came to help Hadadezer, king of Zobah, David struck down 22,000 Aramaeans. ⁶David put garrisons among the Aramaeans around Damascus, and they became subject to him and brought tribute. The LORD gave victory to David everywhere he went. ⁷David took the golden shields carried by Hadadezer's servants and brought them to Jerusalem. ⁸And from Bethah and Berothah, Hadadezer's cities, King David took a large quantity of bronze.

⁹When Tou, king of Hamath, heard David had defeated Hadadezer's whole army, ¹⁰he sent his son Joram to King David to greet him and congratulate him for fighting and defeating Hadadezer, since there had often been war between Hadadezer and Tou, and Joram brought with him articles of gold, silver, and bronze. ¹¹King David gave these as a holy possession to the LORD, together with the silver and gold from all the people he conquered: ¹²Edom, Moab, Ammon, the Philistines, Amalek, and some of the spoil from Hadadezer, Rehob's son and king of Zobah. ¹³David made a name for himself, on his return, by striking down 18,000 men of Edom in the Valley of Salt. ¹⁴He put garrisons everywhere in Edom, and all the Edomites were subject to David. So the LORD gave David victory everywhere he went.

¹⁵David ruled all Israel, judging all of his people fairly and acting righteously toward them. ¹⁶Joab,

^kHeb literally the bridle of the mother (city): 1 Chron 18:1 says Gath and her villages

Zeruiah's son, was in charge of the army. Jehoshaphat, Ahilud's son, was recorder. "Zadok, Ahitub's son, and Ahimelech, Abiathar's son,¹ were priests, and Seraiah was secretary. "Benaiah, Jehoiada's son, was commander of the Cherethites and the Pelethites. And David's sons were priests.

Mephibosheth to Eat at David's Table

9 "Is there still anyone left of Saul's family," David asked, "to whom I can be kind for Jonathan's sake?"

"Saul's family had a servant whose name was Ziba. He was called to come to David. "Are you Ziba?" The king asked him.

"Your servant!" he answered.

"Isn't there still someone of Saul's family," David asked, "to whom I can bring God's kindness?"

"Jonathan has a son with crippled feet," Ziba answered the king.

"Where is he?" The king asked him.

"He is at the home of Machir, Ammiel's son, at Lo-debar," Ziba answered the king.

"King David sent men to get him from the home of Machir, Ammiel's son, at Lo-debar. "When Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan and grandson of Saul, came to David, he bowed down to the ground to show his respect.

"Mephibosheth!" David said to him.

"I am your servant!" he answered.

"Don't be afraid," David told him. "I will certainly be kind to you

for your father Jonathan's sake. I will give back to you all the land of your grandfather Saul, and you will always eat at my table."

"What is your servant," he answered bowing down respectfully, "that you look at such a dead dog as I am?"

"The king called for Ziba, Saul's servant, and told him, "I give your master's grandson everything that belonged to Saul and his family. "Work the land for him, you, your sons, and your servants, and bring in the products so your master's family will have food to eat, but Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, will always eat at my table." Ziba had 15 sons and 20 servants.

"Your servant," Ziba answered the king, "will do everything just as my master, the king, orders. "Then Mephibosheth ate at David's table as one of the king's sons.

"Mephibosheth had a little boy whose name was Micah. And all who lived at Ziba's home became Mephibosheth's servants. "So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem since he ate always at the king's table. Both of his feet were lame.

War with the Ammonites

10 Now after this, the king of Ammon died, and his son Hanun became king in his place. "So David thought, "I will be kind to Hanun, the son of Nahash, as his father was kind to me." David sent his men to comfort him in regard to his father. When David's men came to the country of the Ammonites, "the leaders of Ammon asked Hanun, their master: "Do you think David

¹1 Sam 22:20 says Abiathar was the son of Ahimelech, and 2 Sam 20:25 says Zadok and Abiathar were the priests. The word "son" seems to have become misplaced in the text.

means to honor your father just because he sent men to comfort you? Hasn't David sent his men to you to search the city, explore it as spies, and overthrow it?" "Then Hanun took David's men, shaved off half of their beards, cut away half of their garments up to their buttocks, and sent them away.

³When David heard the news, he sent men to meet them because those men felt deeply ashamed. "Stay in Jericho," the king told them, "until your beards have grown, and then come back."

⁴When the Ammonites saw they had made themselves odious to David, they sent men to hire the Aramaeans of Beth-rehob and the Aramaeans of Zobah, 20,000 foot soldiers, the king of Maacah with 1,000 men, and 12,000 men of Tob. ⁵When David heard about it, he sent Joab and the whole army and the special forces. ⁶The Ammonites went out and took battle positions at the entrance of the gate, while the Aramaeans of Zobah and of Rehob and the men of Tob and Maacah were by themselves in the open country.

⁷When Joab saw he was threatened with attack in front and behind, he took select troops from all the men of Israel and got them ready to meet the Aramaeans. ⁸He put his brother Abishai in charge of the rest of the troops who got them ready to meet the Ammonites. ⁹"If the Aramaeans are too strong for me," he said, "be ready to help me. But if the Ammonites are too strong for you, I'll come to help you. ¹⁰Be bold and let us prove ourselves strong for our people and for the cities of our God, and the LORD will do what to Him is right."

¹¹Then Joab and his troops

advanced to fight the Aramaeans, and they fled from him. When the Ammonites saw the Aramaeans had fled, ¹²they also fled from Abishai and went into the city. Then Joab withdrew from the Ammonites and returned to Jerusalem.

¹³The Aramaeans saw Israel had defeated them, and they rallied their forces. ¹⁴Hadadezer sent and got Aramaeans from beyond the Euphrates, and they came to Helam, with Shobach, the captain of Hadadezer's army, leading them.

¹⁵When David heard the news, he gathered all Israel, crossed the Jordan, and came to Helam where the Aramaeans got ready to meet David in battle, and they fought with him. ¹⁶The Aramaeans fled from Israel, and David killed 700 chariot drivers and 40,000 horsemen, and he struck down Shobach, the captain of their army, so that he died there.

¹⁷When all the kings who were subject to Hadadezer saw Israel had defeated them, they made peace with Israel and became subject to them. Then the Aramaeans were afraid to help the Ammonites anymore.

David Sins

11 In the spring, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab with his officers and all Israel, and they ravaged the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed in Jerusalem.

²Late one afternoon the king got up from his bed for a walk on the roof of the royal palace, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful. ³David sent someone to ask about the woman and was told, "This is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and wife of Uriah the Hittite." ⁴Then

David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he lay with her (she had just cleansed herself from her uncleanness). Then she went back home. ³The woman conceived, and she sent someone to tell David. "I am pregnant."

⁴David sent a messenger to Joab: "Send me Uriah the Hittite." Joab sent Uriah to David. ⁵When Uriah came to him, David asked him how Joab and the troops were and how the war was going.

⁶"Go down to your home," David told Uriah, "and wash your feet and relax." Uriah left the king's palace, and a present of food from the king followed him. ⁷But Uriah slept at the entrance of the royal palace with his master's men and didn't go down to his home. ⁸David was told, "Uriah didn't go home."

So David asked Uriah, "Didn't you come in from traveling? Why didn't you go home?"

⁹Uriah answered David, "The Lord's ark as well as the men of Israel and Judah are under tents, and my master Joab and my lord's men are camping in the field; should I, then, go home to eat and drink and lie with my wife? As sure as you're living, I will not do that!"

¹⁰"Stay here today also," David told Uriah, "and tomorrow I'll send you away." So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day. The next day ¹¹David called him, and he ate and drank with David, who made him drunk. But in the evening he went out to lie down on his bed with his master's men and still didn't go down to his home.

¹²In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and had Uriah take it

with him. ¹³In the letter he wrote: "Put Uriah out in front where the fighting is fiercest; then withdraw from him so that he'll be struck down and die."

¹⁴And so Joab, planning the siege of the city, put Uriah at a place where he knew they were facing the boldest warriors. ¹⁵The men of the city came out and fought with Joab, and some of the troops—some of David's men—fell and died, including Uriah the Hittite. ¹⁶Then Joab sent David a complete report of the battle. ¹⁷"When you finish telling the king all about the battle," he instructed the messenger, ¹⁸"and the king should happen to get angry and ask you, 'Why did you go near the city to fight? Didn't you know they would shoot from the wall?' ¹⁹Who killed Abimelech, Jerubbaal's son? ²⁰Didn't a woman from the wall throw an upper millstone on him, and so he died in Thebez? Why did you go near the wall?" then say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite also is dead.'"

²¹The messenger left and came and told David everything Joab sent him to tell. And David was angry with Joab. "Why did you go near the city to fight? Didn't you know you would be shot at from off the wall? Who killed Abimelech, Jerubbaal's son? Didn't a woman throw a millstone on him from the wall? Why did you go near the wall?" ²²"Their men, showing superior strength," the messenger said, "came out against us in the field; then we drove them back to the entrance of the gate. ²³The archers shot down from the wall at your men, and some of the king's men

^mGk: Heb Jerubbesheth. Cf. 2:8; footnote

ⁿAnd David . . . go near the wall? fr. Gk: omitted in Heb

died, and your man Uriah the Hittite also is dead."

³David said to the messenger: "Tell Joab this: 'Don't let this trouble you, because the sword devours one as well as another. Intensify your attack of the city and destroy it.' And encourage him."

⁴When Uriah's wife heard her husband Uriah was dead, she mourned for her husband. ⁵When the mourning was over, David sent for her and took her to his home, and she became his wife; and they had a son. But what David did was wrong before the LORD.

"You Are the Man!"

12 And the Lord sent Nathan to David. Nathan came to him and said, "There were two men in a city. One was rich and the other was poor. ²The rich man had many sheep and cows, ³but the poor man had only one little female lamb he had bought and raised. It grew up with him and his children. It used to eat what little food he had and drink from his cup. It rested in his arms and was like a daughter to him.

⁴"A man came to visit the rich man, and he didn't like to take any of his own sheep or cattle to prepare food for the traveler who had come to him. So he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him."

⁵David got very angry at the man. "As the LORD lives," he told Nathan, "the man who did this must die! ⁶And he must pay back four times the price of the lamb because he did this and had no pity."

⁷"You are the man!" Nathan told David. "The LORD, the God of Israel, says this: 'I anointed you king

of Israel and rescued you from Saul. ⁸I gave you your master's family and put your master's wives into your arms. I gave you the people of Israel and Judah. And if that isn't enough, I would give you more like that. ⁹Why did you despise what the LORD says and do what is wrong before Him? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your wife. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. ¹⁰And now the sword will not leave your family because you despised Me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' ¹¹The LORD says this: 'I will stir up evil against you in your own family, and before your own eyes I will take your wives and give them to your neighbor, who will openly lie with your wives. ¹²You did this secretly, but I will do this in broad daylight before all Israel.'"

¹³"I have sinned against the LORD," David said to Nathan.

"The LORD also has put away your sin," Nathan answered David. "You will not die. ¹⁴But since you have made the LORD's enemies contemptuous^a by this affair, the son you have must die." ¹⁵Then Nathan went home.

Then the LORD struck the child Uriah's wife had given David, and it got sick. ¹⁶David pleaded with the LORD for the child, and David fasted and would go in and lie on the floor all night. ¹⁷The elders of his palace came and stood beside him to raise him from the ground, but he refused and also wouldn't eat with them.

¹⁸On the seventh day the child died. But David's servants were afraid to tell him the child was dead.

^aThe phrase is a euphemism. It means David held the LORD in contempt.

because they thought: "While the child was alive, we talked to him, and he wouldn't listen to us. How can we tell him the child is dead—he may do something desperate."

¹⁹But when David saw his servants whispering to one another, he realized the child was dead. "Is the child dead?" he asked his servants.

"It is dead," they answered.

²⁰David got up from the floor, bathed, anointed himself, changed his clothes, and went into the LORD's house to worship. Then he went home. At his request they served him some food, and he ate.

²¹"Explain to us what you did," his servants said to him: "You fasted and wept for the child when it was alive, but as soon as the child died, you got up and ate."

²²"As long as the child was alive," he said, "I fasted and wept, because I thought: 'Who can tell? The LORD may be kind to me and let the child live.'"²³But now that he's dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back? I will go to him, but he will not come back to me."

²⁴David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and he came to her and lay with her. She gave birth to a son, whom he called Solomon. The LORD loved him²⁵ and sent a message by the prophet Nathan that he should be called "the LORD's loved one" for the LORD's sake.^P

Rabbah Captured

²⁶Joab fought against Rabbah, the Ammonite city, and took the king's section of the city.²⁷So Joab sent messengers to David. "I fought against Rabbah," he said. "I also took the water supply of the city.

²⁸And now gather the rest of the army, and besiege the city and take it; otherwise I will take the city, and it will be named after me."²⁹David gathered the whole army, came to Rabbah, fought against it, and conquered it.³⁰He took the crown from the head of Milcom⁹—it weighed a talent of gold and had a precious stone in it—and it was fitted for David's head. He also took away from the city a great quantity of spoil.³¹He brought away the people who were there and put them to work with saws, iron harrows, and iron axes, and he made them work with brick moulds. He did the same with all the Ammonite towns. Then David and all the people went back to Jerusalem.

Amnon and Tamar

13 Later the following happened. Absalom, David's son, had a beautiful sister. Her name was Tamar. And Amnon, David's son, fell in love with her.²Amnon felt so anxious about his half-sister Tamar he got sick, because she was a virgin and he found it impossible to make love to her.

³But Amnon had a friend by the name of Jonadab, a son of Shimea, David's brother. Jonadab was a very smart man.⁴"Why are you, the king's son, so haggard morning after morning?" he asked him. "Won't you tell me?"

"I'm in love with Tamar, Absalom's sister," he answered.

"Lie down on your bed," Jonadab told him. "Act sick, and when your father comes to see you, tell him, 'Please let my sister Tamar come and feed me and prepare food

^PGk has according to the word of the LORD ⁹Ammonite idol

before me so that I can watch her and eat from her hand.' "

"Amnon lay down and acted sick, and the king came to see him. "Please let my sister Tamar come," Amnon asked the king, "and make some bread before me and let me eat from her hand."

"David sent for Tamar at the palace. "Please go to the home of your brother Amnon," he said, "and prepare food for him." "So Tamar went to her brother Amnon's home. He was lying down. She took the dough, kneaded it, made flat loaves while he was watching her, and baked the loaves. "Then she took the pan and emptied it out before him; but he refused to eat. "Have everybody leave me," he said. And everybody left him.

"Bring the food into the bedroom," Amnon told Tamar, "so I can eat from your hand."

Tamar took the loaves she had prepared and brought them into the bedroom to her brother Amnon. "When she brought them to him to eat, he took hold of her. "Come," he told her, "lie with me, my sister."

"No, my brother," she told him, "don't rape me; that shouldn't be done in Israel. Don't do such an ungodly thing! "Where could I go with my disgrace? And you will be like one of the vulgar fools in Israel! Now talk to the king. He will not keep me from marrying you."

"But he refused to listen to her, overpowered her, forced her down, and raped her.

"Now Amnon felt a very great dislike for her; his hatred for her was greater than the love he had felt

for her. "Get up and go," he told her.

"No," she told him, "this is a greater wrong than the other thing you did to me—this sending me away!" But he refused to listen to her.

"Then he called his servant who waited on him. "Get rid of her," he said, "put her out and bolt the door behind her." "(She wore a garment with long sleeves. That was the kind of robes the king's daughters wore if they were virgins.) So his servant took her out and bolted the door behind her. "Tamar put ashes on her head, tore the long-sleeved garment she had on, laid her hand on her head, and went away, crying as she went.

"Has your brother Amnon been with you?" her brother Absalom asked her. "Now, my sister, be quiet. He's your brother. Don't take this to heart." So Tamar stayed there, a despondent woman, at the home of her brother Absalom.

"When king David heard about all this, he got very angry." "Absalom wouldn't speak a word to Amnon, because Absalom hated him for raping his sister Tamar.

Absalom Kills Amnon

"After two full years Absalom had men shearing sheep at Baalhazor, which is near Ephraim, and Absalom invited all the king's sons. "Absalom went to the king. "I, your servant, have men shearing sheep," he said. "Do you and your men desire to go with your servant?"

"No, my son," the king answered Absalom. "Let us not all go, or we'll

^fGk adds But he didn't hurt his son Amnon because he loved him and he was his firstborn.

be a burden to you." Even when he continued to urge him, David refused to go, but he gave him his blessing.

²⁶"If you don't go," Absalom said, "then please let my brother Amnon go with us."

"Why should he go with you?" the king asked him. ²⁷But when Absalom urged him, he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him.

²⁸Then Absalom gave an order to his young men. "Watch now," he said. "When the wine makes Amnon feel good, I'll tell you. 'Strike Amnon.' Then kill him. Don't be afraid. I've given you the order, haven't I? Be strong and bold."

²⁹Absalom's servants did to Amnon as Absalom had ordered. Then all the king's sons got up and fled, each one riding his mule. ³⁰While they were on their way, the news reached David: "Absalom has murdered all the king's sons, and not a single one is left." ³¹The king got up and tore his clothes and lay down on the ground, and all his servants also stood there with their clothes torn.

³²Then Jonadab the son of Shimeah, David's brother, spoke up. "My lord should not think," he said, "that all the young men, the king's sons, have been killed; only Amnon is dead. Absalom decided to do this the day his brother raped his sister Tamar. ³³Now then, my lord the king shouldn't burden his heart with the idea that all the king's sons are dead, because only Amnon is dead. ³⁴and Absalom has fled."

When the young man who kept watch looked up, he saw many people coming on the road from

Horonaim. And he came to the king and said, "I have seen men on the mountainside along the Horonaim road."⁹ ³⁵"The king's sons have come," Jonadab told the king. "It is just as your servant said." ³⁶When he finished talking, the king's sons came and wept loud. The king too and all his men wept very bitterly.

³⁷Absalom fled and went to Talmai, Ammihud's son, king of Geshur. And the king mourned for his son Amnon every day. ³⁸When Absalom fled and came to Geshur, he stayed there three years. ³⁹The king began to long for Absalom once he had been comforted in regard to Amnon's death.

Absalom Is Pardoned

14 Joab, Zeruiah's son, knew the king's mind was on Absalom. ²So Joab sent someone to Tekoa to get a wise woman from there. "Please act like a mourner," he told her "and dress in mourning clothes. Don't anoint yourself with oil, but act like a woman who for a long while has been mourning over a dead person. ³Go to the king and tell him this." Then Joab told her what to say.

⁴The woman of Tekoa went in to the king, bowed down to the ground to show her respect for him. "Help, O king," she said.

⁵"What is your trouble?" the king asked her.

She answered, "I'm a widow; my husband is dead. ⁶Your maid-servant had two sons who quarreled in the field, and there was nobody to separate them. The one struck the other and killed him. ⁷Then all the relatives rose against me. 'Give us

⁹Gk: Heb omits this sentence and reads on the road behind him on the mountainside

the one who killed his brother,' they said, 'so we can kill him because he took his brother's life, and we'll not let him be the heir.' So they will put out my burning coal that is left and not let my husband have a name or anyone after him on the earth."

"Go home," the king told the woman, "and I will give orders in your behalf."

"My lord the king," the woman from Tekoa said to the king, "let me and my father's family be responsible for the wrong, and the king and his throne be free of it."

"If anyone says anything against you," the king said, "bring him to me, and he'll never harm you again."

"May the king pray to the LORD your God," she said, "in order to keep the avenger of blood from doing great harm and destroying my son."

"As the LORD lives," he said, "not a hair of your son will fall to the ground."

"Please," the woman said, "let me say something else to my lord the king."

"Speak," he said.

"When the king is saying this, he is condemning himself," she said. "Why have you devised such a thing against God's people that the king doesn't bring back the one he banished? We all die and are poured on the ground like water that can't be gathered again. But does not God spare life? He never plans to keep the one who is banished in exile. And now I've come to say this to my lord the king because the people frightened me. So your maidservant thought, 'I will talk to the king. Perhaps the king will do something for me.' The king will listen and rescue his maidservant from the

man who wants to cut me and my son off from God's heritage.' Your maidservant thought that my lord the king would reassure me, since my lord the king is like God's angel in his understanding of right and wrong. The LORD your God be with you!"

"Please don't hide from me anything I ask you," the king told the woman.

"My lord the king will please speak," the woman answered.

"Isn't Joab behind you in all this?" the king asked.

"By your life, my lord the king," the woman answered, "no one can get away, right or left, from anything my lord the king says. Yes, your servant Joab ordered me and told your maidservant to say everything I said. Your servant Joab has done this to give this affair a different direction. And my lord is as wise as God's angel so that he knows everything on earth."

"Well then," the king told Joab, "I will do this. You may go and bring back the young man Absalom."

Then Joab bowed with his face on the ground, showing his respect, and he blessed the king. "Today your servant knows," he said, "that my lord the king is kind to me because the king has done what his servant wanted."

Joab got up. He went to Geshur and brought Absalom back to Jerusalem. "He should go to his own home," the king said, "and not see me." So Absalom went to his home and didn't see the king.

Now in all Israel there was no one so much to be praised for his beauty as Absalom. There was no blemish on him from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. At the end of every year he used to cut

his hair because it felt heavy on him. When he cut off the hair of his head and weighed it, it weighed almost 200 shekels according to the royal weight. ²⁷Absalom had three sons and one daughter whose name was Tamar. She was a beautiful woman.

²⁸Absalom stayed two full years in Jerusalem without seeing the king. ²⁹So Absalom sent for Joab to send him to the king, but Joab refused to come to him. He sent for him again, and he refused to come. ³⁰So he told his servants: "See, Joab's field is near mine, and he has barley on it. Go and set it on fire." So Absalom's servants set it on fire.

³¹Then Joab went to Absalom at his home. "Why did your servants set my field on fire?" he asked.

³²"I sent someone to you." Absalom answered Joab, "to tell you to come here because I wanted to send you to the king to ask him, 'Why did I come from Geshur? It would be better for me if I were still there. Let me see the face of the king now! If I'm guilty of anything, you should kill me.'"

³³Then Joab went to the king and told him. He called for Absalom. He came to the king and bowed down with his face on the ground before the king, and the king kissed Absalom.

Absalom Rebels

15 Soon after this, Absalom provided himself with a chariot and horses and 50 men to run ahead of him. ²Absalom used to get up early and stand by the road leading to the gate. When any man had a case to be tried before the king, Absalom would ask him, "Which town are you from?"

"Your servant is from such and

such a tribe in Israel." would be the answer.

³"See," Absalom would say to him, "your claims are good and right, but the king hasn't appointed anyone to hear you." "I wish," Absalom would say, "someone would make me judge in the land. Then anyone who had a case to be tried would come to me, and I would give him justice." ⁴When anyone came near to bow down to him, he would reach out, take hold of him, and kiss him. ⁵This is what Absalom did to all Israelites who came to the king to have him try their case. And so he stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

⁶At the end of 4 years Absalom said to the king, "Let me go to Hebron and pay my vow I made to the LORD. ⁷Your servant made a vow while he was living at Geshur in Araw: 'If the LORD will bring me back to Jerusalem,' I said, 'I will serve the LORD at Hebron.'"

⁸"Go in peace," the king told him.

So he left and went to Hebron. ⁹But secretly Absalom sent messengers to all the tribes of Israel, saying: "When you hear the sound of the horn, say, 'Absalom is now king in Hebron.'"

¹⁰Two hundred men from Jerusalem, who had been invited, went with Absalom. They went innocently, without knowing anything. ¹¹While Absalom was offering sacrifices, he sent for Ahithophel, David's adviser who was from Giloh, to come from his town, Giloh. Meanwhile the conspiracy grew stronger, and the number of people with Absalom kept getting larger.

¹²Someone came to tell David: "The hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom."

¹³"Up and let's flee," David told all his men who were with him in

Jerusalem, "otherwise we'll not escape from Absalom. Hurry and get away, or he'll catch up with us and bring disaster on us when he puts the city to the sword."

¹⁵"We are your servants," the king's men told the king, "ready for anything my lord the king decides."

¹⁶The king left on foot and his whole family went with him except 10 concubines whom the king left behind to take care of the palace. ¹⁷As the king went out on foot, all the people went with him, and they stopped at the last house. ¹⁸All his men passed by him; all the Cherethites, all the Pelethites, Ittai and all the Gittites—600 men who had followed him from Gath—were marching by the king.

¹⁹The king asked Ittai from Gath: "Why should you go with us? Go back and stay with the king since you are a foreigner and an exile from your homeland. ²⁰You came to us only yesterday, and should I today make you wander around with me when I don't know where I'm going? Go back, take the men from your country with you, and may the LORD show you kindness and faithfulness."

²¹"As the LORD lives, and by the life of my lord the king, no!" Ittai answered the king. "Wherever my lord the king is, either in death or life, your servant will be there."

²²"Come along," David told Ittai. So Ittai from Gath went ahead with all his men and all his family who were with him.

²³The whole country was weeping out loud as all the people were moving forward, and the king was crossing the Kidron valley, and all the people were moving along on the road to the wilderness. ²⁴There was also Zadok, and all the Levites

were with him, carrying the ark of the covenant of God. They set down God's ark beside Abiathar till all the people had completely left the city.

²⁵"Take God's ark back to the city," the king told Zadok. "If the LORD will be kind to me, He will let me come back and see both it and His dwelling place again. ²⁶But if He says, 'I don't delight in you,' I'm ready. He may do to me what He thinks is right."

²⁷"Do you see?" the king asked Zadok the priest. "Go back to the city peacefully, and take with you both your son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan. ²⁸Now look, I'll wait at the fords of the wilderness till I get news from you." ²⁹So Zadok and Abiathar took God's ark back to Jerusalem and stayed there.

³⁰David was going up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went up, with his head covered and walking barefoot. And everyone of the people with him covered his head, and they wept as they went up.

³¹Then someone told David, "Ahithophel is among those conspiring with Absalom." "LORD," David said, "Make Ahithophel's advice foolish."

³²When David came to the top, where people worshiped God, Hushai the Archite was there to meet him; his garment was torn and he had dirt on his head. ³³"If you go with me," David told him, "you will only be a burden to me. ³⁴But if you go back to the city and tell Absalom, 'King, I will be your servant. As I was your father's servant in the past, I will now be your servant,' then you will help me by defeating Ahithophel's advice. ³⁵The priests Zadok and Abiathar will be with you there, will they not?"

When you hear anything from the king's palace, tell it to the priests Zadok and Abiathar. "They have two sons with them: Zadok has Ahimaaz, and Abiathar has Jonathan. Send them to report to me anything you hear." "So Hushai, David's friend, went into the city just as Absalom was entering Jerusalem.

Ziba Seeks His Own Interests

16 When David had come a little over the top of the mount, Ziba, Mephibosheth's servant, met him with a couple of donkeys that were saddled and loaded with 200 loaves of bread, 100 clusters of raisins, 100 portions of summer fruit, and a skin of wine.

"Why did you bring these?" David asked Ziba.

"The donkeys are for the king's family to ride on," Ziba answered. "The bread and the summer fruits are for the young men to eat. The wine is for you to drink when you feel exhausted in the wilderness."

"Where is your master's grandson?" the king asked.

"He's staying in Jerusalem," Ziba answered the king. "He said, 'Today Israel will give my grandfather's kingdom back to me.'"

"Everything that belonged to Mephibosheth," the king told Ziba, "now belongs to you."

"I bow down to the ground," said Ziba. "May you continue to be kind to me, my lord the king."

Shimei Curses David

"When King David came to Bahurim, a man from the same tribe as Saul's family came out. His name was Shimei, son of Gera. He came

out cursing. "And he threw stones at David and King David's men, although all the people and all the warriors were to the right and left of him. "Cursing, Shimei said, "Get out, get out, you bloody man! You scoundrel! "The LORD pays you back for all the slaughter of the family of Saul whom you succeeded as king. The LORD is giving the kingdom to your son Absalom, and now you're in trouble because you're a bloody man."

"Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king?" Abishai, Zeruiah's son, asked the king. "Let me go over there and tear off his head."

"What has this to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah?" the king said. "Let him curse. If the LORD has told him, 'Curse David,' should anyone ask, 'Why do you do that?' " "Look at my own son," David told Abishai and all his men. "He has come from my body, and even he's trying to kill me. Why, then, shouldn't this Benjamite do this? Let him curse if the LORD has told him to do it. "Perhaps the LORD will look at my misery and turn his curse into a blessing today."

"As David and his men went along the road, Shimei was walking along a terrace of the hill parallel to him, and as he walked along, he was cursing and hurling stones at him on the other side and throwing dirt. "The king and all the people with him reached the Jordan¹ exhausted, and he rested there.

Hushai and Ahithophel with Absalom

"Absalom and all the people, the men of Israel, came into Jerusalem, and Ahithophel was with him.

¹Heb omits the Jordan

"Hushai the Archite, a friend of David, came to Absalom. "Long live the king!" Hushai said to Absalom. "Long live the king!"

¹⁷"Is that how kind you are to your friend?" Absalom asked Hushai. "Why didn't you go with your friend?"

¹⁸"No," Hushai answered Absalom. "I want to be with him whom the LORD, these people, and all Israel have chosen. And I intend to stay with him. ¹⁹And besides, whom should I serve? Shouldn't it be his son? As I was ready to serve your father, so I'm ready to serve you."

²⁰"What do you advise?" Absalom asked Ahithophel. "What should I do?"

²¹"Have sex relations with your father's concubines," Ahithophel told Absalom, "whom he left to take care of the palace. Then all Israel will hear how you have made your father despise you, and all who are with you will support you even more."

²²So a tent was put up on the roof for Absalom, and he had intercourse with his father's concubines in the sight of Israel.

²³In those days Ahithophel's advice was like getting an answer from God. That is what David as well as Absalom thought of Ahithophel's advice.

17 "Let me choose 12,000 men," Ahithophel told Absalom, "and start out tonight and pursue David. ¹I will attack him while he's tired and feels discouraged, and put him in panic. All the people who are with him will flee, and so I will kill only the king. ²I'll return all the

people to you as a bride returns to her husband. Since you seek the life of only one man,"⁴ all the people will have peace." ³Absalom and all the elders of Israel thought it was a good plan.

⁴"Please call also Hushai the Archite," Absalom said, "and let us also hear what he has to say."

⁵Hushai came to Absalom. "Ahithophel has spoken like this," Absalom said to him. "Should we do what he says? If not, tell us."

⁶"Ahithophel's advice is not good this time," Hushai told Absalom. ⁷"You know your father and his men," Hushai said. "They are warriors as fierce as a bear robbed of her young in the field. Your father is a soldier; he will not rest tonight with the people. ⁸He has already hidden in one of the pits or some other place. If it should be that some of the men fall in the beginning and anyone hears about it and says, 'The troops that follow Absalom have been defeated,' ⁹then even a bold man with a heart like a lion would lose his courage, because all Israel knows what a warrior your father is and what mighty men those are who follow him. ¹⁰Yes, my advice is: Gather around you all Israel from Dan to Beersheba, as many as the sand by the sea, and you yourself go into battle. ¹¹Then we'll move against him in some place wherever he may be found, and we'll fall on him as dew falls on the ground, and neither he nor any of his men will be left alive. ¹²And if he should withdraw into a city, all Israel will bring ropes to that city and drag it into a valley till not even a pebble will be found there."

¹³"The advice of Hushai the

⁴I'll . . . one man follows Gk: Heb unintelligible

Archite." Absalom and all the men of Israel said, "is better than Ahithophel's advice." So the LORD had ordered Ahithophel's good advice to be defeated in order to bring disaster on Absalom.

¹³Then Hushai told the priests Zadok and Abiathar: "Ahithophel advised Absalom and the elders of Israel so and so, and I advised so and so. ¹⁴And now send messengers quickly to tell David: 'Don't rest tonight in the plains of the wilderness but by all means cross over, or the king and all the people with him will be wiped out.'"

¹⁵Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting at the Fuller's Spring, and a servant girl was to go and tell them, and they were to go and tell King David. They dared not be seen coming into the city. ¹⁶But a young man saw them and told Absalom. So both of them left quickly and came to the home of a man in Bahurim who had a cistern in his courtyard, and they went down into it. ¹⁷The woman took a cover and spread it over the top of the cistern and spread hulled barley over it so that nobody could tell what was there.

¹⁸Absalom's men came to the woman at her home. "Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan?" they asked.

"They've gone from here toward the water," the woman told them. They searched for them without finding them and went back to Jerusalem.

¹⁹After they left, both came out of the cistern and went and told King David. "Get going," they told David, "and cross quickly over the water because Ahithophel has advised against you so and so."

²⁰David and all the people with him got up and crossed over the Jordan. When the dawn came, there was no one left who hadn't crossed the Jordan.

²¹When Ahithophel saw his advice wasn't followed, he saddled his donkey, left, and went home to his own town. He gave instructions to his family. Then he hanged himself, died, and was buried in his father's burial place.

David at Mahanaim

²²David came to Mahanaim, and Absalom and all the men of Israel with him also crossed the Jordan. ²³Absalom appointed Amasa to take Joab's place at the head of the army. Amasa was the son of Ithra the Ishmaelite,^v who had married Abigail the daughter of Nahash and sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother. ²⁴Israel and Absalom camped in the country of Gilead.

²⁵When David came to Mahanaim, Shobi the son of Nahash from Rabbah of the Ammonites, and Machir son of Ammiel from Lodebar, and Barzillai from Rogelim in Gilead ²⁶brought beds, bowls, pottery, wheat, barley, flour, parched grain, beans, lentils, ²⁷honey and curds, sheep and calves for David and his people to eat, because they thought, "The people are hungry, exhausted, and thirsty in the wilderness."

Absalom's Army Defeated

18 David mustered the troops that were with him and appointed over them commanders of thousands and of hundreds. ²David put a third of the troops under Joab, another third under Abishai,

^vGk and 1 Chron 2:17: Heb has the Israelite

Zeruiah's son and Joab's brother, and the last third under Ittai from Gath.

"Of course, I too am going out with you," the king said to the troops.

"You're not going with us," the troops said. "If we flee, they won't care about us, and if half of us die, they won't care either. But you're worth 10,000 of us. It's better, then, for you to be ready to send us help from the city."

"I'll do what you think best," the king answered them. And so the king stood by the gate while all the troops marched out by hundreds and thousands.

"The king gave an order to Joab, Abishai, and Ittai: "Treat the young man Absalom gently for my sake." And all the troops heard him give all the commanders this order regarding Absalom.

"So the troops went out into the open country against Israel, and there was a battle in the forest of Ephraim. There David's men defeated the army of Israel, and there was a great massacre that day—20,000 men. The fighting spread over the whole country, and that day the wooded areas devoured more people than the sword.

"Absalom happened to get in front of some of David's men. Absalom was riding on a mule, and the mule went under the tangled branches of a large tree, and his head was caught in the tree, and so he was suspended^w between heaven and earth when the mule that was under him ran away. A man who saw him told Joab, "I saw Absalom hanging in a tree."

"What! You saw that!" Joab

said to the man who told him. "Why didn't you strike him to the ground right there? Then I would have felt obligated to give you 10 shekels of silver and a belt."

"Even if I felt the weight of a thousand shekels of silver in my hand," the man told Joab, "I wouldn't raise my hand against the king's son. We heard the order the king gave you, Abishai, and Ittai: 'For my sake be careful with the young man Absalom.' If I had done something treacherous to him, like everything it wouldn't be hidden from the king. Would you have stood by me?"

"I shouldn't waste time with you like this," Joab said. He took three darts in his hands and stuck them into Absalom while he was still alive in the middle of the tree. Then 10 young men, who carried Joab's armor, surrounded Absalom, struck him, and killed him.

"Joab blew the horn, and the troops returned from pursuing Israel, because Joab put a stop to the fighting. Some men took Absalom, threw him into a large pit in the forest, and piled a very large heap of stones over him. Then all Israel fled, everyone to his home.

"While he was still living, Absalom had taken a pillar and set it up for himself; it is in the king's valley. "I have no son," he said, "to keep the memory of my name alive." He called the pillar by his name, and it is still called Absalom's pillar today.

David Hears of Absalom's Death

"Then Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, said, "Let me run and bring the king

^wGk: suspended omitted in Heb

the news that the LORD has freed him from his enemies."

²⁰"You would not be a man carrying good news today," Joab told him. "Some other day you can carry the news. You must not take the news today because the king's son is dead." ²¹Then Joab said to the Nubian,^a "Go, tell the king what you saw." The Nubian bowed before Joab and ran off.

²²But Ahimaaz, Zadok's son, again spoke to Joab. "Whatever may happen, I also want to run after the Nubian."

"Now why should you run, my son?" Joab asked. "There's no news you'll get a reward for."

²³"Whatever happens, I'd like to run."

"Run," he told him. So Ahimaaz ran along the floor of the Jordan valley and got ahead of the Nubian.

²⁴David was sitting between the two gates. The watchman walked along the roof of the gate and on the wall. He looked and saw there was a man running alone. ²⁵The watchman called and told the king.

"If he's alone," the king said, "he has good news to tell." He continued to come nearer.

²⁶When the watchman saw another man running, the watchman called in to the gate. "There's another man running alone," he said.

"This one too is bringing good news," the king said.

²⁷"I can see the first one is running like Ahimaaz, Zadok's son," the watchman said.

"He's a good man," the king said, "and he really comes with good news."

²⁸Then Ahimaaz came near and

said^y to the king: "May you be well!" and bowed with his face on the ground before the king. "Blessed be the LORD your God," he said, "who has delivered over the men who raised their hands against my lord the king."

²⁹"Is the young man Absalom well?" the king asked.

"I saw the great tumult," Ahimaaz answered, "when Joab sent the king's servant away, but I didn't know what it meant."

³⁰"Step aside and stand here," the king said. He stepped aside and stood there.

³¹Then the Nubian came. "News for my lord the king!" the Nubian said. "Today the Lord, showing His righteousness, has freed you from all who attacked you."

³²"Is the young man Absalom well?" the king asked.

"May the enemies of my lord the king," the Nubian answered, "and all who attack you to harm you be like that young man!"

³³Trembling with grief, the king went up to the room above the gate and wept. "My son Absalom!" he said as he went. "My son, my son Absalom! I wish I had died in your place, Absalom, my son, my son!"

Joab Corrects David

19 Joab was told, "The king is weeping and mourning for Absalom." ²The victory of that day was turned into a mourning for all the people because that day they heard that the king was grieving over his son. ³That day the people sneaked into the city as if they had fled from battle and were ashamed of it. ⁴The king covered his face, and the king cried out loud, "My son

^aA Cushite, a black man from Ethiopia

^yGk: Heb called

Absalom! Absalom, my son, my son!"

"Then Joab came into the house to the king. "Today you have made all your men feel ashamed," he said. "They saved your life today and the lives of your sons and daughters and your wives and concubines. "You love those who hate you and hate those who love you, since you show clearly today that your captains and men mean nothing to you. I know today that if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead, that would be just right for you. "And now, get up, go out, and encourage your men. I swear to you by the LORD that if you don't go out, nobody will stay with you tonight, and that will be worse than all the trouble you've had from your youth until now."

"The king got up and sat in the gate. When all the people of the army were told, "The king is sitting in the gate," the army came to the king.

Israel had fled, everyone to his home.

David Returns to Jerusalem

"All the people in all the tribes of Israel were accusing one another: "The king rescued us from our enemies and saved us from the Philistines, and then he fled from Absalom and left the country. "But Absalom, whom we anointed to rule us, has died in battle. Why not do something now about bringing the king back?"

"What all Israel was saying reached the king at his home. So the king sent men to Zadok and Abiathar the priests, saying: "Ask the elders of Judah, "Why should you be the last to bring the king back home? "You are my relatives, my flesh and blood. Why should you be the last to

bring the king back?" "And tell Amasa: "Aren't you my flesh and blood? May God punish me more and more if you aren't given Joab's place to serve me always as the head of the army." "So all the men of Judah were persuaded to act as one man, and they sent the king a message: "Come back with all your men."

"The king started out on the way back and came to the Jordan. The men of Judah came to Gilgal on their way to meet the king and bring the king over the Jordan. "Shimei, Gera's son, the Benjamite from Bahurim, hurried down with the men of Judah to meet King David. "There were a thousand men from Benjamin with him. Also Ziba, the servant of Saul's family, with his 15 sons and 20 servants, rushed down to the Jordan opposite the king, "and they crossed the ford to bring the king's family over and do anything else the king wanted.

Shimei, Gera's son, bowed down before the king just as he was going to cross the Jordan. "Don't count the sin against me," he asked the king, "and don't remember the wrong your servant did the day my lord the king left Jerusalem, or take it to heart. "I, your servant, know I have sinned, and you see how today I have come as the first of all the people of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king."

"But Abishai, Zeruiah's son, answered, "Shouldn't Shimei be killed for cursing the LORD's anointed?"

"Let me alone, you sons of Zeruiah," David said. "You are my enemies today. Should anyone in Israel be killed today? Don't I know that today I'm king of Israel?"

"You will not die," the king

promised Shimei, and the king swore to it.

²⁴Mephibosheth, Saul's grandson, went down to meet the king. He had not tended to his feet, trimmed his mustache, or washed his clothes from the day the king left till he came home in peace. ²⁵He came from Jerusalem to meet the king.

"Why didn't you go with me, Mephibosheth?" the king asked him.

²⁶"My lord the king," he answered, "my servant deceived me. Since I, your servant, am lame, I said: 'Saddle the donkey for me and I'll ride on it and go with the king.' ²⁷He slandered your servant to my lord the king, but my lord the king is like God's angel. Do what you think is right. ²⁸In all my grandfather's family there was no one you couldn't have killed, my lord the king, but you put your servant among those who eat at your table. Then what right have I still to cry out to the king?"

²⁹"Why do you keep on talking about it?" the king asked him. "I have decreed that you and Ziba should divide the land."

³⁰"Let him even take it all." Mephibosheth told the king, "since my lord the king has come home in peace."

³¹Barzillai, the man from Gilead, came down from Rogelim, and he came with the king to the Jordan to say good-bye to him at the Jordan. ³²Barzillai was a very old man of 80 years. Being a very rich man, he had provided the king with food while he was staying at Mahanaim.

"Come over with me," the king told Barzillai, "and I will support you with me in Jerusalem."

³³"How much longer have I to live," Barzillai answered the king,

"that I should go with the king up to Jerusalem? ³⁴I'm 80 years old now. How can I enjoy anything? Can I, your servant, taste what I eat or drink? Or can I hear anymore the singing of men and women? Why should your servant still become a burden for my lord the king? ³⁵Just let your servant cross the Jordan with the king. And why should the king give me such a reward? ³⁶Please let your servant go back, so I can die in my city near the grave of my father and mother. But here is your servant Chimham; let him go over with my lord the king. And do for him what you think is right."

³⁷"Chimham will go over with me," the king said. "And I will do for him whatever you want. Ask me anything, and I'll do it for you."

³⁸All the people crossed over the Jordan, and the king also crossed. The king kissed Barzillai and blessed him. So he went back home.

³⁹The king went over to Gilgal, and Chimham went with him. All the people of Judah and also half of the people of Israel brought the king over.

⁴⁰Then all the men of Israel kept coming to the king. "Why did our relatives, the men of Judah, steal you," they asked, "and bring the king and his family and men over the Jordan?"

⁴¹Then all the men of Judah answered the men of Israel: "Because the king is our relative. And why are you angry about this? Did we eat the king's food or get portions from him?"

⁴²The men of Israel answered the men of Judah: "We have 10 shares in the king, and also a greater claim on David than you have. Why, then, do you despise us? Weren't we the

first to suggest bringing our king back?"

The men of Judah spoke more harshly than the men of Israel.

Sheba's Rebellion

20 There happened to be a scoundrel by the name of Sheba, Bichri's son, a Benjamite. He blew a horn and announced, "We have nothing to do with David. There's nothing for us in Jesse's son. Everybody in Israel, go home!" ²So all the men of Israel withdrew from David to follow Sheba, Bichri's son. But the men of Judah loyally followed their king from the Jordan to Jerusalem.

³When David came home to Jerusalem, the king took the 10 concubines he had left to look after the palace and put them in confinement, provided for them, but had no intercourse with them. So they lived like widows in confinement till they died.

"Call the men of Judah together for me," the king told Amasa, "and in three days be here yourself." ⁴Amasa went to call Judah, but he took longer than the time David gave him.

"Now Sheba will do us more harm than Absalom," David told Abishai. "Take your master's men and go after him, or he will find fortified cities for himself and strike a vital blow at us."

⁷Joab's men went out after him with the Cherethites and Pelethites, and all the warriors. They left Jerusalem to pursue Sheba, Bichri's son. ⁸When they were at the great stone in Gibeon, Amasa had come and was there before them. Joab wore a military garment, held by a belt, and a sword in its scabbard was fastened by the belt to his hips.

As he stepped forward, the sword fell out. "Is it well with you, my cousin?" Joab asked Amasa, with his right hand taking hold of Amasa's beard to kiss him. ¹⁰Amasa wasn't on his guard against the sword in Joab's other hand. Joab stabbed him in the belly with it and made his intestines pour out on the ground, without striking him again, and he died. Then Joab and his brother Abishai pursued Sheba, Bichri's son. ¹¹One of Joab's young men stood by Amasa. "Anyone who likes Joab," he said, "and anyone who is for David, follow Joab." ¹²Amasa was wallowing in his blood in the middle of the road. When the man saw that all the troops stopped, he carried Amasa from the road into the field and threw a garment over him because he saw how everybody who came to him stopped. ¹³As soon as he was moved from the road, everybody followed Joab and pursued Sheba, Bichri's son.

¹⁴Sheba passed through all the tribes of Israel to Abel of Beth-Maacah, and all the Berites. Those who were gathered followed him into the city. ¹⁵The others came and besieged him in Abel of Beth-maacah. They put up an earthwork against the city, and it stood level with the rampart, and all the troops with Joab were battering the wall to tear it down.

¹⁶Then a wise woman called from the city: "Listen, listen! Tell Joab. 'Come near, so I can talk to you.'"

"He came near. 'Are you Joab?' she asked.

"Yes," he answered.

"Listen to what I say," she told him.

"I'm listening," he answered.

¹⁷So she said, "Long ago they used to say, 'Be sure to ask at Abel.'

that's the way they settled matters. ¹⁹"We are a peaceful and faithful people in Israel. Are you trying to destroy a city, a mother in Israel? Why should you devour the LORD's inheritance?"

²⁰"Far be it," Joab answered, "far be it from me to devour and destroy. ²¹That isn't how it is. A man from the hills of Ephraim by the name of Sheba, Bichri's son, has raised his hand against the king, against David. Just hand him over, and I'll withdraw from the city."

"His head will be thrown out to you through a hole in the wall," the woman told Joab. ²²Then the wise woman went to all the people. They cut off the head of Sheba, Bichri's son, and threw it out to Joab. He blew the horn and everyone scattered and withdrew from the city, going home. Joab went back to the king in Jerusalem.

Officials of the Realm

²³Now Joab was in charge of the whole army of Israel. Benaiah, Jehoiada's son, was over the Cherethites and Pelethites. ²⁴Adoram was in charge of the forced labor. Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder. ²⁵Sheva was secretary. Zadok and Abiathar were priests. ²⁶Also Ira the Jairite was a priest to David.

A Famine and the Gibeonites

21 There was a famine in the time of David for three successive years, and David asked the LORD about it. "It is on account of Saul," the LORD answered, "and his family which is guilty of murder because he killed the Gibeonites."

²The king called the Gibeonites. (now the Gibeonites were not a part of Israel, but were some of the

people left over from the Amorites. Although the Israelites had sworn to spare them, in his zeal for Israel and Judah Saul had tried to destroy them.) ³"What should I do for you?" David asked the Gibeonites, "and with what should I atone for this, so you will bless the LORD's heritage?"

"We want no silver or gold from Saul and his family," the Gibeonites answered him. "And none of us want to kill anyone in Israel."

"What do you say I should do for you?" he asked.

⁴"The man who consumed us," they answered the king, "who planned to wipe us out, to keep us from staying anywhere in Israel's territory—"give us seven of his sons to hang them up before the LORD in Gibeah, where Saul, whom the LORD chose, lived."

"I will hand them over," the king said.

⁵But the king spared Mephiboseth, Jonathan's son and Saul's grandson, because of the oath in the LORD's name between David and Jonathan, Saul's son. ⁶The king took two sons whom Rizpah, Aiah's daughter, bore to Saul, Armoni and Mephiboseth, and five sons whom Merab, Saul's daughter, bore for Adriel the Meholathite, ⁷and he handed them over to the Gibeonites, who hanged them before the LORD, and these seven died together. They were killed in the first harvest days when people started cutting barley.

⁸Rizpah, Aiah's daughter, took sackcloth and stretched it out on the rock for herself from the beginning of the harvest until rain poured from heaven on them. She wouldn't let any birds in the sky come down on them by day or animals in the field by night.

¹¹When David was told what Rizpah, Aiah's daughter and Saul's concubine did, ¹²David got the bones of Saul and of his son Jonathan from the citizens of Jabesh in Gilead, which they had secretly taken from the public square of Bethshan, where the Philistines had hanged them when the Philistines killed Saul at Gilboa. ¹³And when he brought up the bones of Saul and Jonathan, the men gathered the bones of those who had been hanged, ¹⁴and they were buried with the bones of Saul and his son in the land of Benjamin in Zela, in the burial place of his father Kish. They did everything the king ordered. After that, God heard the prayers for the country.

The Philistines Fight Again with Israel

¹⁵Once when David and his men went down to fight the Philistines David became exhausted, ¹⁶and Benob, a descendant of the Rephaites, who had a bronze lance weighing 300 shekels and wore a new belt, captured David and intended to kill him. ¹⁷But Abishai, Zeruiah's son, came to help him, struck down the Philistine and killed him. Then David's men promised him with an oath, "You will never go out into battle with us again; you must not put out the lamp of Israel."

¹⁸After this there was more fighting with the Philistines at Gob. And Sibbecai the Hushathite killed Saph, another descendant of the Rephaites. ¹⁹When more fighting broke out with the Philistines at Gob, Elhanan, son of Jair² of Bethlehem, killed Goliath of Gath; the shaft of his spear was like the

beam used by weavers. ²⁰Again war broke out at Gath, and there was a tall man, a descendant of the Rephaites, who had 24 fingers and toes: six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot. ²¹When he defied Israel, Jonathan, the son of David's brother Shimei, killed him. ²²These four, whom David and his men struck down, were descendants of the Rephaites at Gath.

A Royal Thanksgiving Psalm

22 David sang this song to the LORD when the LORD had rescued him from all his enemies and from Saul.

¹The LORD, my Rock and my Fortress, is the One who rescued me.

²I found shelter in God who is my Rock, my Shield, the mighty One who saved me; my mountain Retreat, my Refuge, my Savior who delivered me from violence.

³I cry to the LORD, who deserves to be praised, and I'm saved from my enemies.

⁴The waves of death surrounded me, and the torrents of Belial suddenly attacked me.

⁵The grave closed all around me to catch me; death came toward me to trap me.

⁶In my trouble I cried to the LORD and called on my God. In His temple He heard me, my cry for help reached His ears.

⁷Then the earth swayed and shook, the foundations of the heavens trembled; they were shaken because He was angry.

⁸Smoke went up from His nostrils,

²²
³ Heb 2:13

²Following 1 Chron 20:5; Heb Jaareoregim

- and from His mouth came a devouring fire that made coals glow.
- ¹⁰He stretched out the heavens and came down with a dark cloud under His feet.
- ¹¹He rode on a cherub and flew, darting on the wings of the wind.
- ¹²He made the darkness around Him a tent, and the clouds of the sky a sieve of water.
- ¹³The flash ahead of Him made coals glow with fire.
- ¹⁴The LORD thundered from heaven, the most high God spoke loud.
- ¹⁵He shot arrows and scattered them. He made lightning flash and threw them into panic.
- ¹⁶The fountainheads of the sea appeared; the foundations of the world were laid bare, because of the roar of the LORD and the blast from His nostrils.
- ¹⁷He reached down from above, took hold of me, and pulled me out of the many waters.
- ¹⁸He rescued me from my fierce enemy, from those who hated me: they were too strong for me.
- ¹⁹They attacked me when I was facing disaster, but the LORD supported me.
- ²⁰He brought me to a place where I was free, and so He rescued me because He took a delight in me.
- ²¹The LORD rewards me according to my righteousness and repays me according to the innocence of my hands, ²²because I have kept the LORD's ways and haven't by wickedness turned away from my God.
- ²³I have before me all the rules He wants me to live by and I don't turn away from His laws.
- ²⁴I am blameless with Him and keep myself from doing wrong.
- ²⁵So the LORD repays me according to my righteousness, according to my innocence which He sees.
- ²⁶You are kind to those who are kind, perfect with those who are perfect,
- ²⁷pure with those who keep themselves pure, and those who are crooked will find You perverse.
- ²⁸You save a humble people, but Your look humbles proud men.
- ²⁹You are my lamp, LORD, for the LORD lights up my darkness.
- ³⁰With You I can run against a troop of men, with my God I can jump over a wall.
- ³¹God's way is perfect; what the LORD says has been tested. He is a Shield to all who go to Him for shelter.
- ³²Is there any God beside the LORD? Is there any Rock beside our God,
- ³³the God who is my strong Fortress? He makes my way blameless;
- ³⁴He makes my feet like those of deer and makes me stand on steep places.
- ³⁵He trains my hands to fight, so that my arms can bend a bronze-target bow.
- ³⁶You've given me Your shield to save me, and by Your victory You have made me great.
- ³⁷You make a wide path for me to walk on so that my feet don't falter.
- ³⁸I pursued my enemies and destroyed them, and didn't come back before they were completely defeated.
- ³⁹I defeated them and struck them

9 Rv 11:5
26 Mt 5:7

so they couldn't get up but fell under my feet.

⁴⁰You armed me with strength to fight and made those who attacked me bow down under me.

⁴¹You made my enemies turn their backs to me, so that I might wipe out those who hate me.

⁴²They cried for help, but there was no one to save them, even to the LORD, but He didn't answer them.

⁴³I beat them as fine as the dust on the ground; like the dirt on the streets, I crushed them by stamping on them.

⁴⁴You delivered me from the arrows of the people, You preserved me from the poison of the nations. A people I didn't know now serve me.

⁴⁵Foreigners cringe before me; when they hear the news, they obey me. 50 Ho 15:9

⁴⁶Foreigners wilt and come trembling out of their fortifications.

⁴⁷The LORD lives! Blessed is my Rock! God, the Rock who saves me, is high;

⁴⁸He is the God who gives me victory and subdues people under me.

⁴⁹He frees me from my enemies and lifts me above those who attack me. You rescue me from violent men.

⁵⁰*I will thank You for that, LORD, among the nations and sing praises to Your name.*

⁵¹He makes His king great by giving him victory; He is kind to His anointed, to David and his descendants forever.

These are the last words of David:

23 This is the word of David, Jesse's son, the word of the man whom the Almighty raised to a high position, whom the God of Jacob anointed, the singer of Israel's psalms:

¹The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me. His words were on my tongue;

²the God of Israel said it; the Rock of Israel spoke to me: He who rules over men as a righteous person, who rules by the fear of God,

³will be like the light of the morning when the sun rises on a morning without clouds, when after the rain the grass pushes up out of the ground.

⁴Yes, my family stands firm with God, because He has made an everlasting covenant with me, with every detail arranged and assured. Will He not make everything prosper that saves me, everything I delight in?

⁵But the wicked are all like thorns which are thrown away, because no one can take hold of them with his hands.

⁶To touch them one must use iron or the shaft of a spear. The fire will burn them up where they are.

David's Heroes

^aThese are the names of David's heroes: There was Ishbosheth the Hachmonite, the leader of the three. He wielded a spear^a against 800 whom he struck down at one time. ^bNext to him was Eleazar.

^aHeb obscure. but see 1 Chron 11:11

the son of Dodo the Ahohite, one of the three heroes. He was with David at Pas-dammim^b when they defied the Philistines who had gathered there for battle, and the men of Israel withdrew. ¹⁰He attacked and struck down the Philistines till his hand got tired and stuck to his sword. And so the LORD won a great victory that day; and the army turned to follow him, but it was only to gather loot.

¹¹Next to him was Shammah, the son of Agee the Hararite. The Philistines had gathered at Lehi where there was a plot of ground with a full crop of lentils. The people fled from the Philistines. ¹²But he stood in the middle of the plot and kept it from them by striking down the Philistines. So the LORD won a great victory.

¹³Three of the thirty leading men came down to David at harvest time, to the cave of Adullam when a troop of the Philistines was camping in the valley of Rephaim. ¹⁴While David was in the fortification, a garrison of the Philistines was at Bethlehem. ¹⁵David was thirsty and he said, "I wish I had a drink of water from the well of Bethlehem that is by the gate." ¹⁶Then the three heroic men cut through the camp of the Philistines and drew water from the well of Bethlehem at the gate. They took it and brought it to David, but he wouldn't drink it, but poured it out to the LORD. ¹⁷"Far be it from me, LORD," he said, "that I should do this. Isn't this the blood of the men who risked their lives to go there?" He wouldn't drink it. Three heroic men did these things.

¹⁸Joab's brother Abishai, Zeruiah's son, became the leader of

the thirty. He wielded his spear against 300 men and struck them down. He was famous among the thirty ¹⁹and among them he was honored most. So he became their captain, but he didn't come up to the other three.

²⁰Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was a brave man from Kabzeel who did some great things. He struck down two lion-hearted men of Moab. He also went down and killed a lion in a pit on a day when it snowed. ²¹He struck down a handsome Egyptian. The Egyptian had a spear in his hand; so he went down to him with a club, took the spear away from the Egyptian, and killed him with his own spear. ²²Benaiah, Jehoiada's son, did these things, and he was famous along with the three heroic men. ²³He was honored more highly than the thirty, but he didn't measure up to the three. David put him in charge of his guard.

²⁴One of the thirty was Joab's brother Asahel, and Elhanan, Dodo's son, from Bethlehem. ²⁵Shammah the Harodite, Elika the Harodite, ²⁶Helez the Paltite, Ira the son of Ikkesh, from Tekoa. ²⁷Abiezer from Anathoth, Mebunnai from Hushai, ²⁸Zalmon the Ahohite, Maharai from Netophah. ²⁹Heled, Baanah's son, from Netophah, Ittai, Ribai's son, from Gibeath of Benjamin. ³⁰Benaiah from Pirathon, Hiddai from the Gaash ravines. ³¹Abi-albon from Arba, Azmaveth from Bahurim, ³²Elihba from Shaalbon. Jashen's sons, Jonathan ³³and Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the son of Sharar the Hararite, ³⁴Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of a man from Maacah, Eliam, Ahithophel's son,

^bHeb omits; see 1 Chron 11:12

from Gilo. ³⁵Hezrai from Carmel. Paarai from Arba. ³⁶Igal, Nathan's son from Zobah. Bani of Gad. ³⁷Zelek the Ammonite. Naharai from Beeroth, an armor-bearer of Joab. Zeruah's son. ³⁸Ira the Ithrite. Gareb the Ithrite. ³⁹Uriah the Hittite—37 in all.

David Counts the People

24 Again the LORD got angry with Israel, and He moved David against them. "Go," he said, "count Israel and Judah."

¹The king spoke to Joab, the captain of the army, who was with him: "Go through all the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba and count the people so I know how many there are."

²"May the LORD your God," Joab answered the king, "add to the people a hundred times as many as they are while my lord the king still sees it, but why does my lord the king want to do this?"

³But the king's order overruled Joab and the captains of the army. So Joab and the captains of the army left the king to count the people of Israel. ⁴They crossed the Jordan and reached Aroer, south of the town in the middle of the valley, and went on to Gad and to Jazer. ⁵They came to Gilead and to Kadesh in the land of the Hittites. ⁶Then they came to Dan and Ijon and around toward Sidon. ⁷They came to the fortified city of Tyre and all the cities of the Hivites and the Canaanites. Then they went to the south of Judah. ⁸When they had covered the whole country, they came to Jerusalem after 9 months and 20 days. ⁹Joab reported the number of the people to the king:

There were 800,000 able-bodied men who could draw a sword in Israel, and in Judah 500,000 men.

¹⁰After he counted the people, David's conscience troubled him: "I have sinned very much by what I did," David told the LORD. "And now, LORD, please take away your servant's guilt; I have acted very foolishly."

¹¹When David got up in the morning, the LORD had spoken to the prophet Gad, David's seer: ¹²"Go and tell David: The LORD says, 'I'm offering you three things. Choose one of them for Me to do to you.'"

¹³When Gad came to David he told him about it and asked him: "Should 7 years of famine come to you in your country, or 3 months during which you flee from your enemies and are pursued by them, or should there be a 3-day plague in your country? Now think it over and see what I should answer Him who sent me."

¹⁴"I'm in great trouble," David told Gad. "Let us fall into the LORD's hands because He is very merciful; I don't want to fall into the hands of men."

¹⁵So the LORD sent a plague among the Israelites from the morning until the appointed time, and 70,000 of the people died from Dan to Beersheba. ¹⁶But when the angel stretched out his arm to Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD felt sorry about the disaster. "It is enough!" He told the angel who was destroying the people. "Now drop your hand." The angel was at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

¹⁷David saw the angel who had

Following the Gk

been striking down the people. "I have sinned," he told the LORD. "I have done this wrong. What have these sheep done? Please let Your hand be against me and against my father's family."

An Altar for the LORD

¹⁸That day Gad came to David. "Go up," he told him. "set up an altar for the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite."

¹⁹David went up as Gad told him and the LORD ordered him. ²⁰When Araunah looked down and saw the king and his men coming toward him, Araunah went out and kneeled with his face on the ground before the king. ²¹"Why has my lord the king come to his servant?" Araunah asked.

"To buy the threshing floor from

you," David answered. "and to build an altar for the LORD and stop the plague that is among the people."

²²"My lord the king should just take it and offer what he thinks is right. See there are the oxen for the burnt offering, and the threshing sledges and yokes of the oxen for fuel." ²³All this Araunah gave to the king and said, "May the LORD your God accept you."

²⁴"No!" the king told Araunah. "I must buy it from you at a price. I will not offer the lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing."

So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for 50 shekels of silver. ²⁵David built an altar for the LORD there and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD heard the prayers for the country, and the plague in Israel was stopped.

KINGS

1 King David was old—far along in his years. Although he was covered with blankets, he couldn't keep warm. ²His men told him, "A young unmarried girl should be found for my lord the king who will wait on the king, take care of him, and lie in your arms, and so my lord the king will get warm."

³They looked for a beautiful girl in the whole country of Israel. They found Abishag of Shunem and brought her to the king. ⁴The girl was very beautiful. She took care of the king and served him. But the king had no intercourse with her.

Adonijah's Plot

⁵Adonijah, Haggith's son, kept promoting himself and saying, "I'm going to be king." He provided himself with a chariot and horses and 50 men who ran ahead of him. ⁶His father had never displeased him by asking, "Why are you doing this?" He also was very handsome. His mother bore him after Absalom. ⁷He had dealings with Joab, Zeruah's son, and with Abiathar the priest. These were on his side and helped him. ⁸But Zadok the priest and Benaiah, Jehoiada's son, and the prophet Nathan, Shimei, and Rei, and David's warriors were not with Adonijah.

⁹So Adonijah sacrificed sheep, cattle, and fattened calves at the Snake's Stone, which is by the Fuller's Spring. He had invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the men of Judah, the king's servants. ¹⁰But he hadn't invited the

prophet Nathan, Benaiah and the warriors, and his brother Solomon.

Nathan Rouses David

"Then Nathan asked Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, "Haven't you heard that Adonijah, Haggith's son, is becoming king, and our lord David doesn't know about it? ²Come, then, let me advise you how to save your life and the life of your son Solomon. ³Leave and go to King David and ask him, 'Didn't you, my lord the king, swear to your maid, "Your son Solomon will be king after me and will sit on my throne"? How does it happen that Adonijah is becoming king? ⁴While you're still there and talking to the king, I'll come in after you and confirm what you said."

⁵Bathsheba went to the king in the bedroom. The king was very old, and Abishag from Shunem was waiting on the king. ⁶Bathsheba bowed before the king. "What do you want?" the king asked.

⁷"My lord," she answered, "you promised your servant, swearing by the LORD your God, 'Your son Solomon will be king after me and will sit on my throne.' ⁸But now, you see, Adonijah is becoming king, and you, my lord the king, don't know anything about it. ⁹He sacrificed many cattle, fat calves, and sheep and has invited all the king's sons, Abiathar the priest and Joab the captain of the army, but he hasn't invited your servant Solomon. ¹⁰All Israel is looking to you, my lord the king, to tell them who

should succeed my lord the king in sitting on his throne. ²¹Otherwise when my lord the king will sleep with his fathers, I and my son Solomon will be considered offenders."

²²While she was still talking to the king, the prophet Nathan came in. ²³The king was told, "Here is the prophet Nathan." When he came before the king, he bowed down to the ground before the king. ²⁴"My lord the king," Nathan said, "you must have said, 'Adonijah will be king after me and should sit on my throne,' ²⁵because he went down today and sacrificed many cattle, fat calves, and sheep and invited all the king's sons, the captains of the army, and Abiathar the priest. There they are eating and drinking with him and saying, 'Long live King Adonijah!' ²⁶But he didn't invite me, your servant, or Zadok the priest, or Benaiah, Jehoiada's son, or your servant Solomon. ²⁷Did my lord the king do this without telling your servant who should succeed my lord the king in sitting on his throne?"

²⁸"Call Bathsheba," King David answered. She came and stood before the king. ²⁹The king promised her with an oath: "As the LORD lives who has saved my life from all trouble: ³⁰As I promised you, swearing by the LORD, the God of Israel, 'Your son Solomon will be king after me and succeed me in sitting on my throne,' that is what I will do today."

³¹Then Bathsheba bowed down to the ground to honor the king. "My lord, King David, live forever!" she said.

³²"Call Zadok the priest," King David said, "and the prophet Nathan and Benaiah, Jehoiada's

son." They came before the king. ³³"Take with you your lord's servants, have my son Solomon ride on my own mule, and bring him to Gihon. ³⁴There Zadok the priest and the prophet Nathan shall anoint him king of Israel. Then blow the horn and say, 'Long live King Solomon!' ³⁵Follow him up here as he comes and sits on my throne and succeeds me as king, for I have made him the leader of Israel and Judah."

³⁶"So be it!" Benaiah, Jehoiada's son, answered the king. "The LORD, the God of my lord the king, says so. ³⁷As the LORD has been with my lord the king, so he will be with Solomon and make his throne even greater than the throne of my lord, King David."

Solomon Made King

³⁸Then Zadok the priest, the prophet Nathan, and Benaiah, Jehoiada's son, and the Cherethites and Pelethites went down and had Solomon ride on King David's mule and brought him to Gihon. ³⁹Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the tabernacle and anointed Solomon. They blew the horn, and all the people said, "Long live King Solomon!" ⁴⁰All the people followed him, blowing flutes and celebrating so loudly their voices shook the ground.

⁴¹When Adonijah and all his guests heard this, they stopped eating. When Joab heard the sound of the horn, he asked, "What is the reason for the noisy uproar in the city?"

⁴²While he was still speaking, Jonathan son of Abiathar the priest arrived. "Come in," Adonijah said.

"You're an able fellow, and you bring good news."

"No," Jonathan answered Adonijah, "our lord, King David, has made Solomon king. "The king has sent with him Zadok the priest, the prophet Nathan, Benaiah, Jehoiada's son, with the Cherethites and Pelethites, and they have mounted him on the king's mule. "Zadok the priest and the prophet Nathan have anointed him king at Gihon, and they have come up from there celebrating, and so the city is in an uproar. That is the noise you heard. "Solomon is sitting on the royal throne. "The king's men also have come to congratulate our lord, King David, saying, 'May your God make Solomon more famous than you, and his throne greater than your throne.' And the king has worshiped on his bed. "The king has also said, 'Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who today has appointed a man to sit on my throne and has let me see it.' "

"All Adonijah's guests were frightened. They got up and left, each one going his own way. "Adonijah was afraid of Solomon. He rose and left, and he took hold of the horns of the altar. "Someone told Solomon, "Adonijah is afraid of the king and has taken hold of the horns of the altar, saying, 'May King Solomon swear to me today he will not kill his servant with a sword.' "

"If he will be a worthy person," Solomon said, "not a hair of him will fall to the ground. But if we find him doing wrong, he must die." "King Solomon sent and had him taken down from the altar. He came and bowed down before King Solomon. "Go home," Solomon told him.

David's Last Instructions to Solomon

2 When the time came for David to die, he gave his last instructions to his son Solomon. "I'm going the way of all people," he said. "Be strong, and be a man. "Do everything the LORD your God ordered you to do; Walk in His ways, carry out His rules, commandments, decrees, and solemn instructions as they are written in the law of Moses; then you will succeed in everything you do and everywhere you go 'and the LORD will carry out what He promised me: 'if your descendants will be careful to live before Me sincerely with all their hearts and lives, you will never fail to have a descendant on the throne of Israel.' "

"You also know what Joab, Zeruiah's son, did to me and what he did to the two commanders of Israel's army, Abner, Ner's son, and Amasa, Jether's son: He killed them, treating men at peace with him as if they were at war, and made the belt on his hips and the shoes on his feet bloody with murder. "Act wisely, and don't let his gray hair go down peacefully into the grave.

"Be kind to the sons of Barzillai of Gilead. Have them eat at your table, because they were friendly to me when I fled from your brother Absalom.

"Shimei, Gera's son, the Benjamite from Bahurim, spoke insulting curses against me when I went to Mahanaim, but when he came down to meet me at the Jordan, I promised him, swearing by the LORD; 'I will not kill you with the sword.' "Now, don't treat him as innocent, for you are wise and know what to do to him: Bring his gray

hair down into the grave with blood."

¹⁰David went to rest with his ancestors and was buried in the city of David. ¹¹David had been king of Israel 40 years. He ruled 7 years in Hebron and 33 years in Jerusalem.

Adonijah's Plot

¹²Solomon sat on the throne of his father David, and his kingdom became very firmly established.

¹³Then Adonijah, Haggith's son went to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother. "Do you come as a friend?" she asked.

"As a friend," he answered, "and added. ¹⁴I have something to tell you."

"Speak," she said.

¹⁵"You know," he said, "the kingdom was mine, and all Israel expected me to be their king. But there was a change, and my brother became king for that was what the LORD wanted. ¹⁶And now, I want to ask you to do one thing for me. Don't refuse me."

"Speak," she said.

¹⁷He said, "Please ask King Solomon—he will not refuse you—to give me Abishag from Shunem to be my wife."

¹⁸"Very well," Bathsheba answered. "I will talk to the king for you."

¹⁹Bathsheba went to King Solomon to talk to him for Adonijah. The king got up to meet her and bowed down before her. Then he sat on his throne and set a throne for the king's mother, and she sat at his right.

²⁰"I'm asking you for one little thing," she said; "don't refuse me."

"Ask it, my mother," the king told her. "for I won't refuse you."

²¹"Let Abishag from Shunem,"

she answered, "be given to your brother Adonijah to be his wife."

²²"Why do you ask for Abishag from Shunem for Adonijah?" King Solomon asked his mother. "You might as well ask that he be made king, for he is my older brother and Abiathar the priest and Joab, Zeruah's son are supporting him."

²³Then King Solomon swore by the LORD and said, "May God punish me more and more if Adonijah doesn't pay with his life for what he said. ²⁴Now, as the LORD lives who has established me and set me on my father David's throne and given him a dynasty as He promised, Adonijah must die today." ²⁵And so King Solomon ordered Benaiah, Jehoiada's son, to do it. And he struck him so that he died.

²⁶The king told Abiathar the priest, "Go to your home in Anathoth, for you deserve to die, but I will not kill you now, because you carried the sacred ark of the LORD God ahead of my father David and because you shared all my father's sufferings." ²⁷So Solomon removed Abiathar from being the LORD's priest and so what the LORD had said at Shiloh about Eli's family was fulfilled.

Joab

²⁸The news came to Joab. Joab was on Adonijah's side, but he hadn't been on Absalom's side. So Joab fled to the tent of the Lord and took hold of the horns of the altar. ²⁹King Solomon was told, "Joab has fled to the tent of the Lord, and he's there beside the altar." Then Solomon ordered Benaiah, Jehoiada's son: "Go strike him down."

³⁰When Benaiah came to the tent of the Lord he told him, "The king says, 'Come out.'"

"No," Joab answered, "I will die here."

So Benaiah reported to the king what Joab said and how he had answered.

"Do as he said," the king answered him, "strike him down and bury him. And so you will take away from me and my father's family the blood of innocent people Joab poured out. "The LORD will punish him for his bloody deed; he struck down two men more righteous and better than he and killed them with the sword (my father knew nothing about it): Abner, Ner's son, the commander of the army of Israel, and Amasa, Jether's son, the commander of the army of Judah. "So may their bloody deeds be brought back on the heads of Joab and his descendants, but may David, his descendants and his family, and his throne have peace from the LORD forever."

"Then Benaiah, Jehoiada's son, went up and struck him, killed him, and buried him in his home in the wilderness. "The king appointed Benaiah, Jehoiada's son, in his place over the army. And the king made Zadok priest instead of Abiathar.

Shimei

"The king sent men to call Shimei. "Build a house for yourself in Jerusalem," he said, "and stay there. Don't leave to go anywhere. "If you ever leave and so much as cross the brook Kidron, you will certainly die, and you will be responsible for your own death."

"What my lord the king says is good," Shimei answered. "Your servant will do that." So Shimei stayed in Jerusalem for a long while. "But after three years two of Shimei's slaves escaped to

Achish, Maacah's son, king of Gath. Hearing his slaves were in Gath, "Shimei got up, saddled his donkey, and went to Achish in Gath to look for his slaves. So Shimei came to Gath and got his slaves.

"Solomon was told, "Shimei went from Jerusalem to Gath and came back." "So the king sent men to call Shimei. He asked him, "Didn't I have you swear by the LORD, and didn't I warn you when you leave to go anywhere, you must certainly die, and you told me, 'What you say is good. I will obey?' "Why didn't you keep what you promised the LORD with an oath and do what I ordered you to do?" "The king also said to Shimei, "You know all the evil that is on your conscience, that you did to my father David. The LORD holds you responsible for the evil you did. "But King Solomon is blessed, and David's throne will be established before the LORD forever." "The king gave an order to Benaiah, Jehoiada's son. He went out and struck him so that he died. So the kingdom was firmly established in Solomon's hands.

Solomon Marries Pharaoh's Daughter

3 Solomon became the son-in-law of Pharaoh of Egypt by marrying Pharaoh's daughter. He brought her to David's city to live there till he finished building his own house, the LORD's temple, and the wall around Jerusalem.

Solomon Asks for Wisdom

"The people were sacrificing on the high places because the temple to honor the LORD's name had not yet been built. "Solomon loved the LORD and lived according to the rules of his father David, but he did

sacrifice and burn incense on the high places. "The king also went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for the great high place was there. Solomon offered 1,000 burnt offerings on that altar.

"In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream at night. "Ask what I should give you," God said.

"You have been very kind to Your servant David, my father," Solomon answered, "as he lived before you sincerely, righteously, and with a heart that was right with You. And You have continued to be very kind to him by giving him a son to sit on his throne now. "And now, LORD my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David, although I am a young man and don't know how to be a ruler. "And Your servant is among Your people whom You chose, a great people, too many to be counted or recorded. "Give Your servant a heart that knows how to obey so that I can be a judge of this vast people of Yours and tell what is good and bad. For who is able to judge this people of Yours that is so great?"

"The LORD was pleased that Solomon asked for this. "You asked for this," God answered, "and you didn't ask for a long life or riches or the death of your enemies, but you asked to be able to understand how to be just in giving judgment. "I'm going to do what you ask. I'm giving you such intelligence and understanding that nobody before you or after you will be like you. "But I'm also giving you what you didn't ask for—riches and honor, so that no other king will be like you as long as you live. "And if you live according to My ways and keep My rules and commandments as your father did,

then I will also give you a long life."

"Solomon woke up. It had been a dream. He went into Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the LORD's covenant and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. And he gave a dinner for all his household.

A Wise Judge

"Then two prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. "O lord," the one woman said to him, "I and this woman live in the same house. And I gave birth to a baby while she was with me in the house. "Two days after my baby was born, this woman also had a baby. We two were alone together. There was nobody else with us in the house. "One night this woman's baby boy died, because she lay on top of him. "During the night she got up, took my baby boy who was beside me—I was asleep—and she laid him at her bosom, and she laid her dead baby in my arms. "When I got up in the morning to nurse my baby, he was dead. I looked at him closely in the morning light and saw he wasn't my baby boy whom I gave birth to."

"No," the other woman said, "the living boy is mine and the dead one is yours."

"No," the first woman kept on saying, "the dead one is yours, and the living one is mine." So they argued before the king.

"The king said: "One says, 'This living baby is mine, and the dead one is yours.' But the other says, 'The dead son is yours, and the living one is mine.'" "Then the king said, "Get me a sword." They brought the king a sword.

"Cut the living baby in half," the king said, "and give one half to the

one and the other half to the other."

²⁸Then the mother of the living boy, yearning with a mother's love for her son, said to the king, "O Lord, give her the living child, and don't kill it." But the other said, "He shouldn't be mine or yours. Cut him in two."

²⁹"Give the first woman the living baby," the king answered, "and don't kill it. She is his mother."

³⁰All Israel heard about the decision the king made. They respected the king very highly, because they saw he had God's wisdom to do what was right.

Solomon's Government

4 King Solomon ruled all Israel. ²These were his high officials: Azariah son of Zadok was the priest, ³and Elihoreph and Ahijah, Shisha's sons, were the chief secretaries. Jehoshaphat, Ahilud's son, was the recorder. ⁴Benaiah, Jehoiada's son, was in command of the army. Zadok and Abiathar were the chief priests. ⁵Azariah, Nathan's son, was in charge of the local governors. Zabud, Nathan's son, was the private priest of the king. ⁶Ahishar was in charge of the palace. And Adoniram, Abda's son, was in charge of the forced labor.

⁷Solomon had 12 governors in charge of all Israel, who used to provide food for the king and his palace. Each man had to supply food for one month in a year. ⁸Their names were as follows: Hur's son was in the hills of Ephraim. ⁹Deker's son was in Makaz, Shaalbim, Beth-shemesh, and Elon-beth-hanan. ¹⁰Hesed's son was in Arubboth; he had Socoh and all the country of Hopher. ¹¹Abinadab's son had all the territory of Dor; he married Taphath, Solomon's daughter.

¹²Baana, Ahilud's son, had Taanach, Megiddo, and all Beth-shean, which is beside Zarethan, below Jezreel, from Beth-shean to Abel-meholah all the way to the territory next to Jokmeam. ¹³Geber's son was in Ramoth-gilead; he had the villages of Jair, Manasseh's son, which are in Gilead, and he had the territory of Argob, which is in Bashan, 60 large cities with walls and copper gate bars. ¹⁴Abinadab, Iddo's son, was in Mahanaim. ¹⁵Ahimaaz was in Naphtali; he also married a daughter of Solomon, namely, Basemath. ¹⁶Baana, Hushai's son, was in Asher and Aloth. ¹⁷Jehoshaphat, Paruah's son, was in Issachar. ¹⁸Shimei, Ela's son, was in Benjamin. ¹⁹Geber, Uri's son, was in Gilead, the country of Sihon king of the Amorites, and of Og king of Bashan; there was only one governor in that country.

²⁰Judah and Israel were many, like the sand by the sea. They ate and drank and were happy.

²¹Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates river to the country of the Philistines and as far as the border of Egypt. They brought tribute and served Solomon as long as he lived.

²²Solomon's supply of food for one day was 30 measures of flour, 60 measures of meal. ²³10 fat cattle, 20 cattle from the pasture, and 100 sheep besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fattened fowl. ²⁴He was ruling over all the territory on this side of the Euphrates river, from Tiphseh to Gaza, over all the kings west of the river, and there was peace all around him. ²⁵Judah and Israel lived securely, everyone under his own vine and figtree, from Dan to Beersheba as long as Solomon lived.

^aSolomon had stalls for 40,000^a horses for his chariots, and 12,000 cavalry horses.

⁷Everyone of the governors in his month provided food for King Solomon and all who came to King Solomon's table; they omitted nothing. ⁸As they were assigned they also brought barley and straw for the horses and the chariot horses to the places where they were.

Solomon's Wisdom

⁹God gave Solomon very much wisdom and understanding and a wide range of knowledge, like the sand on the seashore, ¹⁰so that Solomon's wisdom was greater than that of all the people of the east and all the wisdom of the Egyptians. ¹¹He was wiser than all men, than Ethan the Ezrahite, than Heman, Calcol, and Darda, Mahol's sons. His fame spread to all the nations around him.

¹²He spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. ¹³He talked about trees, from the cedar on Lebanon to the hyssop growing in the wall. He talked about animals, birds, reptiles, and fish. ¹⁴From all peoples and all the kings of the world who heard about Solomon's wisdom men came to hear his wisdom.

Wood and Stone for the Temple

5 Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon, for he heard he had been anointed king to succeed his father. Hiram had always been a friend of David.

¹Solomon sent men to Hiram to tell him: ²"You know how my father couldn't build a temple for the name of the LORD his God because he was

surrounded by enemies who fought against him till the LORD put them under his feet. ³But now the LORD my God has given me peace all around. There is nobody opposing me or making trouble. ⁴Now I'm thinking of building a temple to honor the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD spoke to my father David: 'Your son, whom I will put on your throne to succeed you, will build a temple to honor My name.' ⁵And now, order men to cut down cedars on Lebanon for me, and my servants will work with your servants. I will pay you for your servants such wages as you set. You know we don't have any men who know how to cut timber like the men from Sidon."

⁶Hiram was very glad to hear what Solomon said. He said, "Blessed is the LORD today who has given David a wise son to be in charge of this great nation."

⁷Hiram sent men to Solomon to tell him: "I have received the message you sent me. I will do everything you want in regard to the cedar wood and the cypress logs. ⁸My servants will bring it from Lebanon down to the sea, and I will have them make it into rafts to go by sea to any place you say. There I will have them broken up and then you can take them. And you will do exactly what I want if you provide food for my household." ⁹So Hiram gave Solomon all the cedar wood and cypress wood he wanted. ¹⁰And Solomon gave Hiram 20,000 measures of wheat to feed the people of his household and 20,000^b measures of olive oil. Solomon gave this to Hiram every year.

¹¹The LORD gave Solomon wisdom

^a4,000. 2 Chron 9:25 ^b2 Chron 2:10

as He promised him. There was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and they made a treaty with one another.

¹³King Solomon drafted forced labor from all Israel. This forced labor totaled 30,000 men. ¹⁴He sent 10,000 of them at a time to Lebanon for a month; they would be one month in Lebanon and two months at home. Adoniram was in charge of the forced labor.

¹⁵Solomon had 70,000 men who carried burdens and 70,000 who quarried stones in the mountains, ¹⁶besides 3,300 overseers who were in charge of the people doing the work. ¹⁷At the king's order they quarried large and rare blocks of stone in order to lay the foundation of the temple with hewn stones. ¹⁸Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders and the men of Gebal shaped the stones and prepared the lumber and the stone to build the temple.

Building the Temple

6 In the 480th year after Israel left Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's rule over Israel, in the second month, the month Ziv, Solomon began to build the LORD's temple. ²The temple King Solomon built for the LORD was 60 cubits long, 20 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high. ³The porch in front of the main structure of the temple was 20 cubits long, equal to the width of the temple, and 10 cubits deep to the front of the temple. ⁴He made framed windows for the temple. ⁵He also built next to the walls of the main structure and the inner sanctuary a structure with side rooms all around. ⁶The lowest part of the structure was 5 cubits wide, the middle part 6 cubits wide, and the

third part 7 cubits wide. He made ledges all around the temple so that these might not be fastened in the walls of the temple.

⁷When the temple was built, it was done with stones that were perfectly shaped when they were quarried, and no hammer, chisel, or any other iron tool could be heard in building the temple.

⁸The middle structure opened to the south side of the temple, and a winding staircase went up to the middle structure and from the middle to the third structure.

⁹When he finished building the temple, he roofed the house with rows of cedar beams. ¹⁰And he built each structure 5 cubits high alongside the whole temple, and their cedar beams rested on the temple.

¹¹The LORD spoke to Solomon: ¹²"About this temple you are building—if you live according to My rules and do what I order and are careful to live according to My commandments, I will do what I promised you as I told your father David, ¹³and I will live among the Israelites and not forsake My people Israel."

¹⁴Solomon built the temple and finished it. ¹⁵He built the inside walls of the temple of cedar boards. He paneled the inside with wood, from the floor of the temple to the rafters. He covered the floor of the temple with cypress planks.

¹⁶At the farthest end of the temple he enclosed 20 cubits with cedar boards from the floor to the rafters, making it an inner room, the most holy place. ¹⁷The front of the building, 40 cubits long, was the main sanctuary. ¹⁸On the cedar inside the temple were carved gourds and open flowers. Everything

was of cedar wood; no stone could be seen. ¹⁸He prepared the inner sanctuary within the temple in order to put the ark of the LORD's covenant there.

²⁰The inner room was 20 cubits long, 20 wide, and 20 high. He covered it with fine gold, as he did the cedar altar. ²¹Solomon covered the inside of the temple with fine gold and put golden chains across the front of the inner room, which he had covered with gold. ²²He covered the entire inside of the temple with gold. He also covered the whole altar in the inner room with gold.

²³In the inner room he made two angels of olive wood, each 10 cubits high. ²⁴Each wing of an angel was 5 cubits long. The distance from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other was 10 cubits. ²⁵The other angel also measured 10 cubits. Both angels had the same measurements and the same shape. ²⁶each being 10 cubits high. ²⁷He put the angels in the inner room of the temple. The wings of the angels extended so that the wing of one angel touched the one wall, and the wing of the other angel touched the other wall, their other wings touching each other in the center. ²⁸And he covered the angels with gold.

²⁹He carved into the walls of the temple all around figures of angels, palm trees, and open flowers in the inner and outer rooms. ³⁰He covered the floor of the temple in the inner and outer rooms with gold.

³¹He made doors of olive wood for the entrance to the inner sanctuary. The frame and the doorposts had five sides. ³²And two doors were of olive wood, and on them he made

carvings of angels, palm trees, and open flowers. He covered them with gold, pressing down the gold on the angels and the palm trees. ³³And so he also made square doorposts of olive wood for the entrance of the temple. ³⁴He made two doors of cypress wood. Each of the two doors had two folding leaves. ³⁵He carved on them angels, palm trees, and open flowers, and he covered them with gold, evenly applying it to the carved work.

³⁶He built the inner court with three courses of dressed stones and a course of finished cedar beams.

³⁷In the month of Ziv, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid; ³⁸and in the month of Bul, the eighth month of the eleventh year, all the parts of the temple as they had been planned were finished. So he spent seven years building it.

Solomon's Palace

7 Solomon took 13 years to finish building all of his own palace. ²He built the palace called the Forest of Lebanon, 100 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high, with four rows of cedar pillars and cedar planks on the pillars. ³It was covered with cedar above the arcades, which rested on 45 pillars, 15 in each row. ⁴There were window frames in three rows: on each of the three levels window faced window. ⁵All the doors with their posts had square frames, and the front of a door faced an opposite door in each of the three levels.

⁶He made a hall of pillars, 50 cubits long and 30 wide. In front of it

there was a porch with pillars and a threshold^c (with steps).

⁷He made a hall with a throne, the hall of justice, where he would decide court cases. It was covered with cedar from floor to ceiling.

⁸His residence hall was in a different court from the hall of justice, but it was built in a similar way. Solomon also built a house like this for Pharaoh's daughter whom he had married.

⁹All these inside and out, including the great court, were made of fine stone, cut to different sizes, sawed with saws, from the foundation to the copings. ¹⁰The foundation was made with fine large stones of 8 to 10 cubits in size. ¹¹And also above the foundation there were fine stone blocks, cut to different sizes, and cedar wood. ¹²The outer court all around had three layers of cut stones and a layer of cedar beams, just like the inner court of the LORD's temple and its porch.

¹³King Solomon got a man named Hiram from Tyre. ¹⁴He was a widow's son of the tribe of Naphtali, but his father was a native of Tyre. He was a coppersmith with great intelligence, understanding, and skill for all kinds of craftsmanship in bronze. He came to King Solomon and did all his work.

The Two Pillars

¹⁵He made two pillars of bronze, each 18 cubits high and with a circumference of 12 cubits.^d ¹⁶He made two capitals of cast copper to put on the tops of the pillars; each of the two capitals was 5 cubits high. ¹⁷He also made rows of net-

like design and of chain-rope design for the capitals on top of the pillars, 7 rows for each of the two. ¹⁸There were two rows of pomegranates all around the one capital above the network, and he made the other capital in the same way. ¹⁹The capitals on top of the pillars in the hall were lily-shaped, 4 cubits high. ²⁰Above the capitals on the two pillars, over but near the lip that was under the network were 200 pomegranates in rows around each capital. ²¹He set up the pillars on the porch of the temple. He set up one pillar at the right and called it He-establishes and set up the other pillar at the left and called it In-Him-is-strength. ²²There was lily-work at the top of the pillars. So he finished the work of the pillars.

The Bronze Pool

²³He made the pool of cast metal. It was 10 cubits from rim to rim. It was round and 5 cubits high; and its circumference was 30 cubits. ²⁴Under its rim there were two rows of gourds around it, covering the 30 cubits all around the pool; these were cast as one piece with the pool. ²⁵It was standing on 12 bulls, three were facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east. The pool was set on them, and all their hind parts were toward the center. ²⁶It was a handbreadth thick. Its rim was like the rim of a cup. Shaped like the bulb of a lily, it held 2,000 baths.

The Wheeled Stands

²⁷He made 10 stands of bronze. Each stand was 4 cubits square and 3 cubits high. ²⁸The stands were

^cHeb uncertain

^dJer 52:21 and Gk add it was hollow and the metal was four fingers thick

made in this way: They had a chassis set in a frame. ²⁰On the chassis set in the frame there were lions, oxen, and angels; these were also on the frame. Above and below the lions and the cattle there were wreaths of hammered work. ²¹Each stand had four bronze wheels and bronze axles. Each had four legs with flanges on them beneath the basis. The flanges were made of cast metal with wreath-work on the sides. ²²Each had an opening from within to the crown on top which measured one cubit. Its opening was round, built like a pedestal, a cubit and a half high. Also around the opening there were engravings. The chassis was square, not round. ²³The four wheels were under the chassis, and the axles were joined to the stand. Each wheel was a cubit and a half high. ²⁴The wheels were made like chariot wheels. The axles, rims, spokes, and hubs were all cast metal. ²⁵The four flanges at the four corners of each stand were one piece with the stand. ²⁶At the top of the stand there was a round band, half a cubit high, and on the top of the stand were supports which were of one piece with the chassis. ²⁷He engraved on the plates of its supports and on its chassis angels, lions, palm trees wherever there was a clear space, with wreaths all around. ²⁸He made the 10 stands in the same way; all of them were cast in the same way with the same measurements and form.

²⁹He also made 10 bronze basins. Each basin held 40 baths. Every basin measured 4 cubits. There was one basin on each of the 10 stands.

³⁰He set five stands on the right side of the temple and five on the left side of the temple. He set the pool on

the right side of the temple, toward the southeast.

Other Materials

⁴⁰Hiram made the pots, the shovels, and the sprinkling bowls. So Hiram finished all the work he did for King Solomon on the LORD's temple: ⁴¹the two pillars, the mouldings of the capitals on top of the two pillars, and the two networks to cover the two mouldings of the capitals on top of the pillars, ⁴²the 400 pomegranates for the two networks, the two rows of pomegranates for each network to cover the two mouldings of the capitals on the pillars; ⁴³the 10 stands and the 10 basins on the stands; ⁴⁴the one pool with the 12 cattle under it; ⁴⁵the pots, shovels, and sprinkling bowls. All these utensils that Hiram made for King Solomon for the LORD's temple were of polished bronze. ⁴⁶The king had them cast in the Jordan valley, in the clay moulds between Succoth and Zarethan. ⁴⁷Solomon left all the equipment unweighed, because there was so very much; nobody tried to find out how much the bronze weighed.

⁴⁸Solomon made all the utensils for the LORD's temple: the golden altar and the golden table on which the bread was presented to the LORD, ⁴⁹and the lampstands of fine gold, five on the south side and five on the north before the inner sanctuary; and the flower ornamentation, the lamps, and the gold wick-snuffers; ⁵⁰the deep bowls, the trimmers, the sprinkling bowls, and the fire pans of fine gold; he also made the sockets of gold for the doors of the inner building, the most holy place, and for the doors of the temple.

¹When all the work King Solomon did for the LORD's temple was finished, Solomon brought in the holy things of his father David, the silver and the gold, and the vessels and put them in the storerooms of the LORD's temple.

The Sacred Ark Brought Up

8 Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, all the leaders of the tribes, the princes of the clans of the people of Israel before King Solomon at Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the LORD's covenant from David's city, which is Zion. ²All the men of Israel gathered before King Solomon at the festival^e in the month of Ethanim, which is the seventh month.

³When all the elders of Israel had come, the priests lifted up the ark. ⁴The priests and Levites brought up the LORD's ark and the tent where God had met with His people and all the holy utensils in it. ⁵King Solomon and the whole community of Israel that had gathered before him and were with him before the ark were sacrificing so many sheep and cattle they couldn't be recorded or counted. ⁶The priests brought the ark of the LORD's covenant to its place in the inner room of the temple, the most holy place, under the wings of the angels.

⁷The angels spread out their wings over the ark, and so the angels were a shield above the ark and its poles. ⁸The poles were so long their ends could be seen in the holy place by anyone standing before the inner room, but they couldn't be seen outside. ⁹There was nothing in the ark except the

two stone tablets Moses put there at Sinai when the LORD made a covenant with Israel after they left Egypt. And they're still there today.

¹⁰When the priests had come out of the holy place, the cloud filled the LORD's temple "so that the priests couldn't stand and serve on account of the cloud, because the LORD's glory filled His temple.

¹²Then Solomon said,

"The LORD said He would live in thick darkness.

¹³I have built you a lofty temple, a home for You to live in forever."

¹⁴Then the king turned around and blessed the whole community of Israel, while the whole community was standing. ¹⁵"Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel," he said. ¹⁶"With Your mouth You promised my father David, and with Your hand You carried it out. You said,

⁶ ⁸ ¹¹⁻¹⁹
¹⁰⁻¹¹ ¹⁴⁻¹⁵

¹⁶"Ever since I brought My people Israel out of Egypt, I didn't choose any city in all the tribes of Israel to build a temple where My name should be, but now I've chosen David to be over My people Israel." ¹⁷My father David planned to build a temple for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁸And the LORD said to my father David, 'Seeing you planned to build a temple for My name, you did well to plan it. ¹⁹But you must not build the temple. Your son who will come from your body will build the temple for My name.' ²⁰The LORD has done what He promised, and now I stand in my father's place and sit on the throne of Israel as the LORD promised, and I've built the temple for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ²¹And in it I've made a place for the sacred ark, in which is the LORD's

^eThe festival of Booths

covenant that He made with our fathers when he brought them out of Egypt."

Solomon Prays

"Solomon stood in front of the whole community of Israel, faced the LORD's altar, spread his hands toward heaven. "and said, "LORD, God of Israel, there is no god like You in heaven above and on earth below. You are the One who keeps Your covenant and shows mercy to Your servants when their hearts are altogether loyal to You. "You have done for Your servant David, my father, what You promised him. With Your mouth You promised it and with Your hand You did it, and so it is today. "And now, LORD, God of Israel, continue to do for Your servant David, my father, what you promised him when You said, 'You will always have a man sitting on the throne of Israel before Me if only your descendants will watch their ways to live before Me as You have lived before Me.' "And now, God of Israel, may the promise You made to Your servant David, my father, come true.

"But does God really live on earth? The heaven, yes, the heaven of heavens, cannot hold You; how much less this temple I built! "But listen to the prayer and pleading of Your servant, LORD my God, and hear what Your servant is calling aloud and praying before You today: "May Your eyes be looking day and night at this temple and this place about which You said, 'My name will be there.' Listen to Your servant as he prays toward this place. "And hear the pleading of Your servant and Your people Israel as they are praying toward this place,

yes, hear in heaven, where You live, and when You hear, forgive.

"If anyone wrongs another person and has to take an oath, and so he comes and swears before Your altar in this temple, "then hear in heaven and act and judge Your servants by condemning the wicked and punishing him as he deserves and by justifying the righteous and giving him according to his righteousness.

"If Your people Israel sin against You and so the enemy defeats them, but then they turn to You, confess Your name, pray and plead with You in this temple, "then hear in heaven, forgive the sins of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the country You gave their fathers.

"When the sky is shut up and there's no rain because they sin against You, if then they pray toward this place, confess Your name, and turn away from their sins because You made them suffer, "then hear in heaven and forgive the sins of your servants and Your people Israel; teach them how to live a good life and let rain fall on Your land that you gave Your people as a possession.

"When there is a famine in the country or a plague; when there are blight, mildew or swarms of destructive grasshoppers; or when their enemies are in the country, besieging the people at their gates; or whatever plague or sickness there may be, "if anyone of all Your people Israel, whose heart convicts him, who prays or pleads, spreading out his hands toward this temple— "then hear in heaven where You live, forgive and act. Give each what he deserves as You know his heart—You alone know the

hearts of all people—"in order that they may fear You as long as they live in the country You gave our fathers.

"Also the stranger who isn't one of Your people Israel but has come from a distant country because of Your name— "men will hear about Your great name. Your powerful hand and outstretched arm—when he comes and prays toward this temple, "then hear in heaven where You live and do all which the stranger asks of You, so that all the people in the world will know Your name and fear You like Your people Israel and will know also that this temple I built bears Your name.

"When Your people go out to fight against their enemies whichever way You send them, and they pray to the LORD in the direction of the city You chose and the temple I built for Your name, "then hear in heaven what they pray, and plead and do for them what is right.

"When they sin against You—there's no one who doesn't sin—and You are angry with them and put them in the hands of the enemy, who takes them as prisoners to a country far or near, "if in the land of exile they come to their senses and repent and plead with You in the land of exile, saying, 'We have sinned, done wrong, and been wicked,' "if they turn to You with all their heart and all their lives in the land of exile, and they pray turning toward the land that You gave their fathers, and toward the city You chose, and toward the temple I built for Your name— "then hear in heaven where You live what they pray and plead, and do for them what is right, "forgive Your

people, who have sinned against You, all their wrongs by which they've wronged You, and cause those who captured them to have mercy on them "because they are Your people and Your possession whom You brought out of Egypt from the middle of the iron smelter. "Always give attention when Your servant pleads and Your people Israel ask for mercy, and listen to them whenever they call on You, "since You separated them from all the people of the world to be Your possession, as You promised through Your servant Moses when You, LORD God, brought our fathers out of Egypt."

Solomon Blesses the People

"When Solomon finished praying all this prayer to the LORD, he rose before the LORD's altar where he was kneeling with his hands stretched out toward heaven. "Then he stood and blessed the whole community of Israel, saying out loud: "Blessed be the LORD who has given His people Israel rest just as He promised. Not one of all the good promises He made by His servant Moses has failed to come true. "The LORD our God be with us as He was with our fathers. May He never leave us or forsake us "but incline our hearts toward Him so that we will live in His ways, and keep His commandments, His rules, and His ordinances that He ordered our fathers to keep. "May what I have prayed before the LORD be near the LORD our God day and night so He will give His servants and His people Israel justice every day as it is needed, "so that the people of the world may know the LORD is God and there is no other. "May your hearts be

altogether true to the LORD our God so you will live according to His rules and keep His commandments as you do today."

"Then the king and all Israel with him offered sacrifices before the LORD. "Solomon offered as peace sacrifices to the Lord: 22,000 cattle, 120,000 sheep; and so the king and all the people of Israel dedicated the LORD's temple.

"On that day the king consecrated the inner area of the court before the LORD's temple; where he offered the burnt offerings, the food offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings because the bronze altar before the LORD was too small to hold all the burnt offerings, the food offerings, and the fat of the peace offerings.

"At that time Solomon and all Israel with him celebrated the festival.^f It was a large crowd that had come from the land between Hamath and the river of Egypt to be before the LORD our God seven days.^g "On the eighth day he dismissed the people. They blessed the king and went to their tents, joyful and happy at heart for all the good the LORD had done to His servant David and His people Israel.

"I Have Heard Your Prayers"

9 When Solomon finished building the LORD's temple and the king's palace—everything Solomon delighted in doing—^hthe LORD appeared to Solomon a second time, as He had appeared to him in Gibeon. "I have heard your prayers and your pleas that you made before Me," the LORD

said to him. "I have consecrated this temple you built to put My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will always be there. "If you will live before Me as your father David lived, with a sincere heart and righteously, and do everything I ordered and keep My rules and My regulations, "I will establish forever your royal throne over Israel as I promised your father David when I said, 'You will always have a man on the throne of Israel.' "But if you and your descendants will turn away and not follow Me and not keep My commandments and regulations that I set before you, but will live and serve other gods and worship them, "then I will cut off Israel from the land I gave them, and I will reject this temple I consecrated for My name, and Israel will be a byword and a taunt among the nations. "And everyone passing by this temple, lofty as it is, will be amazed and will hiss and ask, 'Why did the LORD do this to this country and this temple?' "And people will answer, 'They forsook the LORD their God, who brought their fathers out of Egypt, and they took hold of other gods, worshiped and served them. That is why the LORD brought all this calamity on them.' "

"At the end of 20 years, in which Solomon built the two structures, the LORD's temple and the king's palace— "Hiram king of Tyre had supplied Solomon with cedars and cypress lumber and with gold for everything he wanted to do—then King Solomon gave Hiram 20 towns in the country of Galilee. "Hiram left Tyre to see the towns Solomon

^fthe festival of Booths

^gGk; Heb adds and again 7 days, that is 14 days. But see v. 66

gave him, but they didn't look good to him. ¹³"What kind of towns are these you gave me, my brother?" he asked. They are still called the country of Cabul today. ¹⁴Hiram had sent the king 120 talents of gold.

Forced Labor

¹⁵This is the record of the forced labor King Solomon drafted to build the LORD's temple and his own palace, the Millo and the walls of Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer. ¹⁶(Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and captured Gezer, burned it down, and killed the Canaanites living in the town, and had given it as a wedding present to his daughter, Solomon's wife. ¹⁷So Solomon rebuilt Gezer.) He built Lower Beth-horon, ¹⁸Baalath, Tamar in the wilderness, within the country, ¹⁹and all the storage towns Solomon had, the towns for his chariots and war horses, and that which Solomon took delight to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the country he ruled over.

²⁰All the people who were left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, who were not a part of the people of Israel, ²¹had descendants who were left in the land after them. The Israelites had not been able to destroy them completely. Solomon drafted these for slave labor, and so it is today. ²²Solomon didn't make any of the Israelites slaves, but they served him as fighting men, as his commanders and lieutenants, and as the captains of his chariots and of his cavalry. ²³The officers who were in charge of the work for Solomon numbered 550 men, who directed the people who did the work.

²⁴But Pharaoh's daughter moved

from David's city to her palace that Solomon built for her. Then he built the Millo.

²⁵Three times a year Solomon offered burnt offerings and peace offerings on the altar he built for the LORD; he offered it on the altar that was before the LORD. And so he finished the building.

²⁶King Solomon built a fleet in Ezion-geber, which is near Elath on the shore of the Red Sea in Edom. ²⁷With the fleet Hiram sent his own servants, experienced seamen, to be with Solomon's men. ²⁸They went to Ophir and got from there 420 talents of gold and brought it to King Solomon.

The Queen of Sheba

10 When the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon (due to the LORD's name) she came in order to test him with puzzling questions. ²She came to Jerusalem with a great following, with camels carrying spices, a large quantity of gold, and precious stones. When she came to Solomon she told him everything she had on her mind. ³Solomon explained all her problems to her; none of them were too difficult for the king to explain to her.

⁴When the queen of Sheba saw all of Solomon's wisdom, the palace he built, ⁵the food on his table, how his officers sat and his servants stood, their garments, his cupbearers, and the sacrifices which he offered up at the LORD's temple, she was breathless. ⁶"It was true," she told the king, "what I heard in my country about you and your wisdom. ⁷But I didn't believe what I was told till I came and saw it with my own eyes. Actually I wasn't told half of it. You have more

¹⁰
2-8 Mt 12:42
Lk 11:31

wisdom and prosperity than anything I've heard. ^aHappy are your men,^b happy are these servants of yours who always stand before you and listen to your wisdom. ^aBlessed be the LORD your God, who is pleased with you and has put you on the throne of Israel; because of the LORD's eternal love for Israel, He has made you king so that you might do what is just and right." ¹⁰She gave the king 120 talents of gold, a very large quantity of spices, and precious stones. Never again did such a quantity of spices come there as the queen of Sheba gave King Solomon.

¹¹(Hiram's fleet that brought gold from Ophir also brought from Ophir a great quantity of almag wood and precious stones. ¹²With the almag wood the king made supports for the LORD's temple and the king's palace and lyres and lutes for the singers. Never again has such almag wood come there or been seen to this day.)

¹³King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba anything she wanted, whatever she asked for, besides what he gave her from the royal stores. Then she and her servants returned and went to her own country.

¹⁴The gold that came to Solomon in one year weighed 666 talents. ¹⁵beside that which came from the traveling merchants and the business of the traders and all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the country.

¹⁶King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold, using 600 shekels of gold on each shield. ¹⁷He made 300 small shields of beaten gold, using three minas of gold on each shield. The king put them in the

House of the Forest of Lebanon.

¹⁸The king also made a large throne of ivory and covered it with pure gold. ¹⁹There were six steps going up to the throne, and the head of a calf was on the back of it. There were arms on each side of the seat, and two lions stood by the arms. ²⁰Twelve lions stood there on each side of the six stairs. None exactly like this had been made in any other kingdom.

²¹All the king's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon were of fine gold; none were of silver, because it wasn't considered as valuable in Solomon's time. ²²The king had at sea a fleet of Tarshish with the fleet of Hiram. The fleet of Tarshish came once every three years bringing gold and silver, ivory, apes and baboons.

²³In wealth and in wisdom King Solomon became greater than all the other kings of the world. ²⁴The whole world wanted to have an audience with Solomon and listen to the wisdom that God put in his mind. ²⁵And everyone brought his tribute, articles of silver and gold, garments, myrrh, spices, horses, and mules, and this was the way it went year after year.

²⁶Solomon gathered chariots and horses. He had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horses. He placed some in chariot towns and others near the king in Jerusalem. ²⁷The king made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem, and cedars as plentiful as sycamore fig trees in the low hills.

²⁸Solomon imported horses from Egypt and Cilicia. The king's traders got them from Cilicia for a fixed

^bThe versions say your wives

price. ⁹A chariot was imported from Egypt for 600 shekels of silver, and a horse for 150. And so all the Hittite and Aramaean kings got their horses through Solomon's agents.

Solomon's Wives and Their Idolatry

11 King Solomon loved, along with Pharaoh's daughter, many foreign women, women of Moab, Ammon, Edom, Sidon, and of the Hittites. ²These belonged to nations about which the LORD had told the people of Israel, "Don't marry them, and don't let them marry you. They will certainly lure you to follow their gods." But Solomon desired their love. ³He had 700 wives who were princesses and 300 concubines, who lured his heart away. ⁴So as Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart away to follow other gods, and he was no more altogether true to the LORD his God as his father David had been. ⁵Solomon followed Astarte, the goddess of the Sidonians, and Milcom, the idol of the Ammonites. ⁶So Solomon did what was wrong before the LORD and wasn't loyal to the LORD like his father David. ⁷Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh, the abominable idol of Moab, on the mount east of Jerusalem, and for Molech, the idol of the Ammonites. ⁸He did this for all his foreign wives, who were burning incense and sacrificing to their gods.

⁹Then the LORD got angry with Solomon because his heart had turned from the LORD, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice ¹⁰and had warned him not to follow other gods; but he didn't do what God ordered him to do.

¹¹"Because this is in your mind," the LORD told Solomon, "and you haven't kept My covenant and My decrees that I ordered you to keep. I will certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to a servant of yours. ¹²But for the sake of your father David I will not do this while you're living; I will tear it from your son's hands. ¹³And I will not tear the whole kingdom from you; I will give your son one tribe for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem that I chose."

Solomon's Enemies: Hadad

¹⁴The LORD raised a man to oppose Solomon, Hadad, an Edomite, of the Edomite royalty. ¹⁵After David had conquered Edom, Joab, the captain of the army, went up to bury the slain and he proceeded to kill the male population of Edom. ¹⁶(Joab and all Israel stayed there 6 months till they had killed every male in Edom). ¹⁷But Hadad and certain of his father's Edomite servants fled with him to go to Egypt while Hadad was still a little boy. ¹⁸They started out from Midian and came to Paran. Taking some men from Paran, they came to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave Hadad a home, a food allotment, and land. ¹⁹Pharaoh liked Hadad very much and gave him as his wife his own wife's sister, the sister of Queen Tahpenes. ²⁰He and the sister of Tahpenes had a son, Genubath. Tahpenes raised him in Pharaoh's palace, and Genubath lived at the palace among Pharaoh's children.

²¹When Hadad heard in Egypt that David lay buried with his fathers and that Joab, the captain of the army, was dead, he said to Pharaoh,

"Let me leave and go to my own country."

"What are you lacking here with me," Pharaoh asked him. "that you should be eager to go home?"

"I lack nothing," he said. "But let me leave."

Rezon

²³God also raised up Rezon, Eliada's son, to oppose him. He fled from his master, Hadadezer king of Zobah. ²⁴He gathered men and became captain of a band of warriors when David killed the men (of Zobah). They went to Damascus and lived there and ruled in Damascus. ²⁵He opposed Israel as long as Solomon lived, beside the evil that Hadad did. He abhorred Israel and ruled over Syria.

Jeroboam

²⁶There was also Jeroboam, Nebat's son from Zeredah in Ephraim. His mother, whose name was Zeruah, was a widow. He was one of Solomon's courtiers, but he rebelled against the king. ²⁷This was the situation when he rebelled: Solomon built the Millo and repaired the breach in the city of his father David. ²⁸Now this man Jeroboam was a very able man. Solomon saw how hard the man worked, and he put him in charge of all the forced labor of the tribe of Joseph.

²⁹At that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah of Shiloh found him on the road. Ahijah had on a new garment, and the two of them were alone in the open country. ³⁰Ahijah took hold of the new garment he had on and tore it in 12 pieces. ³¹"Take 10 pieces," he told Jeroboam, "for the LORD, the God of Israel, says this: 'I am going to tear the kingdom away

from Solomon and give you 10 tribes. ³²He will keep one tribe for the sake of My servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city I have chosen among all the tribes of Israel. ³³I will do this because he has forsaken Me and worshiped Astarte, the god of the people of Sidon; Chemosh, the god of Moab; Milcom, the god of Ammon; and has not lived in My way by doing what is right before Me and keeping My rules and ordinances as his father David did. ³⁴I will not take the whole kingdom from him but will allow him to rule as long as he lives for the sake of My servant David whom I chose, who kept My commandments and rules. ³⁵But I will take the kingdom away from his son and give you 10 tribes. ³⁶I will give his son one tribe so that My servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem, the city I chose so that I could put My name there. ³⁷I will take you to rule over all the country you want, and you will be king over Israel. ³⁸And if you will listen to all I order you to do, live in My way, and do what is right before Me, keeping My rules and My commandments as My servant David did, then I will be with you and build a permanent dynasty for you as I did for David, and I will give you Israel. ³⁹I will make David's descendants suffer for this, but not forever.' "

⁴⁰Then Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam, but Jeroboam left and fled to Shishak king of Egypt and stayed in Egypt till Solomon died.

⁴¹The rest of what Solomon said and everything he did, also his wisdom—are they not written in the records about Solomon? ⁴²Solomon was king of all Israel in Jerusalem for 40 years. ⁴³Solomon went to

rest with his fathers and was buried in the city of David, and his son Rehoboam succeeded him as king.

Rehoboam

12 Rehoboam went to Shechem because all Israel had come there to make him king. ²But Jeroboam, Nebat's son, was still in Egypt, where he had fled from King Solomon. While he was still living there, ³the people sent messengers to invite him back. When he heard the news, Jeroboam and the whole community of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam. ⁴"Your father made our burden heavy," they said, "but now if you make lighter the hard service and the heavy burden he put on us, we will serve you."

⁵"Leave me," he told them, "till the day after tomorrow, then come back to me." So the people left.

⁶King Rehoboam consulted with the old men who had stood before his father Solomon while he was living. "What do you advise I should answer these people?" he asked.

⁷"If today you will be a servant to these people," they told him, "and serve them and talk kindly to them when you answer them, they will always be your servants."

⁸But he turned away from the advice the old men gave him and consulted with the young men who had grown up with him and were standing before him. ⁹"What do you advise I should answer these people," he asked them, "when they tell me, 'Make the burden your father laid on us lighter:'?"

¹⁰The young men who had grown up with him answered him, "Tell these people who say to you, 'Your father made our burden heavy, but you, make it lighter for us,'—tell them this, 'My little finger is thicker

than my father's waist. 'And now, if my father put a heavy burden on you, I will add to it. If my father punished you with whips, I will punish you with scourges.'"

¹¹So when Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam two days later, as the king had said, "Come back the day after tomorrow." ¹²The king gave the people a harsh answer, refusing to take the advice the old men gave him. ¹³"He talked to them as the young men advised. "My father made your burden heavy," he said, "but I will add to it. My father punished you with whips, but I will punish you with scourges." ¹⁴So the king refused to listen to the people because the LORD was shaping events to carry out the promise He made through Ahijah of Shiloh to Jeroboam, Nebat's son.

¹⁵When all Israel saw that the king refused to listen to them, the people answered:

Have we any share in David?

There's no inheritance for us in Jesse's son.

Go home, Israel!

Now look after your own family, David.

So Israel went home. ¹⁷And Rehoboam ruled over the Israelites who lived in the towns of Judah.

¹⁸Then King Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was in charge of the forced labor, but all Israel stoned him to death. And King Rehoboam got on his chariot as fast as he could and escaped to Jerusalem. ¹⁹So Israel has been rebelling against David's dynasty to this day.

²⁰When all Israel heard Jeroboam had come back, they sent men to invite him to their meeting, and they made him king of all Israel. There was nobody outside the tribe of

Judah who followed David's dynasty.

²¹When Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he gathered all the people of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin, 180,000 of the best warriors, to fight against the people of Israel and restore the kingdom for Rehoboam, Solomon's son.

²²But God spoke to Shemaiah, the man of God. ²³"Tell Rehoboam, Solomon's son, king of Judah," He said, "and all the people of Judah and Benjamin, and the rest of the people: ²⁴The LORD says, 'Don't go up and fight against your fellow Israelites. Everyone, go back home, for I have done this.'" So they listened to what the LORD said. They returned and left as the LORD told them.

Jeroboam Introduces Idolatry

²⁵Jeroboam fortified Shechem in the hills of Ephraim and lived there. Then he left that place and fortified Penuel. ²⁶He thought to himself, "Now the kingdom will return to David's line. ²⁷If these people go up and sacrifice in the LORD's temple in Jerusalem, their hearts will turn back to their master, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me."²⁸After getting advice, the king made two golden calves and told the people, "You have been going up to Jerusalem long enough. Here are your gods, Israel, who took you out of Egypt." ²⁹He put the one in Bethel and the other in Dan. ³⁰This became a sin: The people went in procession before one of them all the way to Dan. ³¹And he built shrines on hilltops and took men from all the other people, not descended from Levi, and made them priests.

³²Jeroboam appointed a festival on the 15th day of the eighth month,

just like the festival in Judah, and he went up to the altar in Bethel to sacrifice to the calves he had made. And he placed in Bethel priests from his hill shrines. ³³He went up to his altar in Bethel on the 15th of the eighth month, the month he alone set. So he instituted a festival for Israel and went up to the altar to burn an offering.

A Man of God Bears Witness

13 Then a man of God speaking for the LORD came from Judah to Bethel while Jeroboam was standing at the altar to burn the sacrifice. ²He cried against the altar, speaking for the LORD: "Altar, altar! The LORD says this: 'There will be a son born in David's line. His name will be Josiah. He will sacrifice on you the priests of the hilltop shrines who are burning sacrifices on you, and men's bones will be burned on you.'" ³On that day he gave a miraculous sign, saying, "This is the sign that the Lord promises, 'You will see the altar torn apart and the ashes on it poured out.'"

⁴When the king heard the man of God speak and cry against the altar in Bethel, Jeroboam pointed with his arm stretched out over the altar. "Arrest him," he said. Then his hand that he stretched out against him shriveled so that he couldn't pull it back. ⁵The altar also was torn apart, and the ashes from the altar were poured out; this was the miracle the man of God did at the LORD's command.

⁶Then the king asked the man of God, "Please make an appeal to the LORD your God to be kind, and pray for me that my hand may get well again." So the man of God pleaded with the LORD to be kind, and the

king's hand got well again as it was before.

⁷"Come home with me," the king told the man of God. "take refreshment, and I will give you a reward."

⁸"If you would give me half of your palace," the man of God told the king. "I would not go with you or eat or drink here. ⁹because the LORD has spoken to me and directed me. 'Don't eat or drink.' He said, 'or even go back the way you came.'" ¹⁰So he left on another road and didn't go back the way he had come to Bethel.

A Prophet's Disobedience

¹¹There was an old prophet living in Bethel, and his sons came and told him everything the man of God did in Bethel that day, also the very words he had spoken to the king.

¹²"Which way did he go?" their father asked them. His sons had seen which way the man of God who came from Judah had gone. ¹³"Saddle the donkey for me," he told his sons. When they had saddled the donkey for him, he rode off on it.

¹⁴He went after the man of God and found him sitting under an oak. "Are you the man of God who came from Judah?" he asked him.

"I am," he answered.

¹⁵"Come home with me," he answered, "and eat."

¹⁶"I can't go back with you," he said, "or go home with you, or eat and drink with you there. ¹⁷because the LORD definitely told me. 'Don't eat or drink there, or even go back the way you came.'"

¹⁸"But I'm a prophet like you," he said, "and an angel spoke for the LORD to me. 'Bring him back home with you,' he said, 'so he may eat and drink.'" But he was lying.

¹⁹He went back with him and ate and drank at his home. ²⁰As they were eating at the table, the LORD spoke to the prophet who brought him back. ²¹and he called to the man of God who came from Judah. "The LORD says this," he said, "Because you rebelled against the LORD's Word and didn't do what the LORD your God ordered you, ²²but you came back and ate and drank at this place about which He told you: 'Don't eat or drink there,' your body will not come into the tomb of your ancestors."

²³After the man had eaten and drunk, he saddled the donkey for the prophet he had brought back. ²⁴But when he went away, a lion found him on the way and killed him, and his corpse was thrown on the road. The donkey was standing by it, and also the lion was standing by the body. ²⁵Men who passed by saw the body thrown on the road and the lion standing by the body. They went and told about it in the city where the old prophet was living.

²⁶When the prophet who brought him back from the road heard about it, he said, "It is the man of God who rebelled against the LORD's Word. So the LORD delivered him to the lion, and it tore him in pieces and killed him as the LORD had foretold."

²⁷Then he told his sons, "Put the saddle on the donkey for me." And they put the saddle on it.

²⁸He left and found the body of the man thrown on the road, and the donkey and the lion standing by the body. The lion had not eaten the body nor torn the donkey in pieces. ²⁹The prophet took up the body of the man of God and laid it on the donkey and brought it back. And he went

into his own city to mourn for him and to bury him. ¹⁸He laid his body in his own grave and mourned over him, saying, "O my brother, my brother!" ¹⁹After he had buried him, he said to his sons, "When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God was buried. Lay my body by his body." ²⁰The Word of the LORD that he proclaimed against the altar in Bethel and all the shrines on the hilltops in the towns of Samaria will certainly happen."

²¹After this, Jeroboam didn't give up his evil way but again took men from all the people and made them priests of the hill shrines. He took anyone who was willing and consecrated him to be one of the priests of the hill shrines. ²²This became the sin of the house of Jeroboam so that it had to be cut off and wiped off the earth.

Jeroboam's Son Abijah

14 At that time Abijah, Jeroboam's son, got sick. ¹"Come," Jeroboam told his wife, "disguise yourself so that people will not know you're my wife, and go to Shiloh. There is the prophet Ahijah, who said I would be king of these people. ²Take ten loaves of bread with you, some raisins, and a jar of honey, and go to him. He will tell you what will happen to the boy." ³Jeroboam's wife did this. She started out, went to Shiloh, and came to the home of Ahijah.

Ahijah couldn't see; his eyes had a fixed stare because he was old. ⁴The LORD had told Ahijah, "Jeroboam's wife is coming to ask you about her boy who is sick. Tell her such and such. When she comes, she will pretend to be another woman."

⁵Ahijah heard the sound of her footsteps as she came into the door. ⁶"Come in, wife of Jeroboam," he said. ⁷"Why do you pretend to be somebody else? I've been commissioned to tell you bad news. ⁸Go, tell Jeroboam that the LORD, the God of Israel, says this: 'I took you from the people and gave you a high position as a leader of My people Israel. ⁹I tore the kingdom away from David's line and gave it to you, but you have not been like My servant David, who did what I ordered and followed me loyally, doing only what is right before Me. ¹⁰You have done more wrong than all who were before you. You went and made other gods for yourself and idols of cast metal, provoking Me to anger and turning your back on Me. ¹¹That is why I will bring calamity on Jeroboam's family, cutting off every male of his family in Israel; I will consume every single one to the last of Jeroboam's family as one sweeps away manure till it is gone. ¹²If anyone of Jeroboam's family dies in the city, the dogs will eat him; if anyone dies in the country, the birds of the sky will eat him, for the LORD said it. ¹³Start out now for home. When you step into the city, the child will die. ¹⁴All Israel will mourn for him and bury him. He is the only one of Jeroboam's family who will be properly buried, for in Jeroboam's family only in him was something good found before the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁵The LORD will set up for Himself a king over Israel who will cut off Jeroboam's family. This is the day, and it will happen right now. ¹⁶The LORD will strike Israel so that it will shake like a reed in water, and He will tear Israel out of this fine land

He gave their fathers and will scatter them beyond the river because they made their sacred posts dedicated to Asherah to provoke the LORD. ¹⁶And the LORD will abandon Israel on account of Jeroboam's sin, into which he led Israel."

¹⁷Jeroboam's wife got up, left, and came to Tirzah. When she stepped over the threshold of her home, the boy died. ¹⁸All Israel buried him and mourned for him as the LORD said by his servant, the prophet Ahijah. ¹⁹Everything else about Jeroboam, how he fought and ruled, is written in the history of the kings of Israel. ²⁰Jeroboam ruled 22 years and went to rest with his fathers, and his son Nadab succeeded him as king.

Shishak Takes the Treasures

²¹Rehoboam, Solomon's son, was king of Judah. He was 41 years old when he became king, and he ruled 17 years in Jerusalem, the city the LORD chose of all the tribes of Israel to put His name there. His mother was an Ammonite woman by the name of Naamah.

²²Judah did what was wrong before the LORD. Their sins made Him angry, more than anything their fathers had done. ²³They built for themselves shrines on the hills, sacred pillars and posts dedicated to Asherah on every high hill and under every green tree. ²⁴There were also sacred prostitutes in the country. They did all the abominable things of the people the LORD drove out before Israel.

²⁵In the fifth year of Rehoboam, Shishak the king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem. ²⁶He took the

treasures of the LORD's temple and of the king's palace; he carried them all away. He took all the golden shields Solomon had made. ²⁷To replace them, Rehoboam made bronze shields and had the captains of the guards who guarded the door of the king's palace take care of them. ²⁸As often as the king went into the LORD's temple, the guards carried them and brought them back into the room of the guards.

²⁹Everything else about Rehoboam and all he did are written in the scroll of the annals of Judah's kings. ³⁰There was always war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. ³¹Rehoboam went to rest with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in David's city. (His mother was an Ammonite woman by the name of Naamah.) And his son Abijam succeeded him as king.

Abijam

15 In the 18th year of the reign of Jeroboam, Nebat's son, Abijam started to rule over Judah. ²He ruled three years in Jerusalem. His mother was Maacah, a granddaughter of Abishalom. ³He followed all the sins of his father before him and wasn't loyal to the LORD his God as his ancestor David had been. ⁴But for David's sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem by allowing his son to reign after him and by giving peace to Jerusalem, ⁵because David did what was right before the LORD and didn't turn aside from anything He ordered him to do all his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.¹

⁶Everything else about Abijam, including all he did, is written in the scroll of the annals of Judah's kings.

¹Heb adds *All his life there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam*

There was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. "Abijam went to rest with his fathers and was buried in David's city, and his son Asa succeeded him as king.

Asa

"In the 20th year of Jeroboam king of Israel Asa started to rule over Judah. "He ruled 41 years in Jerusalem. His grandmother was Maacah, a granddaughter of Abishalom.

"Asa did what was right before the LORD, like his ancestor David. "He drove the male sacred prostitutes out of the country and got rid of the idols his father made. "He also deposed his grandmother Maacah from being queen mother, because she made an obscene image dedicated to the goddess Asherah. Asa cut it down and burned it in the valley of Kidron. "Although the pagan hill shrines were not torn down, Asa was at heart loyal to the LORD all his life. "He brought into the LORD's temple the silver, gold, and the utensils he and his father had sanctified.

Asa and Baasha at War

"There was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their lives. "Baasha king of Israel invaded Judah and fortified Ramah to blockade Asa king of Judah.

"So Asa took all the silver and gold that was left in the storerooms of the LORD's temple and in the storerooms of the king's palace and gave them to his men; then he sent these to Benhadad the son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, who lived in Damascus. "There's a treaty between me and you," he said, "as there was

between my father and yours. I am sending you a present of silver and gold. Come now, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel, so he will go and leave me alone."

"Benhadad did what King Asa asked and sent his captains with their armies against the cities of Israel and defeated Ijon, Dan, Abel-beth-maacah, and all Chinneroth with all the country of Naphtali. "When Baasha heard about it, he gave up fortifying Ramah and lived in Tirzah. "Then Asa called out all Judah, excusing nobody, and they carried the stones of Ramah and its lumber with which Baasha had fortified it, and with these Asa fortified Geba in Benjamin and also Mizpah.

"Everything else about Asa, all his mighty deeds, everything he did, the cities he fortified, are written in the scroll of the annals of Judah's kings. But when he was old he had an ailment in his feet. "Asa went to rest with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of his ancestor, David, and his son Jehoshaphat succeeded him as king.

Baasha Wipes Out Jeroboam's Family

"Nadab, Jeroboam's son, started to rule over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and was king of Israel for two years. "He did wrong before the LORD, living in his father's ways and in the sin into which he led Israel.

"Then Baasha, Ahijah's son, of the house of Issachar, plotted against him, and Baasha killed him in Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines, when Nadab and all Israel were besieging Gibbethon. "In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha killed him and

succeeded him as king. ²⁹As soon as he was king, he killed all the rest of Jeroboam's family. He killed every breathing thing that belonged to Jeroboam and didn't leave anyone, as the LORD had said by His servant Ahijah from Shiloh. ³⁰This was because Jeroboam led Israel into sin and made the LORD, the God of Israel, angry.

³¹Everything else about Nadab and all he did are written in the annals of the kings of Israel. ³²There was war between Asa and Baasha all their lives.

³³In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha, Ahijah's son, started to rule over Israel in Tirzah; he ruled 24 years. ³⁴He did evil before the LORD and lived in Jeroboam's ways and in the sin into which he led Israel.

16 The LORD spoke against Baasha to Jehu, Hanani's son. ¹"I raised you from the dust," he said, "and made you a leader of My people Israel, but you have lived in Jeroboam's ways and led My people into sin so as to make Me angry with their sins. ²And so I will wipe out everyone who is with Baasha and his family and make your family like the family of Jeroboam, Nebat's son. ³If anyone from Baasha dies in the city, the dogs will eat him; and if anyone from him dies out in the country, the birds in the air will eat him." ⁴Everything else about Baasha, also what he did and the strength he showed, is written in the scroll of the annals of Israel's kings. ⁵Baasha went to rest with his fathers and was buried in Tirzah, and his son Elah succeeded him as king. ⁶Through the prophet Jehu, Hanani's son, the LORD spoke

against Baasha and his family on account of all the evil he did before the LORD, making Him angry by what he did and by being like Jeroboam's family, and also because he destroyed it.

Elah

¹In the 26th year of Asa king of Judah, Elah, Baasha's son, started to rule over Israel in Tirzah and ruled for two years. ²But his officer Zimri, captain of half of his chariots, plotted against him while he was getting drunk in Tirzah at the home of Arza, who was in charge of the palace in Tirzah. ³Zimri went in, struck him down, and killed him in the 27th year of Asa king of Judah and succeeded him as king. ⁴At the beginning of his rule, as soon as he was on his throne, he killed Baasha's whole family, not leaving a single male of his relatives or friends. ⁵So Zimri destroyed Baasha's whole family, as the LORD had told Baasha by the prophet Jehu, ⁶for all the sins committed by Baasha and his son Elah, and for the way they led Israel into sin, making the LORD, the God of Israel, angry with their worthless idols. ⁷Everything else about Elah, also everything he did, is written in the scroll of the annals of Israel's kings.

Zimri

¹In the 27th year of Asa king of Judah, Zimri was king for 7 days in Tirzah while the people were camping against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines. ²When the people in the camp heard how Zimri had plotted and killed the king, all Israel, on the same day in the camp, made Omri, the captain of the army, king of Israel.

Omri

¹⁷Omri, and all Israel with him, went up from Gibbethon and besieged Tirzah. ¹⁸When Zimri saw the city was taken, he went into the citadel of the king's palace and burned down the king's palace over himself. And so he died ¹⁹on account of the sins he had done—the wrongs he did before the LORD—living in Jeroboam's ways, and on account of the way he led Israel into sin. ²⁰Everything else about Zimri, also how he plotted, is written in the annals of Israel's kings.

²¹Then the people of Israel were divided into two factions. Half of the people were with Tibni, Ginath's son, and wanted him to be king; and half of them were with Omri. ²²But the people who followed Omri proved to be stronger than those who followed Tibni, Ginath's son, and so Tibni died, and Omri was king. ²³Omri became king of Israel in the 31st year of Asa, king of Judah, and he ruled 12 years; he ruled in Tirzah for 6 years.

²⁴He bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver. He fortified the hill and called the city he built Samaria, after the name of its former owner, Shemer.

²⁵Omri did wrong before the LORD, and worse than all who were before him. ²⁶He followed all the ways of Jeroboam, Nebat's son, by sinning and leading Israel into sin, and by making the LORD, the God of Israel, angry with their worthless idols.

²⁷Everything else about Omri, also what he did and the strength he showed, is written in the scroll of the annals of Israel's kings. ²⁸He

went to rest with his fathers and was buried in Samaria, and his son Ahab succeeded him as king.

Ahab

²⁹Ahab, Omri's son, started to rule over Israel in the 38th year of Asa king of Judah, and he was king of Israel in Samaria for 22 years. ³⁰Ahab, Omri's son, did wrong before the LORD, worse than all who were before him. ³¹It wasn't enough that he lived in the sin of Jeroboam, Nebat's son; he also married Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the people of Sidon. He went and served Baal and worshiped him. ³²He set up an altar for Baal in the temple he built for him in Samaria. ³³Ahab made the sacred post of the goddess Asherah. Ahab did more to make the LORD, the God of Israel, angry than all the kings who were before him.

³⁴In his time Hiel from Bethel rebuilt Jericho. With the loss of his firstborn, Abiram, he laid the foundation. And with the loss of Segub, his youngest son, he set up its gates. This fulfilled what the LORD had said by Joshua the son of Nun.

Elijah

17 Elijah, who was from Tishbe and lived in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be no dew or rain these coming years unless I say so."

²Then the LORD spoke to him: "Get away, and turn east and hide beside the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. You will drink from the stream, and I've ordered the crows to feed you there."

³He left and did what the LORD told him. He went and lived at the

stream Cherith, east of the Jordan. ⁶And the crows brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the stream.

⁷But after some time the stream dried up because no rain had fallen in the country. ⁸Then the LORD spoke to him: ⁹"Leave and go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and stay there. I've ordered a widow there to feed you."

The Widow of Zarephath

¹⁰He left and went to Zarephath. As he came to the gate of the town, a widow was gathering wood, and he called to her: "Please bring a little water in a jar for me to drink." ¹¹As she was going to get it, he called to her again: "Please bring me a bite of bread."

¹²"As the LORD your God lives," she answered, "I don't have anything baked; only a handful of flour in the jar and a little oil in the jug. I'm gathering a few sticks. I will go and prepare something for myself and my boy so we may eat it and then die."

¹³"Don't be afraid," Elijah told her. "Go and do as you said, but first make me a little cake of it, bring it to me, and after that prepare something for yourself and your boy. ¹⁴The LORD, the God of Israel, says this: 'The jar of flour will never get empty, and the jug will never lack oil till the LORD sends rain on the land.'"

¹⁵She went and did what Elijah told her, and so she, he, and her family ate for a long while. ¹⁶The jar of flour never got empty, and the jug never lacked olive oil, as the LORD had promised by Elijah.

¹⁷Later the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, got sick. He

got so very sick that finally there was no breath left in him. ¹⁸"Leave me alone, man of God," she told Elijah. "Did you come to remind me of my sin and kill my boy?"

¹⁹"Give me your boy," he asked her. He took him from her arms and carried him to the upper room where he was staying and laid him on his own bed. ²⁰Then he cried to the LORD. "LORD my God," he said, "would You also bring misery on the widow I'm staying with by killing her boy?" ²¹Then he stretched himself out on the boy three times and called to the LORD, "O LORD my God, please make this boy live again." ²²The LORD did what Elijah asked, and the life of the boy returned again to his body and so he lived.

²³Elijah took the boy, brought him down from the upper room of the house, and gave him to his mother. "Look," Elijah said, "your boy is alive."

²⁴"Now I'm convinced," the woman told Elijah, "you are a man of God and the LORD's Word you speak is the truth."

18 After a long time, in the third year, the LORD spoke to Elijah: "Go, present yourself to Ahab; I will let rain fall on the ground." ²So Elijah went to present himself to Ahab.

Obadiah

The famine was severe in Samaria. ³Ahab called Obadiah, who was in charge of his palace. Obadiah held the LORD in great reverence. ⁴When Jezebel killed the LORD's prophets, Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them, fifty at a time, in caves and kept them alive on bread and water. ⁵"Go through the country,"

17
9 Lk 4:26
18 Mt 8:29
Mk 1:24

Ahab told Obadiah, "to all the springs of water and streams. Perhaps we can find grass and keep the horses and mules alive and not lose any animals." "So they divided the country in order to go through it. Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went the other way by himself.

"When Obadiah was on the way, he met Elijah. He recognized him and bowed down with his face on the ground. "Is it you, my master Elijah?" he asked.

"Yes," he answered him. "Go, tell your master, 'Elijah is here.' "

"What wrong have I done," he asked, "that you should hand your servant over to Ahab to be killed? "As the LORD your God lives, there is no people or kingdom to which my master hasn't sent men to search for you. When they would say, 'He isn't here,' he made the kingdom and the people take an oath that they hadn't found you. "And now you say, 'Go, tell your master, Elijah is here.' "This is what will happen: When I leave you, the LORD's Spirit will take you away I don't know where. Suppose I go and tell Ahab, and then he doesn't find you. He will kill me. But I, your servant, have feared the LORD since I was a child. "Wasn't my master told what I did when Jezebel killed the LORD's prophets, how I hid a hundred of the LORD's prophets, fifty at a time, in caves and kept them alive on bread and water? "And now you say, 'Go, tell your master, Elijah is here.' He will kill me."

"As the LORD of armies lives, whom I serve," Elijah said, "today I will present myself to him."

"So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him.

Elijah Meets Ahab

Then Ahab went to meet Elijah: "When he saw Elijah, Ahab said, "So there you are, you troubler of Israel!"

"I haven't troubled Israel," he answered, "but you and your father's family have done it by giving up the LORD's commandments and following Baal. "And now, send men to bring all Israel to Mount Carmel and also the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah who eat at Jezebel's table."

Elijah on Mount Carmel

"Ahab sent men to all Israel and gathered the prophets to Mount Carmel. "Elijah stepped before all the people. "How long are you going to straddle the fence?" he asked them. "If the LORD is God, follow Him; and if Baal, follow him." The people didn't answer him.

"I'm the only prophet of the LORD who is left," Elijah told the people, "and there are 450 prophets of Baal. "Bring two bulls and let them choose one for themselves, cut it in pieces, lay it on the wood, and put no fire under it. I will take the other bull, put him on the wood, and put no fire under it. "Then you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD, and then the god who answers by fire, he is God."

"That is good," all the people answered.

"Choose one bull for yourselves," Elijah told the prophets of Baal, "and prepare yours first, because you are many, and call on the name of your gods, but don't add any fire."

"They took the bull, prepared it,

and called on the name of Baal from morning until noon. "Baal, answer us!" they said. But no one spoke or answered. So they danced with a limping step at the altar they had made. ²⁷By noon Elijah started to mock them. "Call out loud," he said, "because he's a god. Perhaps he's thinking! Or is busy; or he has gone away! Or he may be sleeping and has to wake up!"

²⁸So they called out loud, and according to their custom they cut themselves with swords and lances till the blood flowed on them. ²⁹And in the afternoon they raved on until the time of the evening offering. But no one spoke or answered or paid attention to them.

³⁰Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near me." And all the people came near him. He rebuilt the LORD's altar that was torn down. ³¹Elijah took 12 stones, as many as there were tribes of the sons of Jacob to whom the LORD had said, "Your name will be Israel." ³²With the stones he built an altar in the LORD's name and made a trench around the altar, deep enough to hold two measures of seed. ³³He arranged the wood, cut up the bull, and laid it on the wood.

³⁴"Fill four jars with water," he said, "and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood." Then he said, "Do it again," and they did it again. Then he said, "Do it a third time," and they did it a third time. ³⁵The water flowed around the altar, and even the trench was filled with water.

³⁶At the time when the evening offering was made, the prophet Elijah stepped forward. "LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel," he said, "let the people learn today that You are God in Israel, that I'm Your

servant and have done all these things at Your command. ³⁷Hear me, LORD, hear me, so these people may know that You, LORD, are God and You turn their hearts back to You."

³⁸So the LORD's fire fell down and consumed the burnt offering, wood, stones, dirt, and licked up the water that was in the trench. ³⁹All the people saw it and fell down on their face. "The LORD is God!" they said, "the LORD is God!"

⁴⁰"Arrest the prophets of Baal," Elijah told them. "Don't let anyone of them escape." They arrested them, and Elijah took them down to the stream Kishon and killed them there.

⁴¹Then Elijah told Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink. It sounds like a heavy rain." ⁴²Ahab went up to eat and drink.

Elijah went to the top of Carmel, bowed down to the ground, and put his face between his knees. ⁴³"Please go up," he told his boy. "Look toward the sea." When he had gone up and looked, he said, "There's nothing." "Go back," he told him seven times.

⁴⁴After the seventh time he said, "There's a little cloud like a man's hand, coming up from the sea."

"Go and tell Ahab," he said, "'Hitch up the chariot and go down so the rain won't stop you.'"

⁴⁵Gradually the sky grew darker with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. Ahab rode and went to Jezreel. ⁴⁶The LORD's power was on Elijah. He fastened his clothes around his waist and ran ahead of Ahab till they came to Jezreel.

At Mount Horeb

19 Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and especially how he killed all the prophets with the sword. ²Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah. ³"May the gods punish me again and again," she said. "if by this time tomorrow I don't do to you what you did to them."

⁴Frightened, Elijah fled to save his life and came to Beersheba, which belonged to Judah, and he left his servant there. ⁵Then he traveled for a day into the wilderness, sat under a broom tree, and wished he were dead. "I've had enough now, LORD," he said. "Take my life—I'm no better than my fathers." ⁶He lay down under a broom tree and slept.

Then an angel came and touched him. ⁷"Get up and eat," he told him. ⁸When he looked, he saw near his head some bread baked on hot stones and a jar of water. So he ate and drank and lay down again.

⁹The angel came back again and touched him. "Get up and eat," he told him. "or your journey will be too much for you."

¹⁰He got up, ate, and drank. Strengthened by that food, he went on for 40 days and nights till he came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ¹¹There he entered the cave and spent the night.

Then the LORD spoke to him. "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He asked him.

¹²"I've been very zealous for the LORD, the God of armies," he answered, "because Israel has forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I'm the

only one left, and they're trying to kill me!"

¹³"Go out," He said, "and stand on the mountain before the LORD."

Then, as the LORD was passing by, a great and mighty wind was tearing mountains and shattering rocks ahead of the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind came an earthquake, but the LORD wasn't in the earthquake. ¹⁴After the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD wasn't in the fire. **And after the fire there was a gentle, quiet Voice.** ¹⁵When Elijah heard that, he wrapped his face in his mantle, went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

Then a Voice spoke to him saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

¹⁶"I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of armies," he answered, "because Israel has forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. Now I'm the only one left, and they're trying to kill me."

¹⁷"Make your way back to the wilderness near Damascus," the LORD told him, "and when you come there, anoint Hazael as king of Syria, ¹⁸anoint Jehu, Nimshi's son, as king of Israel, and Elisha, Shaphat's son of Abel-meholah, as prophet in your place. ¹⁹If anyone escapes from Hazael's sword, Jehu will kill him, and if anyone escapes from Jehu's sword, Elisha will kill him. ²⁰But I will leave in Israel 7,000, none of whom have knelt before Baal, none of whom have kissed him."

Elisha

²¹When Elijah left, he found Elisha, Shaphat's son. He was plowing behind 12 yoke of oxen; he

^{10, 14 Ro 11,3}
^{18 Ro 11,4}

himself was using the 12th. Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle on him. ²⁰So he left the oxen and ran after Elijah. "Please let me kiss my father and mother good-bye," he said, "and then I will follow you."

"Go back," he answered him. "What have I done to keep you?"

²¹Elisha left him, took a yoke of oxen, butchered them, and using the yokes of the oxen, boiled the meat, and gave it to the people to eat. Then he started to follow Elijah and serve him.

Benhadad

20 Benhadad king of Aram gathered his whole army together. There were 32 kings with him, and horses and chariots. He went up and besieged Samaria and fought against it. ²He sent messengers into the city to Ahab king of Israel to tell him. "Benhadad says this: ³Your silver and gold are mine, and your wives and the finest of your sons are mine.' "

"As you say, my lord the king," the king of Israel answered, "I am yours with everything I have."

⁴But Benhadad's messengers came again and said, "Benhadad says, 'I merely asked that you give me your silver and gold, your wives and your children. ⁵But now I'm going to send my servants to you tomorrow at this time to search your home and the homes of your servants. They will lay their hands on anything that is precious to you and take it away.' "

⁷Then the king of Israel called for all the elders of the country. "Just notice and see," he said, "how he's trying to ruin us; when he sent for my wives and children, my silver and gold, I didn't refuse him."

"Don't listen to him," all the

elders and all the people told him, "and don't agree to do what he tells you."

⁹"Tell my lord the king," he told Benhadad's messengers, "I have been ready to do everything your messengers told your servant the first time, but I can't do this.'" The messengers left to take back his answer.

¹⁰Then Benhadad sent messengers to him. "May the gods punish me again and again," he said, "if there'll be enough dust of Samaria to fill the hands of all the troops that will follow me."

¹¹The king of Israel answered him, "When you fasten your armor, don't brag as though you're taking it off."

¹²When Benhadad, who was drinking with the kings in their quarters, heard this, he told his men, "Get ready!" So they got ready to attack the city.

¹³Then a prophet came to Ahab king of Israel. "The LORD says this," he said: "Have you seen this whole mass of people? I will put them into your hands today; then you will know I am the LORD.' "

"How?" Ahab asked.

He answered, "The LORD says this: 'By using the young servants of the district governors.' "

"Who will start the fighting?" he asked.

"You," he answered.

¹⁵He counted the young servants of the district governors: There were 232. After these he counted all the troops, all the men of Israel: There were 7,000. ¹⁶They made a raid at noon when Benhadad was in his quarters getting drunk with the 32 kings who were helping him. ¹⁷The servants of the district governors went out first. When

Benhadad sent men, these reported to him: "Some men have come out of Samaria."

¹⁸"Whether they have come out in peace or to fight," he said, "take them alive."

¹⁹So the young servants of the district governors and the troops that followed them made a raid from the city, ²⁰and each struck down his man. The Aramaeans fled, and Israel pursued them. Benhadad king of Aram escaped on a horse with the cavalry. ²¹The king of Israel went out and struck down the horses and chariots and inflicted a great defeat on the Aramaeans.

Battle at Aphek

²²Then the prophet came to the king of Israel. "Go," he said, "reinforce yourself. Understand well and watch what you're doing; when spring comes, the king of Aram will come up to attack."

²³But the officers of the king of Aram told him, "Their god is a god of the hills, and so they were stronger than we are. But if we fight them on level ground, we will certainly be stronger than they are. ²⁴Now do this: Take away each of the kings from his post, and substitute governors for them. ²⁵And get an army as large as the one you lost, as many horses and as many chariots. Then, if we fight them on level ground, we'll certainly be stronger than they are." He took their advice and did it.

²⁶Spring came, and he mustered the Aramaeans and went up to Aphek to fight against Israel. ²⁷When Israel had been mustered and provided with food, they went out to meet them. The Israelites camped opposite them like two little

flocks of kids, while the Syrians filled the country.

²⁸The man of God came again. "The LORD says this," he told the king of Israel: "'Because the Aramaeans have said, the LORD is the god of the hills and not the god of the valleys, I will put this vast crowd in your hands. Then you will know I am the LORD.'"

²⁹They camped facing one another for seven days, and on the seventh day the battle started, and Israel struck down 100,000 Aramaean foot soldiers in one day. ³⁰The rest fled to Aphek, into the town, where the wall fell on 27,000 men who were left. Benhadad also fled and, coming into the city, took refuge in an inner room.

³¹"You know," his men told him, "the kings of Israel are kind. Let us put sackcloth on our waists, and ropes around our necks, and go out to the king of Israel. He may spare your life." ³²So they put sackcloth on their waists, ropes around their necks, and went to the king of Israel and said, "Your servant Benhadad says, 'Please let me live.'"

"Is he still alive?" he asked. "He is my brother."

³³The men, watching for a good sign, were quick to take him at his word. "Benhadad is your brother," they said.

"Go in, get him," he said. Then Benhadad came out to him and Ahab brought him up on his chariot.

³⁴"I will give back the towns my father took from your father," Benhadad told him, "and you may set up bazaars for yourself in Damascus as my father set them up in Samaria."

"I will let you go on these terms," said Ahab. So he made a covenant with him and let him go.

²⁵One man from the group of the prophets spoke to his friend by the LORD's authority: "Strike me," but the man refused to strike him. ²⁶"Since you didn't do what the LORD told you," he said to him, "a lion will kill you when you leave me." When he left him, a lion found him and killed him.

²⁷Then he found another man. "Strike me," he said. The man struck him hard and wounded him.

²⁸Then the prophet, disguising himself with a bandage on his eyes, waited for the king on the road ²⁹and called to the king as he passed by. "Your servant went out into the middle of the battle when a man turned and brought another man to me. 'Keep this man,' he said. 'If he should get away, you will pay for his life with your life, or pay one talent of silver.'" ³⁰But while your servant was busy here and there, he was gone."

"That is your own verdict," the king of Israel told him. "You yourself have decided it."

³¹Then he quickly took the bandage from his eyes, and the king of Israel recognized him as one of the prophets.

³²"The LORD says this," the prophet told him: "Because you let the man who was to be destroyed escape from you, your life will be taken as a substitute for his life and your people for his people."

³³Then the king of Israel went home sullen and angry, and so he came to Samaria.

Naboth's Vineyard

21 Later the following happened. Naboth of Jezreel had a vineyard in Jezreel near the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.

¹"Give me your vineyard," Ahab

told Naboth. "It will be my vegetable garden because it is near my house. I will give you a better vineyard for it, or if you like, I will give you the money for what it is worth."

²"The LORD forbid," Naboth told Ahab, "that I should give you what I inherited from my fathers."

³So Ahab went home, annoyed and angry because Naboth in Jezreel had told him, "I will not give you what I inherited from my fathers," and he lay down on the couch, turned his face away, and refused to eat.

⁴His wife Jezebel came to him. "Why do you feel so peeved," she asked him, "and why¹ don't you eat?"

⁵"I talked to Naboth in Jezreel," he told her. "I asked him, 'Give me your vineyard. I will pay for it, or if you like, I will give you another vineyard for it.' But he said, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'"

⁶"Don't you govern Israel?" she asked him. "Get up, eat, and be cheerful. I will give you Naboth's vineyard in Jezreel." ⁷So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and noblemen living with Naboth in his town. ⁸In these letters she wrote: "Call a fast and have Naboth sit as the first among the people. ⁹Have two worthless men sit opposite him and testify, 'You cursed God and the king.' Then take him out and stone him to death."

¹⁰Then men in his town, the elders and noblemen living in his town, did what Jezebel wanted them to do as she had written in the letters she sent them. ¹¹They called a fast and had Naboth sit as the first among the people. ¹²The two worthless men came in and sat opposite him.

and these worthless men testified against Naboth before the people. "Naboth has cursed God and the king." And they took him out of the town and stoned him to death. "Then they sent men to tell Jezebel. "Naboth has been stoned and is dead."

¹⁵When Jezebel heard Naboth had been stoned to death, she told Ahab. "Get up, take possession of Naboth's vineyard in Jezreel that he refused to give you for money. He isn't alive any more but dead."

¹⁶When he heard Naboth was dead, Ahab got up to go to Naboth's vineyard in Jezreel to take possession of it.

¹⁷Then the LORD spoke to Elijah from Tishbe: ¹⁸"Get up and go to meet Ahab, king of Israel, who lives in Samaria. He has gone down to Naboth's vineyard and is there to take possession of it. ¹⁹Tell him the LORD asks this, 'Have you murdered and also taken possession?' And tell him the LORD says this, 'At the place where the dogs licked Naboth's blood, the dogs will also lick your blood.'"

²⁰Ahab asked Elijah, "Did you find me, my enemy?"

"I found you," he answered, "because you sold yourself to do wrong before the LORD. ²¹I will bring calamity on you. I will destroy everything after you. I will destroy every male of Ahab's line, every single one in Israel. ²²I will make your family like the family of Jeroboam, Nebat's son, and like the family of Baasha, Ahijah's son, because you have made me angry and made Israel sin."

²³The LORD also spoke about Jezebel: "The dogs will devour Jezebel within the boundary of Jezreel. ²⁴If anyone of Ahab dies in

the city, the dogs will devour him, and if anyone dies in the country, the birds in the sky will devour him."

²⁵There just was nobody like Ahab, who, spurred on by his wife, sold himself to do wrong before the LORD. ²⁶It was a great abomination for him to follow idols just as the Amorites had done whom the LORD had driven out before Israel.

²⁷When Ahab heard this, he tore his clothes, put sackcloth on his body, fasted and lay in sackcloth, and went around depressed.

²⁸Then the LORD spoke to Elijah from Tishbe. ²⁹"Do you see how Ahab is humbling himself before Me?" He asked. "Because he's humbling himself before Me, I will not bring calamity on his family while he is living, but during his son's life."

Ahab Dies in Battle

22 For three years there was no war between Aram and Israel. ²In the third year Jehoshaphat king of Judah went down to visit the king of Israel.

³The king of Israel asked his men, "Do you know that Ramoth in Gilead belongs to us, and we are doing nothing to get it back from the king of Aram?" ⁴Then he asked Jehoshaphat, "Will you go with me to fight at Ramoth in Gilead?"

"I will join you in this," Jehoshaphat told the king of Israel, "my troops will be your troops, and my horses your horses." ⁵"First, please find out what the LORD says," Jehoshaphat asked the king of Israel.

⁶So the king of Israel gathered about 400 prophets. "Should I go," he asked them, "and fight against Ramoth in Gilead, or not?"

"Go up," they said. "The LORD will put it in the king's hands."

⁷But Jehoshaphat asked, "Isn't there also a prophet of the LORD here whom we could ask?"

⁸"There's still one man by whom we can ask the LORD," the king of Israel told Jehoshaphat, "but I hate him; he doesn't prophesy anything good about me but only evil—Micaiah, Imlah's son."

"The king must not say that," Jehoshaphat answered.

⁹The king of Israel called an officer. "Quick, get Micaiah, Imlah's son," he said.

¹⁰The king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah were sitting each on his throne, dressed in their robes, on the threshing-floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria, and all the prophets were prophesying before them. ¹¹Zedekiah, Chenaanah's son, made iron horns for himself. "The LORD says this," he said: "With these you will push down the Aramaeans till they are destroyed." ¹²All the other prophets made the same prophecy. "Go up to Ramoth in Gilead," they said, "and win a victory. The LORD will put it in the king's hands."

¹³The messenger who went to call Micaiah told him, "Look here now. The prophets are all agreed to tell the king something good. Please talk like one of them and tell something good."

¹⁴"As the LORD lives," Micaiah answered, "I will say what the LORD tells me."

¹⁵When he came to the king, the king asked him, "Micaiah, should we go and fight against Ramoth in Gilead or not?"

"Go up," he told him, "and win a victory. The LORD will put it in the king's hands."

¹⁶"How many times," the king asked him, "must I get you to promise me solemnly to tell me nothing but the truth in the LORD's name?"

¹⁷"I saw all Israel scattered in the hills," he said, "like sheep without a shepherd. And the LORD said, 'These have no master. Let each one go home peacefully.'"

¹⁸"Didn't I tell you," the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "he will prophesy nothing good about me but only evil?"

¹⁹He added, "Then hear what the LORD says. I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the army of heaven was standing near Him on His right and on His left. ²⁰'Who will persuade Ahab,' the LORD asked, 'So he will attack and fall at Ramoth in Gilead?' One said one thing, and another said another.

²¹"Then a spirit stepped forward and stood before the LORD. 'I will persuade him,' he said.

²²"How?' the LORD asked him.

"I will go out," he answered, "and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all the prophets."

"You will succeed in persuading him," He said, "Go and do it."

²³"So you see, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, but the LORD has spoken evil about you."

²⁴Then Zedekiah, Chenaanah's son, went up to Micaiah and struck him on the cheek. "How did the Lord's Spirit leave me to talk to you?" he asked.

²⁵"You will see," Micaiah answered, "on the day you go and hide yourself in an inner room."

²⁶"Take Micaiah," the king of Israel said, "and bring him back to Amon, the governor of the city, and to Joash, the king's son. ²⁷and say:

²²
¹⁷ Mt 9:36;
Mk 6:34

The king says this: 'Put this fellow in prison and feed him the scantiest bread and water until I come home safely.'

²⁸"If you come back safely," Micajah said, "the LORD has not spoken by me."ⁱ

²⁹So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah went up to Ramoth in Gilead. ³⁰"I will disguise myself and so go into battle," the king of Israel told Jehoshaphat, "but you wear your robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself and then went into battle.

³¹The king of Aram had given orders to the 32 captains of his chariots. "Don't fight with every warrior," he said, "but only with the king of Israel." ³²So when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, "Certainly this is the king of Israel," and they turned to fight against him. Then Jehoshaphat gave a yell. ³³When the captains of the chariots saw he wasn't the king of Israel, they turned away from him.

³⁴But one man drew his bow at random and hit the king of Israel between his scale armor and breastplate. "Turn around," he told the driver of his chariot, "and get me away from these troops; I'm badly wounded." ³⁵As the battle got worse that day, the king was kept propped up in his chariot facing the Aramaeans, but he died in the evening. The blood from the wound had flowed into the bottom of the chariot. ³⁶When the sun went down, a cry went through the army: "Every man to his town and to his country!"

³⁷When the king was dead, he was

brought to Samaria and buried in Samaria. ³⁸The chariot was washed at the pool of Samaria. The dogs licked his blood, and the prostitutes washed in it, as the LORD had said.

³⁹Everything else about Ahab, all that he did, how he built the ivory palace and fortified all the cities, is written in the annals of Israel's kings. ⁴⁰Ahab went to rest with his fathers, and his son Ahaziah succeeded him as king.

Jehoshaphat

"Jehoshaphat, Asa's son, became king of Judah in the fourth year of the rule of Ahab king of Israel. ²Jehoshaphat was 35 years old when he started to rule, and he ruled 25 years in Jerusalem. His mother was Azubah, Shilhi's daughter. ³In every way he followed his father Asa without turning aside. He did what was right before the LORD. But the shrines on the hills were not removed; the people continued to sacrifice and burn incense at them. ⁴Jehoshaphat kept peace with the king of Israel.

⁵Everything else about Jehoshaphat, the great deeds he did and how he fought, all is written in the annals of Judah's kings. ⁶He rid the land of the rest of the sacred male prostitutes who were left there in the time of his father Asa. ⁷There was no king in Edom, but a deputy ruled.

⁸Jehoshaphat made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold, but they didn't go because the ships were wrecked at Ezion-geber. ⁹Then Ahaziah, Ahab's son, said to Jehoshaphat, "Let my servants go

ⁱHeb adds from Micah 1:2. Listen, all peoples

with your servants in the ships." But Jehoshaphat refused.

⁵⁰Jehoshaphat went to rest with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of his father David, and his son Jehoram succeeded him as king.

Ahaziah

⁵¹Ahaziah, Ahab's son, started to rule over Israel in Samaria in the

17th year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he was king of Israel for two years. ⁵²He did wrong before the LORD, living in the ways of his father and mother and in the ways of Jeroboam, Nebat's son, who made Israel sin. ⁵³He served Baal and worshiped him and made the Lord, the God of Israel, angry just as his father had done.

KINGS

Fire From Heaven

1 After Ahab died, Moab rebelled against Israel. ²Ahaziah fell through a lattice that was in his upper room in Samaria, and he was suffering. So he sent messengers. "Go," he told them, "ask Baalzebub, the god at Ekron, if I will get rid of this suffering."

³Then the LORD's angel spoke to Elijah from Tishbe: "Get up and go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria and ask them, 'Is it because there's no God in Israel that you go to get help from Baalzebub, the god at Ekron?' 'That is why the LORD says this, 'You will not leave the bed you lay down on, because you will certainly die.'"

⁵When the messengers returned, the king asked them. "Why did you come back?"

⁶"A man came up to meet us," they told him. " 'Go back to the king who sent you,' he told us. 'And tell him, the LORD says this: Is it because there's no God in Israel that you send men to get help from Baalzebub, the god at Ekron? That is why you will not leave the bed you lay down on, because you will certainly die.'"

⁷"What kind of man came up to meet you and told you this?" he asked them.

⁸"He was hairy," they told him, "and had a leather belt fastened around his waist."

"That's Elijah from Tishbe," he answered.

⁹The king sent a captain of 50 with his men to him. When he came up to him, he was sitting on top of a hill.

"Man of God," he told him, "the king says, 'Come down.'"

¹⁰"If I'm a man of God," Elijah answered the captain, "may fire come down from heaven and devour you and your fifty." Then fire came down from heaven and devoured him and his 50.

¹¹Then he sent another captain with his 50 men to him. "Man of God," he told him, "the king says, 'Hurry down.'"

¹²"If I'm a man of God," Elijah answered them, "may fire come down from heaven and devour you and your men." And God's fire came down from heaven and devoured him and his 50.

¹³For the third time he sent a captain of 50 with his men. The captain of the third group went up and bowed down on his knees before Elijah and begged him. "Man of God," he said to him, "please treat my life and the lives of these fifty servants of yours as something precious. ¹⁴Fire has come from heaven and devoured the first two captains and their hundred men, but now please value my life."

¹⁵The LORD's angel told Elijah, "Go down with him. Don't be afraid of him." So he got up and went down with him to the king. ¹⁶"The LORD says this," he told him: " 'You sent messengers to get help from Baalzebub, the god at Ekron. Is this because there's no God in Israel whose Word you can seek? That is why you will not leave the bed you lay down on; you will certainly die!'"

1
8 Mt 3,4
Mt 1,6
10, 12, 14 Lk
9,54. Rv
11,5, 20,9

¹⁷So he died as the LORD said through Elijah. Jehoram, his brother,^a started to rule in the second year of Jehoram, Jehoshaphat's son, king of Judah, because Ahaziah had no son. ¹⁸Isn't everything else about Ahaziah, what he did, written in the annals of Israel's kings?

Elijah Taken to Heaven

2 When the LORD was going to take Elijah in a whirlwind up to heaven, Elijah and Elisha left Gilgal. ²"Please stay here," Elijah told Elisha; "the LORD is sending me to Bethel."

"As the LORD lives and as you live," Elisha answered, "I will not leave you." So they went down to Bethel.

³Some of the prophets at Bethel came out to Elisha. "Do you know," they asked him, "the LORD is going to take your master from you today?"

"Yes, I know," he answered. "Be silent."

"Elisha, please stay here," Elijah told him; "the LORD is sending me to Jericho."

"As the LORD lives and as you live," he answered, "I will not leave you." And so they went to Jericho.

⁴Then some of the prophets who were in Jericho came to Elisha. "Do you know," they asked, "the LORD is going to take your master from you today?"

"Yes, I know," he answered. "Be silent."

"Please stay here," Elijah told him; "the LORD is sending me to the Jordan."

"As the LORD lives and as you live," he answered, "I will not leave you." So the two went on.

⁵Then 50 of the prophets went and stood at some distance from these two men who stood by the Jordan. ⁶Elijah took his coat, rolled it up, and struck the water. It divided in two parts, and the two men went over on dry ground.

⁷"Ask what I should do for you," Elijah told Elisha when they had crossed over, "before I'm taken away from you."

"May a double share of your spirit be on me," Elisha answered.

⁸"You have asked for something difficult," he said. "If you see me taken away from you, it will be that way, but otherwise not."

⁹As they were walking along and talking, there came a fiery chariot with fiery horses, separating the two, and Elijah went up in a whirlwind to heaven.

¹⁰"My father, my father!" Elisha cried out when he saw it. "Israel's chariot and horses!" When he didn't see him anymore, he took hold of his own garment and tore it in two pieces. ¹¹Then he took up Elijah's coat that had fallen from him, went back, and stood on the bank of the Jordan. "He took the coat Elijah had dropped and struck the water. "Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?" he asked. As he struck the water, it divided in two parts, and Elisha crossed over.

¹²Those prophets who were at Jericho saw him from the distance. "Elijah's spirit," they said, "rests on Elisha." They went out to meet him and bowed down before him. ¹³"You see," they told him, "there are fifty able men with your servants. Please let them go and search for your master; the LORD's Spirit may have lifted him up and

²
¹¹ Mk 16:19;
Lk 24:51;
Rv 11:12

^aGk: *Heb omits his brother*

dropped him on one of the hills or in one of the valleys."

"Don't send them," he answered. "But they kept urging him until, feeling ashamed, he said, "Send them." They sent 50 men who searched for three days without finding him. "They returned to him while he was waiting in Jericho. "Didn't I tell you not to go?" he said.

Miracles of Elisha

"The men of the city told Elisha, "The site of this city is a good one as my master can see, but the water is bad and the ground is barren."

"Bring me a new jar," he said, "and put salt in it." They brought it to him. "He went out to the spring and threw the salt into it. "The LORD says this," he said, "I have healed this water. No more deaths or miscarriages will come from this water." "So the water is still wholesome today as Elisha declared.

Boys Mock Elisha

"From there he went up to Bethel. As he went up along the road, some youths came out of the city and mocked him. "Go up, baldy! Go up, baldy!" they said to him.

"Looking back, he saw them and cursed them in the LORD's name. Then two bears came out of the woods and tore up 42 of these youths. "He left that place and went to Mount Carmel and then back to Samaria.

War with Moab

3 Jehoram, Ahab's son, started to rule over Israel in Samaria in the 18th year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he ruled 12 years. "He did wrong before the LORD, but not like his father and mother, since he

put away the pillar of Baal his father made. "But he lived in the sin of Jeroboam, Nebat's son, which he made Israel do, and Jehoram didn't give it up.

"Now Mesha king of Moab raised sheep and used to pay the king of Israel 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams. "But when Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. "At that time King Jehoram left Samaria to muster all Israel. "He went and sent men to Jehoshaphat king of Judah. "The king of Moab has rebelled against me," he said. "Will you go with me to fight against Moab?"

"I will go up," he answered. "In this I will be like you; my troops will be like your troops, and my horses will be like your horses."

"Which way should we go up?" Jehoram asked.

"Through the wilderness of Edom," he answered.

"So the king of Israel, the king of Judah, and the king of Edom went in a semicircle for 7 days, and then they had no water for the army or the animals that came with them. "Oh my! The LORD has called us three kings together," the king of Israel said, "to put us in Moab's hands."

"Isn't there a prophet of the LORD here," Jehoshaphat asked, "from whom we can get the LORD's help?"

"Elisha, Shaphat's son, is here," a servant of the king of Israel answered. "He used to pour water on Elijah's hands."

"He can speak the LORD's Word," Jehoshaphat said. So the king of Israel, Jehoshaphat, and the king of Edom went down to him.

13 "Why do you come to me?" Elisha asked the king of Israel. "Go to your father's prophets and your mother's prophets."

14 "No," the king of Israel answered him, "the LORD has called us three kings to put us in Moab's hands."

15 "As the LORD of armies lives, whom I serve," Elisha said, "if I didn't respect Jehoshaphat king of Judah, I wouldn't look at you or notice you. 16 But now, get me someone to play some music." While he was playing, the LORD's power came on him, 17 and he said, "The LORD says this: 'Make ditches all over this valley.' 18 The LORD says this: 'You will not see wind or rain, and yet this valley will be filled with water. You, your cattle, and your other animals will drink. 19 But this is nothing for the LORD to do; He will also put Moab in your hands. 20 You will defeat all the walled cities and all the best cities. You will cut down every good tree, close up all the springs of water, and ruin every good field with stones.' 21 And so it happened in the morning. At the time of the food offering there was water flowing from Edom, and the country was filled with water.

22 All Moab heard the kings had come to fight against them, and every man old enough to wear a belt and bear arms was called up, and they stood at the border. 23 When they got up early in the morning and the sun rose over the water, the Moabites saw how the water at a distance was red like blood. 24 "This is blood," they said. "The kings have been fighting one another and have defeated one another. And now, Moabites, let's take their goods."

25 They came into Israel's camp. Then the Israelites arose and

defeated the Moabites so that they fled before them. They went into their country and defeated Moab. 26 They tore down the cities, each one throwing stones on every good field till it was covered. They closed every spring of water, cut down every good tree—till there were left only the stones of Kir-hareseth, which the slingers surrounded and bombarded. 27 When the king of Moab saw the battle was going against him, he took 700 men who could draw a sword to break through to the king of Edom, but he couldn't do it. 28 Then he took his oldest son, who would have succeeded him as king, and sacrificed him as a burnt offering on the wall. There was bitter anger against the Israelites, who then left them alone and went home to their country.

A Jar of Oil

4 One of the wives from the group of the prophets called to Elisha: "My husband, your servant, is dead, and you know how your servant feared the LORD. Now the creditor has come to take my two children with him as slaves."

2 "What should I do for you?" Elisha asked her. "Tell me, what do you have in your house?"

3 "Your maid has nothing in the house except a jar of olive oil," she answered.

4 "Go outside," he said, "and borrow containers from all your neighbors, empty ones, and not just a few. 5 Then go and close the door behind you and your children, and pour oil into all those containers, and set each full one aside."

6 So she left him and shut the door behind her and her children. They kept bringing containers to her, and

she poured into them. ⁶“Bring me another container,” she told her son when the containers were full.

⁷“There are no more containers,” he told her. So the olive oil stopped flowing. ⁸She went and told the man of God.

⁹“Go,” he said, “sell the oil, pay your debt, and live on the rest with your children.”

A Woman of Shunem and Her Son

¹One day Elisha went to Shunem where there was a rich woman. She urged him to eat. And so it happened that whenever he passed by, he turned in there to eat.

²“I know he’s a holy man of God,” she told her husband, “and he’s always passing by us. ³Let us make a little room on the roof with walls, and put a bed, a table, a chair, and a lampstand there for him so he can go there whenever he comes to us.”

⁴One day he came there and went into the upper room and rested there. ⁵“Call this woman of Shunem,” he told his servant Gehazi.

He called her and she stood before him. ⁶“Tell her,” he said to him. ⁷“You have taken all this trouble for us. What should we do for you? Should we talk to the king or the captain of the army for you?”

“I’m living among my own people,” she answered.

“What then should be done for her?” he asked.

“Well, she has no son,” Gehazi answered, “and her husband is old.”

“Call her,” he said. So he called her, and she stood in the door. ¹⁰“In due time next spring,”

he said, “you will hold a boy in your arms.”

“No, my lord,” she answered, “as a man of God, don’t lie to your maid.”

¹¹But the woman conceived and had a son at the right time the next year as Elisha told her.

¹²When the boy had grown, he happened one day to go out to his father among the reapers. ¹³Then he said to his father, “My head, my head!”

“Carry him to his mother,” he told his servant.

¹⁴He took him and brought him to his mother. He sat on her lap till noon and then died. ¹⁵She took him up and laid him on the bed of the man of God, shut the door on him, and went out. ¹⁶She called her husband, “Please send me one of the servants,” she said, “and one of the donkeys, and I will go quickly to the man of God and come back again.”

¹⁷“Why are you going to him today?” he asked. “It isn’t the first of the month or a Sabbath.”

“It will be all right,” she answered.

¹⁸She harnessed the donkey. “Lead him away,” she told her servant. “Don’t hold back the reins unless I ask you.” ¹⁹So she went and came to the man of God at Mount Carmel.

When the man of God saw her coming at a distance, he told his servant Gehazi, “There is that woman from Shunem. ²⁰Run now and meet her and ask her, ‘Are you well? Is your husband well? Is the boy well?’”

“All is well,” she answered.

²¹When she came to the man of God at the mountain, she took hold of his feet. Gehazi went to her to push her away. “Let her alone,” the

man of God said, "she feels bitter, and the LORD has hidden the reason from me and hasn't told me."

²⁸"Did I ask my lord for a son?" she asked. "Didn't I say, 'Don't give me such a hope?'"

²⁹"Pull your garment up under your belt," he told Gehazi, "and take my rod in your hand and go. Whenever you meet anyone, don't greet him, and when he greets you, don't answer him. Then lay my rod on the boy's face."

³⁰"As the LORD lives and as you live," the boy's mother said, "I will not go back without you."

³¹Gehazi went ahead of them and put the rod on the boy's face, but there was no sound or response. So he came back to meet him. "The boy didn't wake up," he told him.

³²When Elisha came to the house, there was the boy lying dead on his bed. ³³He went in and closed the door behind them and prayed to the LORD. ³⁴Then he went up and lay on the boy, putting his mouth on the boy's mouth, his eyes on his eyes, his hands on his hands, and bowed over him, and so the boy's body became warm. ³⁵He came away and walked once back and forth in the room, and then went up and bowed over him. Then the boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes. ³⁶He called Gehazi. "Call the woman of Shunem," he said. He called her. When she came to him, he said, "Take your boy."

³⁷Then she went in and bowed down on the ground at his feet to honor him. She took her son and went out.

Death in the Pot

³⁸Elisha went back to Gilgal. There was a famine in the country. And the group of the prophets was sitting

before him. "Set on the great pot," he told his servant, "and cook the food for the group of the prophets."

³⁹One of them went out into the field to gather vegetables and found a wild vine. He gathered his garment full of wild gourds. Then he came and cut them into the pot of food without knowing what they were. ⁴⁰They poured out the food for the men to eat. And as they were eating it, they cried, "There is death in the pot, man of God." And they couldn't eat it.

⁴¹"Bring some flour," he said. He threw it into the pot. "Pour it out for the people," he said, "so they can eat." Then there was nothing harmful in the pot.

Feeding a Hundred Men

⁴²A man came from Baal-shalisha and brought to the man of God bread of the first grain, 20 barley loaves, and crushed fresh grain in his bag. "Give it to the people," he said, "so they can eat."

⁴³"How can I set this before a hundred men," he asked.

"Give it to the people so they can eat," he said. "The LORD says, 'They will eat and have some of it left over.'"

⁴⁴He set it before them. They ate and had some left over, as the LORD said.

Naaman

5 Naaman the captain of the army of the king of Syria was a great man with his master and highly honored, because the LORD had through him given Syria victory. Although the man was an able soldier, he was a leper.

²On one of the raids the Aramaeans made they had brought back from the country of Israel a

little captive girl, who waited on Naaman's wife. "I wish my master were with the prophet in Samaria," she told her mistress. "Then he would cure him of his leprosy."

"Naaman went and told his lord, "The girl who came from the country of Israel has said so and so."

"Go there," the king of Syria said, "and I will send a letter along for the king of Israel." He left, taking with him 10 talents of silver and 6,000 shekels of gold, and 10 changes of clothes. "He brought the letter to the king of Israel. It read: "And now as this letter reaches you, I'm sending my officer Naaman to you to cure him of his leprosy."

"When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes. "Am I God," he asked, "that I should kill and make alive? This fellow asks me to cure a man of his leprosy. You must certainly understand and realize he's trying to pick a quarrel with me."

"But when Elisha, the man of God, heard how the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent a messenger to the king. "Why did you tear your clothes?" he asked. "Please let him come to me and find out there's a prophet in Israel."

"Naaman came with his horses and his chariot and stopped at the door of Elisha's home. "Elisha sent a messenger to him. "Go and wash seven times in the Jordan," he said, "and your flesh will be healthy again and clean."

"But Naaman got angry and left. "Here I thought," he said, "he will surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, wave his hand over the place,

and heal the leprosy. "Aren't the rivers of Damascus, Abana and Pharpar, better than all the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be clean?" So he turned around and left in a rage.

"But his servants came to him and talked to him: "My father, if the prophet had asked you to do something big, wouldn't you have done it? How much more when he tells you, 'Wash and be clean'?"

"So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times as the man of God told him, and his flesh became clean again like that of a little child. "Then he and all his company returned to the man of God. He came and stood before him: "Now I know there's no god in all the world except in Israel," he said. "So please, take a present from your servant."

"As the LORD lives whom I serve," he said, "I will not take it." He urged him to take it, but he refused.

"Then Naaman said, "Please have someone give your servant as much ground as a pair of mules can carry, because your servant will not offer any burnt offering or sacrifice to any other gods anymore but only to the LORD. "May the LORD forgive your servant this one thing: When my master goes into the temple of Rimmon to worship, leaning on my arm, and I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, when I do this, may the LORD forgive your servant this one thing."

"Go in peace," he told him.

When he had left him and gone a distance, "Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, thought: "My master has spared Naaman, this Aramaean, by not taking from him what he brought. As sure as the

LORD lives, I'll run after him and get something from him." ²²So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw him running after him, he got down from his chariot. "Is everything all right?" he asked.

²²"It is," he answered. "My master has sent me. He says, 'Just now two young men of the group of the prophets in the hills of Ephraim have come to me. Please give them a talent of silver and two festal garments.'"

²³"Please let me give you two talents," Naaman said. And he urged him and tied up two talents of silver in two bags with two festal garments. He gave them to two of his own servants to carry ahead of him.

²⁴When he came to the hill,^b he took these from them and put them away in the house. Then he dismissed the men, and they left. ²⁵Then he went in and stood before his master.

"Where were you, Gehazi?" Elisha asked him.

"Your servant wasn't anywhere," he answered.

²⁶Then he said to him, "Didn't I go with you in spirit when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? Is this a time to take money and to take clothes, olive orchards and vineyards, sheep, cattle, servants, and maids? ²⁷And so Naaman's leprosy will cling to you and your descendants forever." When he left him, he was leprous, as white as snow.

The Floating Ax

6 The group of prophets said to Elisha: "You see, the place where we're staying is too small for us. ²Let us go to the Jordan and

each of us get a log there, and let us make a place there for us to live."

"Go ahead," he said.

³"Won't you please go with your servants?" the same person asked.

"I will go," he answered.

⁴He went with them, and they came to the Jordan and cut down trees. ⁵As one was cutting down a log, the head of his ax fell into the water. "O my master," he cried, "it was borrowed."

⁶"Where did it fall?" the man of God asked. When he showed him the place, he cut off a piece of wood, threw it in there, and so made the iron float. ⁷"Pick it up," he said. The other reached for it and took it.

Elisha and the Aramaeans

⁸When the king of Aram was fighting against Israel he advised his officers, "You are to camp at such and such a place."

⁹So the man of God used to send a message to the king of Israel: "Be careful not to go by that place; the Aramaeans will attack there."

¹⁰Then the king of Israel would send someone to the place about which the man of God told him and warned him, and he would be on guard there. He did this more than once or twice.

¹¹The king of Aram was troubled about this. Calling his officers, he asked them, "Won't you tell me who among us is for the king of Israel?"

¹²"No one, my lord and king," one of his officers answered, "but Elisha, the prophet who is in Israel, tells the king of Israel anything you say even in your bedroom."

¹³"Go and see where he is," he said; "then I will send men to get him."

^bOphel, a hill near (in) Samaria

"He is in Dothan," he was told. "So he sent horses and chariots and a large force there, and they came there at night and surrounded the city.

¹⁵When the servant of the man of God rose early and went out, he saw troops with horses and chariots surrounding the city. "O master," the servant asked him, "How can we do anything?"

¹⁶"Don't be afraid," he answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." ¹⁷Then Elisha prayed, "LORD, please open his eyes and let him see." The LORD opened the young man's eyes and let him see: The mountain was full of fiery horses and chariots around Elisha.

¹⁸As the Aramaeans came down to him, Elisha prayed to the LORD: "Please strike these people with blindness." And the LORD struck them with blindness as Elisha asked. ¹⁹"This isn't the way," Elisha told them, "or the city. Follow me and I will lead you to the man you're looking for." And he led them to Samaria. ²⁰When they came into Samaria, Elisha said, "LORD, open the eyes of these and let them see." The LORD opened their eyes and let them see: There they were in the middle of Samaria.

²¹"My father," the king of Israel asked Elisha when he saw them, "should I strike them down? Should I strike them down?"

²²"Don't strike them down," he answered. "Do you strike down those whom you take captive with sword and bow? Serve them food and water and let them eat and drink and then go to their master."

²³So he prepared a great meal for them. They ate and drank and went to their master. And Aramaean

bands didn't raid Israel's country anymore.

²⁴But later Benhadad king of Aram gathered his whole army to Samaria. ²⁵The famine in Samaria became so severe as they were besieging it, that a donkey's head sold for 80 shekels of silver and a quarter of a kab of dove manure for 5 shekels of silver.

²⁶As the king of Israel was walking along on the wall, a woman cried to him, "Save me, my lord and king!"

²⁷"If the LORD doesn't save you," he answered, "how can I save you? With something from the threshing floor or the winepress?" ²⁸"What's your trouble?" the king asked her.

She answered: "This woman told me, 'Give your son, and let us eat him today, and let us eat my son tomorrow.' ²⁹So we boiled my son and ate him. The next day I told her, 'Give your son, and we'll eat him,' but she hid her son."

³⁰When the king heard the woman say this, he tore his clothes; and as he was walking along on the wall, the people saw he had sackcloth underneath on his body. ³¹He said, "The LORD punish me more and more if the head of Elisha, Shaphat's son, stays on him today."

³²Elisha was sitting in his home, and the elders were sitting with him, when the king sent one of his men ahead. But before the messenger came to him, he asked the elders, "Do you see how this son of a murderer has sent someone to tear off my head? Watch, and when the messenger comes, shut the door and press it against him. Isn't that the sound of his master's feet following him?"

³³While he was talking to him, the king came down to him and said, "The evil is from the LORD. Why

should I wait any longer for the LORD to help?"

7 "Hear what the LORD says." Elisha answered. "The LORD says this: 'About this time tomorrow a measure of good flour will sell in the gate of Samaria for a shekel of silver, and two measures of barley for a shekel of silver.'"

²The aide on whose arm the king leaned answered the man of God; "If the LORD made windows in the sky, could this happen?"

"You will see it with your own eyes," he answered, "but you will eat none of it."

³There were four lepers at the entrance of the gate. "Why do we sit here till we die?" one asked the other. "If we go into the city, the famine is there, and so we'll die. If we stay here, we'll die. So then, let's go over to the camp of the Aramaeans. If they keep us alive, we'll live; and if they kill us, we'll die." ⁴So they started out in the twilight to go into the Aramaean camp. When they came to the edge of the camp, nobody was there.

⁵The LORD had made the Aramaean army hear the noise of chariots, horses, and a great army, and they said to one another, "The king of Israel has hired the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Egypt to attack us!" ⁷So they got up and ran away, leaving their tents, horses, and donkeys—the camp just as it was—and they fled for their lives.

⁸When the lepers came to the edge of the camp, they went into a tent, ate and drank, and took away from it silver, gold, and clothes, and went away and hid it. Then they came back, went into another tent, and carried away what was there and went away and hid it.

⁹"We're not doing what is right," they said one to another. "This is a day of good news, and we're not telling anybody about it. If we wait till it is light in the morning, we'll get punished. Come, then, let's go and bring the news to the king's palace." ¹⁰So they went and called the gatekeepers of the city and told them: "We went into the Aramaean camp, and there was nobody to be seen or heard there, nothing but horses and donkeys that were tied, and the tents left as they were."

¹¹The gatekeepers called and told the news in the king's palace. ¹²The king got up at night. "Let me tell you what the Aramaeans have prepared for us," he told his officers. "They know we're hungry. So they left the camp to hide in the open country, thinking: 'When they've left the city, we'll capture them alive and get into the city.'"

¹³One of his officers answered, "Please let some men take five of the horses that are left here. They will be no worse off than the rest of the Israelites who are perishing. Let us send men to take a look." ¹⁴So they took two chariots with horses, and the king sent them to follow the Aramaean army, saying, "Go and look." ¹⁵They followed them as far as the Jordan and saw how the whole road was littered with clothes and equipment that the Aramaeans had thrown away in their hurry. The messengers returned and told the king about it.

¹⁶So the people went out and plundered the Aramaean camp. Then a measure of good flour sold for a shekel of silver, and two measures of barley for a shekel of silver at the gate of Samaria as the LORD had said.

¹⁷The king appointed his aide, on

whose arm he leaned, to be in charge of the gate, and the people trampled him to death at the gate as the man of God had said when the king came down to him. ¹⁸It also happened exactly as the man of God had told the king: "Two measures of barley will sell for a shekel of silver, and a measure of good flour for a shekel; this will happen about this time tomorrow at the gate of Samaria." ¹⁹Then the aide had answered the man of God, "If the LORD would make windows in the sky, would it be like this?" And he had answered, "You will see it with your own eyes, but you will eat none of it." ²⁰And so it happened to him: The people trampled him to death at the gate.

The Shunemite's Property Given Back

8 Elisha had told the woman whose son he made alive: "Go away, you and your family, and stay wherever you can stay; the LORD has called for a famine, and it will come to this country for seven years."

¹The woman started out and did as the man of God told her. She and her family went to the country of the Philistines for 7 years. ²At the end of 7 years the woman came from the country of the Philistines, but left again to appeal to the king about her house and her farm.

³The king was talking to Gehazi, the servant of the man of God. "Please tell me," he said, "about all the great things Elisha has done." ⁴Now while he was telling the king how he made the dead son alive, there was the very woman whose boy he made alive, appealing

to the king in regard to her house and her farm. "My master and king," Gehazi said, "this is the woman, and this is her son whom Elisha made alive."

⁵When the king asked the woman, she told him the story. And the king assigned to her an attendant to whom he said, "Restore all that is hers, and all the products of the farm from the day she left the country till now."

Hazael of Damascus

¹Elisha went to Damascus. Benhadad king of Aram was sick, and he was told, "The man of God has come here."

²"Take a present with you," the king told Hazael, "and go and meet the man of God and ask the LORD by him, 'Will I be cured of this illness?'"

³Hazael went to meet him and took the present with him, all kinds of goods of Damascus, loaded on 40 camels. So he came and stood before him. "Your son Benhadad king of Aram," he said, "has sent me to you. He asks, 'Will I be cured of this illness?'"

⁴"Go," Elisha said to him, "tell him, 'You certainly can get well,'^c although the LORD has shown me he is really going to die." "And his face became fixed till he looked confused, and then the man of God wept.

⁵"Why is my lord weeping?" Hazael asked.

"I know," he answered, "what evil you will do to Israel, how you will set their fortresses on fire, kill their best young men with the sword, smash their little children,

^cThe versions. Heb You will not get well

and rip open their pregnant women.'

¹³'But what is your servant—a dog—that he should do such a great thing?' Hazael asked. And Elisha answered, 'The LORD has shown me that you will be king over Aram.'
¹⁴He then left Elisha and went to his master.

'What did Elisha tell you?' he asked him.

'He told me you can certainly get well,' he answered.

¹⁵But the next day he took a blanket, dipped it in water, and spread it over his face till he died. And Hazael succeeded him as king.

Joram King of Judah

¹⁶In the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab, king of Israel (Jehoshaphat being the king of Judah), Joram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, started to rule. ¹⁷He was 32 years old when he started to rule, and for 8 years he was king in Jerusalem. ¹⁸He lived in the ways of the kings of Israel, as Ahab's family had done, because his wife was Ahab's daughter, and so he did wrong before the LORD. ¹⁹But the LORD didn't want to destroy Judah, on account of His servant David; He had promised to give him and his descendants a light forever.

²⁰During his time Edom rebelled against Judah, and they put up a king of their own. ²¹Joram with all his chariots went over to Zair. The Edomites with the captains of their chariots surrounded him, but he rose at night and smashed through them, and his troops fled home. ²²So Edom rebelled against Judah's rule and is still independent today. At that time Libnah also rebelled. ²³Isn't everything else about Joram and all he did written in the annals

of Judah's kings? ²⁴Joram went to rest with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in David's city, and his son Ahaziah succeeded him as king.

Ahaziah of Judah

²⁵In the 12th year of Joram, Ahab's son, king of Israel, Ahaziah the son of Joram, king of Judah, started to rule. ²⁶Ahaziah was 22 years old when he started to rule, and he ruled one year in Jerusalem. His mother was Athaliah, the granddaughter of Omri, king of Israel. ²⁷He lived in the ways of Ahab's family and did wrong before the LORD like Ahab's family, because he was related by marriage to Ahab's family.

²⁸He went with Joram, Ahab's son, to fight against Hazael king of Aram at Ramoth in Gilead, where the Aramaeans wounded Joram. ²⁹King Joram returned to Jezreel to let his wounds heal that he had received at Ramoth when he fought against Hazael king of Aram. Then Ahaziah, Joram's son, king of Judah, went down to see Joram, Ahab's son, in Jezreel because he was sick.

Jehu Anointed King of Israel

9 The prophet Elisha called one of the prophets. 'Fasten your belt around your waist,' he said, 'and take this flask of olive oil with you, and go to Ramoth in Gilead. ²When you come there, look for Jehu son of Jehoshaphat, son of Nimshi. Go in and have him get up and leave his companions, and bring him into an inner room. ³Take the jar of oil, pour it on his head, and say, 'The LORD says this: I have anointed you king of Israel.' Then open the door and run away without delay.'

⁴The young prophet went to

Ramoth in Gilead. "When he came there, the officers of the army were sitting together. "I have something to tell you, commander," he said.

"Whom among all of us?" Jehu asked.

"You, commander!" he answered.

"He got up and went into the house, and the prophet poured olive oil on his head and told him: "The LORD, the God of Israel, says this: 'I have anointed you king of Israel, the LORD's people. 'You will strike down the family of your master Ahab, and I will punish Jezebel for her murder of My servants the prophets, as well as the murder of all the LORD's servants. 'All of Ahab's family will perish, and I will cut down every male coming from Ahab, bound or free, in Israel. 'And I will make Ahab's family like that of Jeroboam, Nebat's son, and like that of Baasha, Ahijah's son. 'The dogs will eat Jezebel in the vicinity of Jezreel, and nobody will bury her.' " Then he opened the door and ran away.

"Jehu came out to his master's officers, "Is everything well?" one asked him. "Why did this crazy fellow come to you?"

"You know the man," he answered. "and how he talks."

"Nonsense," they said. "Please tell us."

He answered: "He said this and that to me, adding: The LORD says this. 'I have anointed you king of Israel.' "

"Then each one quickly took his garment and laid it under him on the stairs. They blew the horn, saying, "Jehu is king!"

"So Jehu son of Jehoshaphat, son of Nimshi, plotted against Joram. [Joram and all Israel were guarding Ramoth in Gilead against Hazael

king of Aram. "But King Joram had returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds he received while fighting Hazael king of Aram.)

Then Jehu said, "If you want me as king, don't let anybody escape from the city to go and tell the news in Jezreel." "Then Jehu got on his chariot and drove to Jezreel because Joram was lying there, and Ahaziah king of Judah had come down to see Joram.

"The watchman standing on the tower in Jezreel saw Jehu's crowd coming. "I see a crowd," he said. "Take a driver," Joram said, "and send him to meet them and ask, 'Is everything well?' " "So one drove to meet him and said, "The king asks, 'Is everything well?' "

"What is it to you?" Jehu asked. "Turn around and follow me."

So the watchman announced, "The man you sent has reached them but isn't coming back." "Then he sent out a second driver. When he came to them, he said, "The king asks, 'Is everything well?' "

"What is it to you?" Jehu asked. "Turn around and follow me."

"So the watchman announced, "He has reached them but isn't coming back. And it's like the driving of Jehu, Nimshi's grandson; he drives as if he's crazy."

"Hitch the horses to the chariot," Joram ordered. When that was done, Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah, each in his own chariot, went out to meet Jehu, and they found him in the field of Naboth of Jezreel.

"Is everything well, Jehu?" Joram asked when he saw Jehu.

"How can it be well," he answered, "as long as the fornications

7 Rv 6:10
19:7
22 Rv 9:21

and sorceries of your mother Jezebel increase?"

Joram Killed

²³Then Joram turned his chariot around and tried to flee, saying to Ahaziah, "Treason, Ahaziah!" ²⁴But Jehu took hold of his bow and shot Joram between the shoulder blades, and the arrow came out of his heart again, and he collapsed in his chariot. ²⁵Then he told his attendant Bidkar, "Take him away and throw him on the field of Naboth of Jezreel. Remember how I and you used to drive our teams behind his father Ahab and the LORD gave this judgment against him: ²⁶'As surely as I saw the blood of Naboth and his sons yesterday, says the LORD, I will pay you back on this field, says the LORD.' Now take him and throw him on the field as the LORD said."

Ahaziah Killed

²⁷When Ahaziah king of Judah saw this, he fled on the road to Beth-haggan. Jehu pursued him. "Shoot him down too in his chariot," Jehu ordered. It happened in the ascent of Gur, which is near Ibleam. He fled to Megiddo and died there. ²⁸His servants brought him in a chariot to Jerusalem. They buried him in his grave with his fathers in David's city. ²⁹(Ahaziah had become king of Judah in the 11th year of Joram, Ahab's son.)

Jezebel Killed

³⁰Jezebel heard about Jehu's coming to Jezreel. So she painted her eyes, made her head look pretty, and looked out of the window. ³¹When Jehu entered the gate, she asked, "Is everything well, Zimri, murderer of your master?"

³²Looking up to the window, he

asked: "Is anyone on my side? Anyone?" Then two or three eunuchs looked out at him.

³³"Throw her down," he said. They threw her down, and some of her blood splattered on the wall and on the horses, and she was trampled on.

³⁴He went in, ate and drank. Then he said, "Take care of this cursed woman; she's a king's daughter." ³⁵But when they went out to bury her, they couldn't find anything of her but the skull, the feet, and the palms of the hands. ³⁶They came back and told him.

And Jehu said, "That is the Word of the LORD by His servant Elijah from Tishbe: In the territory of Jezreel the dogs will devour Jezebel's body. ³⁷and Jezebel's flesh will be like the manure on the ground in the vicinity of Jezreel, so that nobody can say, 'This is Jezebel.'"

Ahab's Family Killed

10 Ahab had 70 sons in Samaria. So Jehu wrote to the rulers of Israel, the elders, and the guardians of Ahab's children in Samaria: ²"Now, as soon as this letter reaches you, seeing that your master's sons are with you and you have chariots, horses, fortified cities, and weapons, ³choose the one of the princes who is best and most just, and put him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's family."

⁴But they were in a panic. "The two kings have gone down before him," they said, "how can we stand?" ⁵So the manager of the palace, the manager of the city, the elders, and the guardians sent men to tell Jehu: "We are your servants, and we'll do everything you tell us."

We will not make anyone king. Do what you believe is right."

"So he wrote them a second letter: "If you are for me and ready to listen to me, take the heads of your master's sons, and come to me in Jezreel about this time tomorrow." The 70 royal princes were with the city's aristocrats who raised them. When the letter came to them, they took the princes and killed all 70, put their heads in baskets, and sent them to him in Jezreel. "A messenger came and told him. "They've brought the heads of the king's sons."

He said, "Put them in two heaps at the entrance of the gate till the morning." "In the morning he went out and stood there. "You are innocent," he told all the people. "I have plotted against my master and killed him, but who killed all these? "You must realize then that no promise the LORD made against Ahab's family will fall to the ground, but the LORD will do what He promised by His servant Elijah."

"Jehu also killed all the rest of Ahab's family in Jezreel, all the aristocrats, friends, and priests of Ahab till none of them was left.

"Then he started out on the way to Samaria. And when he was on the way, at a shepherds' shearing-place, "Jehu met the relatives of Ahaziah king of Judah. "Who are you?" he asked.

"We are Ahaziah's relatives," they answered, "and we're going down to make a friendly visit with the king's sons and the queen's sons."

"Take them alive," he ordered.

They took them alive and killed 42 of them at a cistern near the shearing-place and didn't leave a one.

Jehonadab

"When he left that place, he met Jehonadab, Rechab's son, who was coming to him. He greeted him and asked, "Are you as true to me as I am to you?"

"I am," Jehonadab answered.

"If you are, give me your hand."

When he gave him his hand, he took him up on the chariot with him. "Come with me," he said, "and see how zealous I am for the LORD." And so he had him ride on his chariot. "When he came to Samaria, he struck down all the rest of Ahab's family who were left in Samaria till he had wiped them out, as the LORD had said to Elijah.

Prophets of Baal Killed

"Then Jehu gathered all the people. "Ahab served Baal a little," he told them, "but Jehu will serve him much. "And now summon to me all the prophets of Baal, all his servants, and all his priests. Don't let anyone be missing because I have a great sacrifice to offer to Baal. Anyone who is missing will not live." But Jehu was acting deceitfully; he wanted to destroy those who worshiped Baal. "Call a special holy meeting for Baal," he said. And they called it. "Jehu sent messengers to all the Israelites, and so all the worshipers of Baal came and there wasn't anyone left behind who didn't come. They went into the temple of Baal, and the temple of Baal was filled from one end to the other.

"Then he told the man in charge of the wardrobe: "Bring out the vestments for all the worshipers of Baal," and he brought out the vestments for them. "Then Jehu and Jehonadab, Rechab's son, went

into the temple of Baal and told the worshipers of Baal: "Search and see that there are no worshipers of the LORD here with you but only the worshipers of Baal." ²⁴So they went in to offer sacrifices and burnt offerings, while Jehu had stationed 80 of his men outside. "If any of the men I'm putting in your hands escapes," he said, "you will pay for his life with yours."

²⁵When the burnt offerings had all been made, Jehu told the guards and attendants: "Go and strike them down. Don't let anybody get away." So they struck them down with the sword. Then the guards and attendants struck them down until they came to the sanctuary of the temple of Baal. ²⁶They then brought out the sacred pillar of the temple of Baal and burned it. ²⁷They smashed the sacred pillar of Baal, and tore down the temple of Baal, and made it into a place for toilets, as it is today.

²⁸And so Jehu wiped out Baal in Israel. ²⁹But Jehu did not turn away from the sins that Nebat's son, Jeroboam, made Israel do—the golden calves that were at Bethel and at Dan.

³⁰The LORD said to Jehu, "You did what was right before me, and you did it well. You did to Ahab's family everything I planned to do. For that reason four generations of your descendants will sit on the throne of Israel."

³¹But Jehu wasn't careful to live according to the law of the LORD, the God of Israel, with all his heart. He didn't turn away from the sins Jeroboam made Israel do. ³²So the LORD in those days began to cut away some territory of Israel. Hazael defeated them on every border of Israel, ³³east of the

Jordan: all the country of Gilead, the people of Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh, the land beyond Arzer in the valley of Arnon, and in Gilead and Bashan.

³⁴Isn't everything else about Jehu, including all he did and all his prowess, written in the annals of Israel's kings? ³⁵Jehu went to rest with his fathers and was buried in Samaria. His son Jehoahaz succeeded him as king. ³⁶Jehu was king of Israel in Samaria for 28 years.

Athaliah

11 When Athaliah, Ahaziah's mother, saw her son was dead, she proceeded to destroy all the royal descendants. ²But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram and sister of Ahaziah, took Ahaziah's son Joash, stole him away from the king's sons who were being killed, and so he hid him from Athaliah. And she wasn't killed ³but was hidden with her in the LORD's temple for 6 years while Athaliah ruled the country.

⁴In his seventh year Jehoiada sent for the regimental commanders of the Carian bodyguard and the running guards and had them come to him in the LORD's temple. He made a covenant with them and put them under oath in the LORD's temple. Then he showed them the king's son. ⁵He gave them this order: "This is what you must do: one third of you who come in on the Sabbath are to guard the king's palace, ⁶another third are to be at the gate Sur, and another at the gate behind the running guard. You must take turns in guarding the king's palace. ⁷Then two contingents of you, all who leave on the Sabbath, must provide a watch over the king

at the LORD's temple "by forming a circle around the king; everyone must have his weapons in his hands so that anyone who tries to break your ranks can be killed. Stay with the king at all times."

"The regimental commanders did just as Jehoiada the priest ordered them. Everyone took his men coming in on the Sabbath as well as those who were to go out on the Sabbath, and they came to Jehoiada the priest. "The priest gave the commanders the spears and the shields that had belonged to King David and were now in the LORD's temple. "Each guard stood with his weapons in his hand from the southern corner to the northern corner of the temple, around the altar and the temple, to protect the king. "Then he brought out the king's son, put the crown on him, presented him with the Law, and made him king by anointing him. Clapping their hands, they said: "Long live the king!"

"When Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and the other troops, she came to the Lord's temple where the people were. "She looked, and there was the king standing by the pillar according to the custom, and the commanders and the trumpeters by the king's side. The people of the countryside were rejoicing and blowing trumpets. As she tore her garments Athaliah cried, "Treason, treason!"

"Then Jehoiada the priest gave the order to the commanders of the army. "Take her out under guard," he said. "Kill with the sword anyone who wants to follow her." The priest had said, "She must not be killed in the LORD's temple." "So they arrested her and brought her on the way through the horses' entrance to

the king's palace, and there she was killed.

"Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD and the king and his people that they should be the LORD's people, and another between the king and the people. "All the people of the country went to the temple of Baal, tore it down, smashed his altars and his images, and killed Mattan, the priest of Baal, in front of the altars.

Then the priest appointed guards for the LORD's temple. "He took the regimental commander of the Carian bodyguard and the running guards, and all the people of the country, and they brought the king down from the LORD's temple, going by the way of the guards' gate to the royal palace. So he sat on the throne of the kings. "All the people of the country were delighted and the city was quiet. They had killed Athaliah with the sword at the royal palace.

Joash of Judah

"Joash was 7 years old when he became king.

12 He started to rule in the seventh year of Jehu and ruled in Jerusalem for 40 years. His mother was Zibiah from Beersheba. "Joash did what was right before the LORD as long as the priest Jehoiada instructed him. "But the high places were not taken away. On these high places the people continued to offer sacrifices and incense.

"Joash told the priests: "As for all the money from the sacred dues that is brought into the LORD's temple—the money each person is assessed, and all the money anyone brings voluntarily to the LORD's temple— 'each of the priests

should take it from his friends and repair the temple wherever it may be found to be damaged."

"But by the 23rd year of King Joash the priests had not repaired the temple. 'So King Joash called for the priest Jehoiada and other priests. "Why aren't you repairing the temple?" he asked them. "So now, don't take any more money from your friends, but give it for the repair of the temple." "The priests agreed not to take money from the people nor to be responsible for the repair of the temple.

"Then the priest Jehoiada took a box, bored a hole in its cover, and put it at the right side of the altar as you come into the LORD's temple. And the priests who guarded the threshold put in it the money that was brought to the LORD's temple. "Whenever they saw there was a lot of money in the box, the king's secretary and the high priest came up, melted down the silver that was found in the LORD's temple into ingots, and weighed it. "Then they gave the money exactly as weighed to the men who supervised the work of the LORD's temple, and they used it to pay the carpenters and builders working on the temple, "the masons and stonecutters, as well as for buying wood and cut stones to repair the LORD's temple and anything else that had to be spent for the temple repairs. "But no silver basins, knives, bowls, trumpets, or any other silver or gold utensils were made for the LORD's temple with the money that was brought, "because it was given to the workmen who used it to repair the temple. "They didn't ask the men to whom they entrusted the money to pay the workers to give an account,

because they were honest. "The money from the guilt and sin offerings was not brought into the LORD's temple because it belonged to the priests.

"When Hazael king of Aram came up and fought against Gath and took it, he was also determined to attack Jerusalem. "So Joash king of Judah took all the gifts his ancestors Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah kings of Judah, had dedicated and his own dedicated things and all the gold that could be found in the store rooms of the LORD's temple and the king's palace and sent them to Hasael king of Aram, who then went away from Jerusalem.

"Isn't everything else about Joash, all he did, written in the annals of Judah's kings? "His officers proceeded to plot against him and struck him down at the Beth-millo on the way down to Silla. "It was Jozacar, Shimeath's son, and Jehozabad, Shomer's son, his officers, who struck him so that he died. They buried him with his fathers in David's city. And his son Amaziah succeeded him as king.

Jehoahaz of Israel

13 In the 23rd year of Joash the son of Ahaziah, king of Judah, Jehoahaz, Jehu's son, started to rule over Israel in Samaria and ruled for 17 years. "He did wrong before the LORD and lived in the sin that Jeroboam, Nebat's son, made Israel do; he did not leave it. "So the LORD got angry at Israel and put them in the hands of Hazael king of Aram and of Hazael's son Benhadad.

"Jehoahaz pleaded with the LORD, and the LORD heard him because He saw how the Aramaean king was oppressing Israel. "So the LORD

gave Israel a savior, and they were freed from subjection to Syria, and the Israelites lived in their homes again as they had done before. "But they didn't leave the sin of the family of Jeroboam by which he made Israel sin, but they lived in it. Also the sacred Asherah pole stayed in Samaria.

⁷Jehoahaz had no army left except 50 horses, 10 chariots, and 10,000 foot soldiers because the king of Syria destroyed them and made them like dust that is trampled on. ⁸Isn't everything else about Jehoahaz, including all he did and the strength he showed, written in the annals of Israel's kings? ⁹Jehoahaz went to rest with his ancestors and was buried in Samaria. His son Joash succeeded him as king.

Joash of Israel

¹⁰In the 37th year of Joash king of Judah, Joash, Jehoahaz' son, started to rule over Israel in Samaria, and was king for 16 years. ¹¹He did wrong before the LORD and didn't turn away from any of the sins by which Jeroboam made Israel sin, but continued to practice them. ¹²Isn't everything else about Joash, including all he did and the ability with which he fought against Amaziah king of Judah written in the annals of Israel's kings? ¹³Joash went to rest with his fathers and was buried with the kings of Israel in Samaria, and Jeroboam sat on his throne.

¹⁴Elisha got sick, and this sickness was to end in death. Joash king of Israel came down to him. Weeping over him, he said, "My father, my father, Israel's chariot and horses!"

¹⁵"Get a bow and some arrows," Elisha told him. So he got a bow and

some arrows. ¹⁶"Draw the bow," he told the king of Israel, and he drew it. And Elisha laid his hands on the king's hands. ¹⁷"Open the window toward the east," he said, and he opened it. "Shoot," Elisha said, and he shot. Then he said, "The arrow of the LORD's victory, the arrow of victory against Syria! Defeat the Aramaeans at Aphek till you wipe them out." ¹⁸"Take the arrows," he said, and he took them. "Smash them on the ground," he told the king of Israel. He struck three times and then stopped.

¹⁹The man of God got angry at him. "You should have smashed five or six times," he said. "then you would have defeated the Aramaeans and wiped them out. But now you will defeat the Aramaeans only three times."

²⁰Elisha died and was buried. And Moabite bands used to invade the country at the beginning of the year. ²¹Men who were going to bury a man saw such a band, and so they hurriedly put the man into Elisha's tomb. But touching Elisha's body, he became alive and stood up on his feet.

²²Hazael king of Syria had oppressed Israel as long as Jehoahaz ruled. ²³But the LORD was kind and merciful to them and had listened to them on account of His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He didn't want to destroy them, and He hasn't yet banished them from His presence.

²⁴Hazael king of Syria died, and his son Benhadad succeeded him as king. ²⁵Then Joash the son of Jehoahaz took again from Benhadad the cities which he had taken from his father Jehoahaz in war. Joash defeated him three times and recovered the cities of Israel.

Amaziah of Judah

14 In the second year of Joash the son of Joahaz, king of Israel, Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, began to rule. ¹He was 25 years old when he started to rule and was king for 29 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jehoaddin; she was from Jerusalem.

²He did what was right before the LORD but not like his ancestor David. He did everything just as his father Joash had done. ³But the high places were not taken away. The people were still sacrificing and burning incense on the high places.

⁴As soon as he had a firm hold on the government, he killed the officials who had murdered the king, his father. ⁵But he didn't kill the murderers' children; so it is written in the Law of Moses, where the LORD had ordered: The fathers must not die for their children, and the children must not die for their fathers, but everyone must die for his own sin.^d

⁶He killed 10,000 Edomites in the Salt Valley and in battle took Sela and gave it the name Joktheel, which it is still called today.

⁷Then Amaziah sent messengers to Joash the son of Joahaz, the son of Jehu, king of Israel. "Come," he said, "let's meet in battle."

⁸Then Joash king of Israel sent men to Amaziah king of Judah and said, "A thistle in Lebanon sent a message to a cedar in Lebanon, saying, 'Let your daughter marry my son,' but a wild animal came along and trampled on the thistle." ⁹Sure, you defeated Edom, and now you feel cocky. Enjoy your glory and stay

home. Why must you challenge disaster and so go down to defeat, you and Judah with you?"

¹⁰But Amaziah wouldn't listen. So Joash king of Israel went up, and he and Amaziah king of Judah met in battle at Beth-shemesh, which belongs to Judah. ¹¹Israel defeated the men of Judah, and they all ran home. ¹²Joash king of Israel took Amaziah son of Joash, son of Ahaziah, king of Judah, at Beth-shemesh and came to Jerusalem. He tore down the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim gate to the corner gate, 400 cubits of it. ¹³He took the gold and silver, all the utensils he found in the LORD's temple and in the treasury of the king's palace; he also took hostages, and went back to Samaria.

¹⁴The rest of what Joash did, what he accomplished, how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah—isn't it written in the annals of the kings of Israel? ¹⁵Joash went to rest with his fathers and was buried with the kings of Israel. And his son Jeroboam succeeded him as king.

¹⁶Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, lived 15 years after the death of Joash the son of Joahaz, king of Israel. ¹⁷The rest of what Amaziah did is written in the annals of Judah's kings. ¹⁸Conspirators in Jerusalem plotted against him, and he fled to Lachish. But they sent men to Lachish after him who killed him there. ¹⁹They brought him back by horse, and he was buried in Jerusalem, David's city, with his fathers.

²⁰All the people of Judah took Azariah, who was 16 years old, and made him king to succeed his father Amaziah. ²¹He rebuilt Elath and

^dDt 24:16

restored it to Judah after the king went to rest with his fathers.

Jeroboam II of Israel

¹In the 15th year of Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, started to rule in Samaria. He ruled 41 years. ²He did what was wrong before the LORD. He didn't turn from any of the sins of Jeroboam, Nebat's son, by which he led Israel to sin.

³He restored Israel's boundary from the entrance of Hamath to the Dead Sea as the LORD, Israel's God, said by His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath-hepher. ⁴because the LORD saw that everyone in Israel was suffering, and there was nobody to help Israel. ⁵The LORD had promised not to wipe out Israel's name from the world, and so He saved them by Jeroboam the son of Joash.

⁶The rest of Jeroboam's history—everything he did, his accomplishments, how he fought, how he recovered Damascus and Hamath from Jaudi^e for Israel— isn't this written in the annals of Israel's kings? ⁷Jeroboam went to rest with his fathers, the kings of Israel, and his son Zechariah succeeded him as king.

Uzziah (Azariah) of Judah

15 In the 27th year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Azariah, Amaziah's son, started to rule as king of Judah. ²He was 16 years old when he started to rule and was king for 52 years in Jerusalem. His mother was Jecoliah from Jerusalem.

³He did what was right in the LORD's eyes just as his father Amaziah had done. ⁴But the high places were not taken away. The people still continued to sacrifice and burn incense on them.

⁵The LORD struck the king so that he became a leper till the day he died, and he lived in a separate house. The king's son Jotham managed the palace and also governed the country.

⁶The rest of Azariah's history and everything he did are written in the history of Judah's kings. ⁷Azariah went to rest with his fathers and was buried with them in David's city. His son Jotham succeeded him as king.

Five Kings of Israel

⁸In the 38th year of Azariah king of Judah, Zechariah, Jeroboam's son, was king of Israel in Samaria for 6 months. ⁹He did wrong before the LORD as his fathers had done. He didn't give up the sins of Jeroboam, Nebat's son, who made Israel sin. ¹⁰Shallum the son of Jabesh plotted against him, struck him down in front of the people, killed him, and succeeded him as king. ¹¹You will find the rest of Zechariah's history written in the annals of Israel's kings. ¹²This was what the LORD had told Jehu: "Your descendants to the fourth generation will sit on the throne of Israel." And so it happened.

¹³Shallum the son of Jabesh became king in the 39th year of Uzziah king of Judah, and he was king for a whole month in Samaria. ¹⁴Then Menahem, Gadi's son, came up from Tirzah to Samaria, struck

^eA kingdom near Hamath with a name similar to Judah

down and killed Shallum the son of Jabesh and succeeded him as king.

¹⁵The rest of Shallum's history, all about his conspiracy, you will find recorded in the annals of Israel's kings. ¹⁶Then Menahem conquered Tiphshah and all who were there and its territory near Tirzah. Because the town didn't open up to him, he destroyed it, ripping open all the pregnant women.

¹⁷In the 39th year of Azariah king of Judah, Menahem, Gadi's son, started his rule as king of Israel for 10 years in Samaria. ¹⁸He did wrong before the LORD and all his life didn't give up the sins of Jeroboam, Nebat's son, who made Israel sin.

¹⁹Pul king of Assyria came to attack the country. Menahem gave Pul 1,000 talents of silver to get him to help make his government strong. ²⁰Menahem raised the money from all the wealthy men of Israel, 50 shekels of silver from each for the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back and didn't occupy the country. ²¹The rest of Menahem's history and everything he did, aren't they recorded in the annals of Israel's kings? ²²And Menahem went to rest with his fathers, and his son Pekahiah succeeded him as king.

²³In the 50th year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah, Menahem's son, started to rule and was king of Israel in Samaria for two years. ²⁴He did what was wrong before the LORD. He didn't give up the sins of Jeroboam, Nebat's son, who made Israel sin. ²⁵His officer Pekah, Remaliah's son, with 50 men of Gilead struck him down in the citadel of the royal palace in Samaria, and also Argob and Arieah. Pekah killed him and succeeded him

as king. ²⁶The rest of Pekahiah's history and everything he did you will find written in the annals of Israel's kings.

²⁷In the 52nd year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah, Remaliah's son, started to rule Israel in Samaria for 20 years. ²⁸He did wrong before the LORD. He didn't give up the sins of Jeroboam, Nebat's son, who made Israel sin. ²⁹In the days of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria came and took Ijon, Abel-beth-maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, Galilee, all the country of Naphtali and took the people away captive to Assyria. ³⁰Hoshea, Elah's son, conspired against Pekah, Remaliah's son. He struck him down, killed him, and succeeded him as king in the 20th year of Jotham, Uzziah's son. ³¹The rest of Pekah's history and everything he did you will find written in the annals of Israel's kings.

Jotham of Judah

³²In the second year of Pekah, Remaliah's son, king of Israel, Jotham the son of Uzziah, king of Judah, became king. ³³He was 25 years old when he started to rule and was king in Jerusalem for 16 years. His mother was Jerusha, Zadok's daughter. ³⁴He did what was right before the LORD just as his father Uzziah had done. ³⁵But the high places were not taken away; people still continued to sacrifice and burn incense on them. He built the upper gate of the LORD's temple. ³⁶The rest of Jotham's history and everything he did, aren't they recorded in the annals of Judah's kings?

³⁷In those days the LORD started to send Rezin king of Aram and

¹Pekah, Remaliah's son, against Judah. ²Jotham went to rest with his fathers and was buried with them in the city of his ancestor David. And his son Ahaz succeeded him as king.

Ahaz of Judah

16 In the 17th year of Pekah, Remaliah's son, Ahaz the son of Jotham, king of Judah, became king. ²Ahaz was 20 years old when he started to rule and was king in Jerusalem for 26 years. He didn't do what was right in the presence of the LORD his God like his ancestor David. ³He lived like the kings of Israel and even sacrificed his son in fire, one of the abominable things done by the nations the LORD drove out ahead of the Israelites. ⁴He sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, on the hills, and under every green tree.

⁵Then King Rezin of Aram and Pekah, Remaliah's son, king of Israel, went up to fight against Jerusalem. They besieged Ahaz but couldn't get him to fight. ⁶At that time King Rezin of Aram gave Elath back to Edom,^f driving the Judeans out of Elath. The Edomites came to Elath and still live there today.

⁷Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria to tell him: "I'm your vassal and your son. Come up and save me from the king of Aram and the king of Israel who are attacking me." ⁸Ahaz took the silver and the gold he found in the LORD's temple and in storerooms of the king's palace and sent them as a present to the king of Assyria.

⁹The king of Assyria listened to him and attacked Damascus. He

captured it, took the people captive to Kir, and killed Rezin.

¹⁰Then King Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria. There he saw an altar that was in Damascus. So King Ahaz sent the priest Urijah a model of the altar and a pattern of its exact construction. Urijah built an altar ¹¹and made it exactly according to all the directions King Ahaz sent from Damascus and waited for King Ahaz to come home from Damascus.

¹²When the king came from Damascus, he saw the altar. The king approached the altar and went up on it. ¹³He offered his burnt offering and his food offering, poured out his drink offering, and dashed the blood of his peace offering against the altar. ¹⁴But the bronze altar that was before the LORD he moved from its place—in front of the temple, between his altar and the LORD's temple—and put it on the north side of his altar. ¹⁵King Ahaz gave these orders to the priest Urijah: "On this great altar you shall offer the morning burnt offerings and the evening sacrifices, the king's burnt offerings and his food offerings, the burnt offerings of all the people of the country and their food offerings and their drink offerings; dash against it all the blood of the sacrifices. I will use the bronze altar to get information." ¹⁶The priest Urijah did just as King Ahaz ordered.

¹⁷King Ahaz cut off the panels of the stands and removed the laver from each of them. He took the bronze pool down from the bronze oxen that were under it and put it on a base made of stones. ¹⁸The

^fHeb Aram. "Edom" and "Aram" in Heb look almost alike

covered walk used on the Sabbath, which had been built at the temple, as well as the outer entrance for the king. Ahaz removed from the LORD's temple on account of the king of Assyria. ¹⁹The rest of the things Ahaz did—aren't they recorded in the annals of Judah's kings? ²⁰Ahaz went to rest with his fathers and was buried with them in David's city. And his son Hezekiah succeeded him as king.

Hoshea of Israel

17 In the 12th year of Ahaz king of Judah, Hoshea, Elah's son, started to rule in Samaria and was king of Israel for 9 years. ²He did what was wrong before the LORD but not like the kings of Israel before him.

Samaria Falls

¹Shalmaneser king of Assyria marched against him, and Hoshea became his servant and paid him tribute. ²But the king of Assyria found Hoshea treacherous—he sent messengers to Sais, to the king of Egypt, and paid the king of Assyria no tribute as he had done from year to year—and so the king of Assyria arrested him and kept him in prison. ³Then the king of Assyria overran the whole country, went up to Samaria, and besieged it for three years. ⁴In Hoshea's ninth year the king of Assyria captured Samaria and took the people captive to Assyria and settled them in Halah, and along the Habor at the river Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

Why Did Samaria Fall?

¹The Israelites sinned against the LORD their God who took them out of Egypt, from the power of Pharaoh

King of Egypt. They also worshiped other gods ²and lived according to the customs of the nations the LORD drove out ahead of the Israelites, and they did what their kings wanted them to do. ³The Israelites secretly did things that aren't right against the LORD their God, building high places for themselves in all their towns, from the watchman's tower to the fortified city. ⁴They set up sacred pillars for themselves and Asherah posts on every high hill and under every green tree. ⁵And there on all the high places they sacrificed like the nations the LORD drove out ahead of them, and so they did wrong and made the LORD angry. ⁶And they served the idols though the LORD had told them, "Don't do this."

⁷The LORD warned Israel and Judah by every kind of prophet and seer: "Turn from your evil ways and keep My commandments and decrees, according to the whole Law I ordered your fathers to keep and also sent to you by My servants the prophets. ⁸But they refused to listen, getting as stubborn as their fathers who refused to trust in the LORD their God. ⁹They rejected His decrees and the covenant He made with their fathers and the solemn warnings He gave them. They went after nothing and became nothing, and behaved like the nations around them although the LORD had ordered them, "Don't do as they do." ¹⁰They discarded all the commandments of the LORD their God and made idols of metal, two calves, and they made a post of Asherah; they worshiped the whole army of heaven and served Baal. ¹¹They sacrificed their sons and daughters in fire, practiced fortune-telling, and used charms;

they abandoned themselves to do wrong before the Lord and made Him angry.

¹⁸The LORD got so very angry with Israel that He put them out of His sight. Only the tribe of Judah was left. ¹⁹Even Judah didn't keep the commandments of the LORD their God but lived in the ways practiced by Israel. ²⁰And so the LORD rejected all of Israel's descendants, made them suffer, and put them into the hands of those who plundered them, and finally He put them out of His sight.

²¹When He tore Israel away from David's line, they made Jeroboam, Nebat's son, king. Jeroboam took Israel away from following the LORD and led them into great sin. ²²The Israelites lived in all the sins Jeroboam did; they didn't leave them, ²³till finally the LORD put Israel out of His sight as He had said by all His servants the prophets. And so Israel was taken from its country to Assyria, and they are still there today.

The Samaritans

²⁴The king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim and had them live in the towns of Samaria, replacing the Israelites. They took over Samaria and lived in its towns.

²⁵When they first came to live there, they didn't worship the LORD, and He sent lions that killed some of them. ²⁶So they told the king of Assyria, "The people you took from their homes to live in the towns of Samaria don't know how to worship the god of this country, and so he sent lions among them, and now they're killing them because they don't know the way of the god of this land."

²⁷The king of Assyria gave this order: "Bring one of the priests you took away from there as a prisoner, and let him go and live there and teach them how to worship the god of the country." ²⁸So one of the priests who had been exiled from Samaria came to live in Bethel, and he was teaching them how to fear the LORD.

²⁹But each nation continued to make its own idols, and they set them in the shrines on the high places the Samaritans had made. Every nation did this in the towns where they were settled. ³⁰The men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth; the men of Cuthah made Nergal; the men of Hamath made Ashima; ³¹the men of Avva made Nibhaz and Tartak; and the men of Sepharvaim burned their children in fire to Adramelech and Anamelech, the gods of Sepharvaim. ³²So while they were worshiping the LORD, they also appointed all kinds of people as the priests of their high places, to officiate at the shrines on the high places. ³³They were worshiping the LORD but also serving their own gods according to the custom of the people the LORD had driven away from there.

³⁴Today they still do just as they've done from the beginning. They don't fear the LORD or do according to the decrees and rules, the law and the commandments the LORD prescribed for the descendants of Jacob whom He named Israel. ³⁵The LORD made a covenant with them, ordering them: "Don't worship other gods, bow down to them, serve them, or sacrifice to them." ³⁶But fear the LORD who brought you out of Egypt with great power and a stretched-out arm, worship Him, and sacrifice

to Him. ²⁷And the decrees, rules, laws, and commandments He wrote for you—be careful to do them all your life, and don't worship other gods. ²⁸Don't forget the covenant I made with you, and don't worship other gods. ²⁹But fear the LORD your God, and He will rescue you from your enemies."

³⁰But they refused to listen and did just as they had done from the beginning. ³¹So these nations were worshipping the LORD but also were serving their own idols, and so did their children and their children's children. As their fathers did, so they still do today.

Hezekiah Begins to Rule

18 In the third year of Hoshea the son of Elah, king of Israel, Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, became king. ²He was 25 years old when he became king and was king in Jerusalem for 29 years. His mother was Abi, Zechariah's daughter.

³He did what was right before the LORD just as his ancestor David had done. ⁴He put away the high places, smashed the sacred pillars, cut down the Asherah posts, and broke in pieces the bronze snake Moses had made. Up to that time the Israelites were burning incense to it. They called it Nehushtan.⁸ ⁵Hezekiah trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel. Among all the kings of Judah that came after him or were before him there was none like him. ⁶Loyal to the LORD, he didn't turn away from Him but did what the LORD had ordered through Moses.

⁷And so the LORD was with him, and he succeeded in everything he

undertook. But he rebelled against the king of Assyria and wouldn't serve him anymore. ⁸He conquered the Philistines as far as Gaza and its territory, including both the watchman's tower and the fortified city.

Samaria Taken in Hezekiah's Sixth Year

⁹In the fourth year of King Hezekiah, the seventh year of Hoshea, Elah's son, king of Israel, Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, besieged it, ¹⁰and captured it at the end of three years. Samaria was taken in the sixth year, in the ninth year of Hoshea. ¹¹The king of Assyria took the Israelites away as prisoners to Assyria and put them in Halah, and along the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the towns of the Medes. ¹²It was because they refused to listen to the LORD their God and broke His covenant—everything that Moses, the LORD's servant ordered. They wouldn't listen nor obey.

Sennacherib Invades Judah

¹³In the 14th year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib, king of Assyria attacked all the fortified towns of Judah and was capturing them. ¹⁴Then Hezekiah king of Judah sent a message to the king of Assyria at Lachish. "I have done wrong," he said. "Go away and leave me alone. I'll do anything you demand of me."

So the king of Assyria demanded from Hezekiah king of Judah 300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold. ¹⁵Hezekiah gave him all the silver that could be found in the

⁸Bronze snake. In Heb the same word in its basic form means both "bronze" and "snake"

LORD's temple and in the store-rooms of the king's palace. ¹⁶At that time Hezekiah cut off the plating of the doors of the LORD's temple and of the doorposts, which Hezekiah king of Judah had covered with plating, and he gave it to the king of Assyria.

¹⁷Then the king of Assyria sent his chief of staff, a top general, and a large force from Lachish to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. When they came there, they stood at the canal of the upper pool on the road that goes to the laundryman's field. ¹⁸When they called for the king, there came out Eliakim, Hilkiah's son, manager of the palace, Shebna the secretary, and Joah, Asaph's son, the recorder.

¹⁹The general said to them: "Tell Hezekiah that the great king, the king of Assyria, asks, 'What makes you so confident?' ²⁰Do you think a few words dropped from the lips are as good as strategy and strength in battle? Now, whom are you trusting enough to rebel against me? ²¹See here now, when you trust in Egypt /ou're trusting in a staff that's like a broken reed. If you lean on it, it runs into your hand and pierces it. That's what Pharaoh king of Egypt is to all who trust him. ²²But if you tell me what you're trusting in the LORD /our God, isn't He the one whose high places and altars Hezekiah got rid of when he told Judah and Jerusalem that they must worship at his altar in Jerusalem?"

²³"Come now, make a bet with my master the king of Assyria: I'll give you 1,000 horses if you can put riders on them. ²⁴How can you turn back the attack of just one of the least of my master's officers while you trust Egypt or chariots and horses?"

²⁵"Now, did I attack this place to

destroy it without the consent of the LORD? The LORD told me to attack this country and destroy it."

²⁶Then Eliakim, Hilkiah's son, and Shebna, and Joah, told the general, "Please talk to your servants in Aramaic; we understand it. Don't talk to us in the Jewish language while the people on the wall are listening."

²⁷"Did my master send me to tell only your master and you these things?" the general asked them. "No! He sent me to the people sitting on the wall who are going to eat their own dung and drink their own urine with you."

²⁸Then the general stood and shouted loud in the Jewish language. "Listen to the great king, the king of Assyria. ²⁹The king says this: Don't let Hezekiah deceive you—he can't save you from me. ³⁰Don't let Hezekiah get you to trust the LORD by saying, 'The LORD will certainly save us, and this city will not be put in the hands of the king of Assyria.' ³¹Don't listen to Hezekiah, because the king of Assyria says: Make peace with me, come out and give yourselves up to me. Then everybody will eat from his vine and his fig trees, and everybody will drink water from his cistern ³²till I come and take you away to a country like your own, a land with grain and wine, a land with bread and vineyards, a land with oil-producing olive trees and honey so that you will live and not die. Don't listen to Hezekiah when he tries to mislead you by saying, 'The Lord will save us.' ³³Did anyone of the gods of the nations ever save his country from the king of Assyria? ³⁴Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? Did they save Samaria from my hands? ³⁵Was there anyone among all the gods of these countries who could save their country from my hands that the LORD

should now save Jerusalem from my hands?"

³⁶But the people were silent and didn't answer him because the king had ordered, "Don't answer him."

³⁷Then Eliakim, Hilkiyah's son, who managed the palace, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah, Asaph's son, the recorder, went in to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and told him what the general said.

The LORD Rescues Jerusalem

19 When King Hezekiah heard about it, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the LORD's temple. ²And he sent Eliakim the manager of his palace, Shebna the secretary, and the elders of the priests, all of them covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz.

³They told him, "Hezekiah says: Today we're in trouble, punished, and scorned; we're like a woman who should give birth and hasn't the strength to do it. ⁴May the LORD your God hear everything the general said, whom the king of Assyria sent to defy the living God, and may the LORD your God punish him for what He heard him say. So pray for those who are still left."

⁵When King Hezekiah's men came to Isaiah, ⁶Isaiah answered them: "Tell your master, The LORD says: 'Don't be afraid of what you heard when the Assyrian king's boys mocked Me. ⁷See, I'm putting such a spirit in him that when he hears a rumor, he will go home to his country, and I'll have a sword in his own country cut him down.'"

⁸The general went back and found the king of Assyria attacking Libnah. He had heard the king had left Lachish. ⁹Then Sennacherib got news about Tirhakah king of Ethiopia

that he was coming out to fight him. So he again sent messengers to Hezekiah: ¹⁰"Tell Hezekiah king of Judah: Don't let your God whom you trust cheat you by promising that Jerusalem will not be put in the hands of the king of Assyria. ¹¹You heard what the kings of Assyria did to all the countries, how they totally destroyed them, and how can you be saved? ¹²Did the gods of the nations my fathers destroyed save them—Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden at Telassar? ¹³Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, and the king of Lahir, Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah?"

¹⁴Hezekiah took the letter from the messengers' hands, read it, and went up to the LORD's temple, and Hezekiah spread it out before the LORD. ¹⁵Hezekiah prayed to the LORD: "LORD God of Israel, on Your throne above angels, You alone are God over all the kingdoms of the world. You made heaven and earth. ¹⁶Listen, LORD, and hear. Open Your eyes, LORD, and see. Hear what Sennacherib says, who sent someone to defy the living God. ¹⁷It is true, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their countries ¹⁸and have put their gods in the fire because they are no gods but something men make of wood and stone, and so they have destroyed them. ¹⁹And now, LORD our God, please save us from his hands so that all the kingdoms in the world will know You alone are the LORD God."

²⁰Then Isaiah the son of Amoz said to Hezekiah, "The LORD, the God of Israel, says: I heard what you prayed to Me in regard to Sennacherib, king of Assyria. ²¹This is what the LORD says about him:

Zion's virgin daughter despises you and laughs at you.
 The daughter of Jerusalem shakes her head after you.
²¹Whom are you defying and mocking?
 Against whom are you shouting and looking so proud?
 Against the Holy One of Israel!
²²By your messengers you defy the LORD.
 You think: With my countless chariots
 I'll ride up to the top of the mountains,
 the distant parts of Lebanon.
 I will cut down its tallest cedars and fell its finest cypresses,
 and enter its most distant lodging places,
 its luxurious forests.
²³I'll dig wells and drink strange water.
 With the tramping of my feet
 I'll dry up all the streams of Egypt.
²⁴Haven't you heard?
 Long ago I prepared for this and planned it in the past,
 and now I have made it happen that you should make fortified cities crash into heaps of ruins.
²⁵Those who live there are now shorn of strength,
 broken in spirit, and in disgrace. They were like plants in the field, fresh green grass, grass on the roofs,
 but are now scorched by the east wind.
²⁶I know how you live,
 your going out and your coming in:
 I know how you rage against Me.

²⁸And because you rage against Me,
 because I hear your cocky talk,
 I will put My hook in your nose and My bridle in your mouth
 and make you go back the way you came.

²⁹And this is how you can tell it is true:
 This year you will eat what grows by itself
 and the next year what comes up by itself, but in the third year
 sow and reap, plant vineyards, and eat the produce.
³⁰Then those who are left of the people of Judah
 will again take root in the ground and grow a crop above ground.
³¹From Jerusalem will come the people who are left
 and from Mount Zion those who escaped.
 The LORD's zeal will do this.

³²And so the LORD says about the king of Assyria:
 He will never get into this city, shoot an arrow there,
 march against it with shields, or put ramparts against it.
³³He will go back the way he came without getting into this city,
 says the LORD.
³⁴I will shield this city
 and save it for My own sake
 and for the sake of My servant David.

³⁵It happened that night. The LORD's angel went out in the camp of the Assyrians and killed 185,000,
 and when people got up in the morning, they saw all the dead bodies.

³⁶Then Sennacherib king of Assyria left and went home and

lived in Nineveh. While he was worshiping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer killed him with their swords and escaped to the country of Ararat. His son Esarhaddon succeeded him as king.

Hezekiah Is Cured

20 In those days Hezekiah got sick and was dying. The prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him. "The LORD says this," he told him: "Give last instructions to your family because you will die and not get well."

"Then Hezekiah turned toward the wall and prayed to the LORD: "Please, LORD, remember how I've lived before You faithfully and with complete loyalty and have done what is right before You." And he wept much.

"Isaiah hadn't left the inner court when the LORD spoke to him: "Go back and tell Hezekiah, leader of My people, that the LORD, the God of your ancestor David, says, 'I've heard your prayer; I've seen your tears. Now I'm going to heal you. The day after tomorrow you will go up to the LORD's temple. 'I will give you 15 more years to live and will save you and this city from the king of Assyria and will protect this city for My sake and for the sake of My servant David.'" Then Isaiah told them to get a lump of figs and put on the ulcer so that he could get well.

"How do I know," Hezekiah asked Isaiah, "that the LORD will heal me and I'll go up to the LORD's temple the day after tomorrow?"

"This will be your proof from the LORD," Isaiah said, "that the LORD will do what He said; shall the

shadow go ahead ten steps or back ten steps?"

"It is easy for the shadow to go ahead ten steps," Hezekiah said. "No, let it go back ten steps."

"Then the prophet Isaiah called on the LORD, and He made the shadow that had gone down on the stairway of Ahaz go back 10 steps.

The Babylonians See the Treasures

"At that time Merodach-baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent a letter and a present to Hezekiah because he heard Hezekiah had been sick. "Hezekiah was so delighted with them he showed them his whole house of treasures: the silver, the gold, the spices, the fine olive oil, his armory, and everything that could be found among his treasures. There wasn't a thing in his palace or anywhere else under his control that Hezekiah didn't show them.

"Then the prophet Isaiah came to King Hezekiah. "What did these men say?" he asked him. "And from where did they come to you?"

"They came from a distant country," Hezekiah answered, "from Babylon."

"What did they see in your palace?" he asked.

"They saw everything in my palace," Hezekiah answered. "There wasn't a thing among my treasures I didn't show them."

"Listen to what the LORD says," Isaiah told Hezekiah. "'The days will come when everything in your palace, all your fathers have stored up till now will be taken away to Babylon, and nothing will be left, says the LORD. "Some of your own sons that will come from you, whose father you will be, they will take

away to be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon."

¹⁸"The Word of the LORD that you speak is good," Hezekiah answered Isaiah. And added, "Isn't it good if we have peace and security as long as I live?"

²⁰The rest of Hezekiah's history, everything he accomplished, how he made the pool and tunnel to bring the water into the city—aren't they recorded in the annals of Judah's kings? ²¹Hezekiah went to rest with his fathers, and his son Manasseh succeeded him as king.

Manasseh of Judah

21 Manasseh was 12 years old when he became king, and he was king in Jerusalem for 55 years. His mother's name was Hephzibah.

²He did what was wrong before the LORD, like the abominations of the people the LORD had driven out ahead of Israel. ³He rebuilt the high places his father Hezekiah had destroyed, set up altars for Baal, and made an Asherah post as King Ahab of Israel had done, and they worshiped the whole army of heaven and served them. ⁴He built altars in the LORD's temple even though the LORD had said, "In Jerusalem I will put My name." ⁵He built altars for the whole army of heaven in the two courts of the LORD's temple. ⁶He burned his son as a sacrifice, practiced fortune-telling and used charms, and appointed men to deal with ghosts and wizards. He did a lot of wrong before the LORD and made Him angry. ⁷And the image of Asherah he made he set up in the temple of which the LORD had said to David and his son Solomon, "In this temple and in Jerusalem, which I have

selected from all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever. ⁸I will never again make Israel's feet wander from the country I gave their fathers if only they will carefully do just as I ordered them, according to the law My servant Moses gave them." ⁹But they wouldn't listen. Manasseh misled Israel so that they did more wrong than the nations the LORD had destroyed in front of them.

¹⁰Then the LORD spoke by His servants the prophets: ¹¹"Because Manasseh king of Judah has done these abominable things, doing worse than all the Canaanites did before him, and has also made Judah sin with his disgusting idols, ¹²the LORD, the God of Israel, says this: I'm going to bring such a disaster on Jerusalem and Judah that the ears of everyone who hears about it will ring. ¹³I will stretch over Jerusalem the measuring line of Samaria and the plumb line of Ahab's family. I will wipe out Jerusalem as you wipe a dish and turn it on its face. ¹⁴And what is left of My heritage I will drive out and put in the hands of their enemies, to be plunder and spoils for all their enemies, ¹⁵because they have done wrong before Me and have been making Me angry from the time their fathers left Egypt till now."

¹⁶Manasseh also poured out so much innocent blood that it filled Jerusalem from end to end, beside the sin he led Judah into by his own wrong doing before the LORD. ¹⁷The rest of Manasseh's history, everything he did, and the sinful deeds, are they not recorded in the annals of Judah's kings? ¹⁸Manasseh went to rest with his fathers and was buried in the

garden of his own palace, in the garden of Uzza. His son Amon succeeded him as king.

Amon of Judah

¹⁹Amon was 22 years old when he started to rule and was king in Jerusalem for two years. His mother was Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. ²⁰He did what was wrong before the LORD as his father Manasseh had done. ²¹He lived in every way like his father and served the disgusting idols his father served and worshiped. ²²He deserted the LORD, the God of his fathers, and didn't live in the LORD's way. ²³Amon's men conspired against him and killed the king in his palace. ²⁴But the people of the country killed those who conspired against King Amon, and the people of the country made his son Josiah king in his place. ²⁵The rest of the things that Amon did, aren't they recorded in the annals of Judah's kings? ²⁶He was buried in his burial place in the garden of Uzza. And his son Josiah succeeded him as king.

Josiah and His Reform

22 Josiah was 8 years old when he started to rule and was king in Jerusalem for 31 years. His mother was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah from Bozkath. ²He did what was right before the LORD, living in all the ways of his ancestor David without turning away right or left.

³In the 18th year of King Josiah, the king sent his secretary Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, to the LORD's temple, saying, "Go up to Hilkiah the

high priest and have him get the money ready that is brought into the LORD's temple, which the doorkeepers have collected from the people. "It should be given to those workmen who have been put in charge of the LORD's temple, and these should give it to the workmen who are in the LORD's temple to repair the temple, "and to the carpenters, builders, masons, and to buy lumber and quarried stones to repair the temple. "But don't keep any account of the money given them because you can trust them in their work."

The Book of the Law Found

⁸Hilkiah the high priest told the secretary Shaphan, "I have found the book of the Law in the LORD's temple," and Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. ⁹Shaphan the secretary went to the king and reported to the king: "Your servants have poured out the money found in the temple and have given it to the workmen who have been put in charge of the LORD's temple."

¹⁰The secretary Shaphan told the king, "The priest Hilkiah has given me a book." And Shaphan read it in front of the king. ¹¹When the king heard what the book of the Law said, he tore his clothes. ¹²And the king gave an order to the priest Hilkiah, to Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Achbor the son of Micaiah, Shaphan the secretary, and to Asaiah the king's minister, saying, ¹³"Go, ask the LORD for me, for the people and for all Judah in regard to what this book that was found says. The LORD's anger blazing against us is so great because our fathers refused to listen to what this book says and to do all that is written about us."

"So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, who was in charge of the wardrobe. She was living in the new section in Jerusalem. And they talked to her.

"She told them, "The LORD, the God of Israel, says this to the man who sent you to me: "The LORD says, 'I'm going to bring disaster on this place and the people living here and everything threatened in the book the king of Judah has read. "Because they have forsaken Me and sacrificed to other gods and have made Me angry by all the idols their hands have made, My fury will blaze against this place never to be put out.' "Tell the king of Judah who sent you to ask the LORD: The LORD, the God of Israel, says in regard to what you've heard, "Because you were open-minded and humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I said against this place and those who live here, that they will be destroyed and cursed, and you tore your clothes and wept before Me—I too will listen,' says the LORD. "That is why I'm going to bring you down to your fathers in the grave and you'll be buried peacefully without seeing any of the disaster I'll bring on this place.' "

They reported this to the king.

Josiah Renews the LORD's Covenant

23 The king called for all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem to join him. "Then the king went up to the LORD's temple and with him everybody in Judah, all the people in Jerusalem, the priests, the prophets, and all the people,

young and old. And while they listened, he read everything written in the book of the covenant found in the LORD's temple. "Standing by the pillar, the king made the covenant before the LORD to follow the LORD, to keep His orders, regulations, and decrees with his whole heart and soul, to do exactly what was required by this covenant as it was written in this book. And all the people agreed to the covenant.

"Then the king ordered the high priest Hilkiah, the priests under him, and the doorkeepers to take out of the LORD's temple all the utensils made for Baal and Asherah, and for all the army of heaven. He burned them outside Jerusalem in open places near the Kidron and carried their ashes to Bethel.

"He put an end to the idol priests whom the kings of Judah had appointed to sacrifice on the high places in the towns of Judah and the environs of Jerusalem, those who sacrificed to Baal, the sun, the moon, the star groups of the zodiac, and all the army of heaven. "From the LORD's temple he took the Asherah post outside Jerusalem to the Kidron Valley and burned it in the Kidron, ground it to dust, and threw its ashes on the graves of the common people. "He tore down the huts of the male prostitutes that were in the LORD's temple, where women were weaving vestments for Asherah.

"He brought all the priests out of the towns of Judah and defiled the places where the priests sacrificed, from Geba to Beersheba. He tore down the High-Place-at-the-Gate which was at the entrance of the gate of Joshua, the governor of the

city, at the left of anyone going into the city gate.

⁹Now the priests of the high places didn't go up to the LORD's altar in Jerusalem but ate their bread without yeast among their people.

¹⁰He also defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of Hinnom's son, so that nobody would ever again burn his son or daughter in fire for Molech.

¹¹He took away the horses that Judah's kings had put at the entrance of the LORD's temple for the worship of the sun; it was near the room of the eunuch Nathan-melech, in the temple court. And he burned the chariots of the sun. ¹²Also the altars on the roof of Ahaz's upper room that Judah's kings had made, and the altars Manasseh made in the two courts of the LORD's temple—the king broke them and tore them down from there and dumped their rubble in the Kidron Valley.

¹³The king defiled the high places east of Jerusalem, on the southern part of the hill of destruction,^b which Solomon king of Israel had built for Astarte, the abomination of the Sidonians; for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab; and for Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites. ¹⁴He smashed the sacred pillars and cut down the Asherah posts and filled their places with human bones. ¹⁵He also tore down the altar at Bethel on the high place made by Jeroboam, Nebat's son, who made Israel sin—both the altar and high place he tore down. They burned the high place, crushing it to powder and burning the Asherah post.

¹⁶When Josiah turned and saw the graves in the mount, he sent men to take the bones out of the graves and burned them on the altar to defile it according to the LORD's threat announced by the man of God who had predicted these things. ¹⁷Then he asked, "What monument is this that I see?"

"The grave of the man of God," the men of the city answered him. "who came from Judah and announced these things you did to the altar of Bethel."

¹⁸"Let him alone," he said. "Nobody should move his bones." So they let his bones alone with the bones of the prophet who had come from Samaria.

¹⁹Josiah also got rid of all the temples on the high places in the towns of Samaria that the kings of Israel built, making the LORD angry. He did to them everything he had done at Bethel. ²⁰He slaughtered all the priests of the high places there by their altars and burned human bones on them. Then he went back to Jerusalem.

²¹Then the king gave orders to all the people: "Celebrate the Passover for the LORD your God as it is prescribed in this book of the covenant." ²²No such Passover had been celebrated during the time of the judges who ruled Israel and in all the time of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah. ²³But in the 18th year of King Josiah this Passover was celebrated for the LORD in Jerusalem.

²⁴Josiah also got rid of those who talked to ghosts, those who told the future by spirits, and the family idols, the filthy and disgusting gods that could be seen in the land of

^bA spur of the Mount of Olives

Judah and in Jerusalem. This he did to carry out the instructions of the Law written in the book the priest Hilkiah found in the LORD's temple.

²⁵Before him there had been nobody like Josiah, a king who turned to the LORD with all his heart and soul, and with all his strength according to the Law of Moses, and after him there came nobody else like him.

²⁶But the LORD didn't turn from the fury of His great anger blazing against Judah for the way in which Manasseh had made Him angry. ²⁷"I will also put Judah out of My sight," the LORD said, "as I did to Israel, and I will reject Jerusalem, this city which I chose, and the temple where I promised to put My name."

²⁸The rest of the history of Josiah and everything he did—isn't it written in the annals of the kings of Judah?

²⁹In his days Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt came up to the king of Assyria, to the Euphrates river. King Josiah went to meet him. When Pharaoh saw him, he killed him at Megiddo. ³⁰His men brought him dead in a chariot from Megiddo to Jerusalem and buried him in his grave.

Jehoahaz

The people of the country took Jehoahaz, Josiah's son, anointed him, and made him king to succeed his father. ¹Jehoahaz was 23 years old when he started to rule and was king in Jerusalem for three months. His mother was Hamulah the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. ²He did wrong before the LORD just as his ancestors had done. ³Pharaoh Necho made him a prisoner at Riblah in the country of Hamath to

keep him from being king in Jerusalem, and put a fine of 100 talents of silver and a talent of gold on the country.

Jehoiakim

⁴Then Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim, Josiah's son, king to succeed his father and changed his name to Jehoiakim. When he took Jehoahaz away, he went to Egypt and died there. ⁵Jehoiakim gave Pharaoh the silver and the gold but taxed the country to give the silver Pharaoh demanded. By taxing everyone he got the silver and the gold from the people of the country to give it to Pharaoh Necho.

⁶Jehoiakim was 25 years old when he started to rule and was king in Jerusalem for 11 years. His mother was Zebidah the daughter of Pedaiah from Rumah. ⁷He did wrong before the LORD just as his ancestors had done.

24 In his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became subject to him for three years. Then he turned and rebelled against him.

¹The LORD sent against him bands of soldiers including Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites. He sent them against Judah to destroy it as the LORD had predicted by His servants the prophets. ²Surely this came on Judah by the LORD's order to get them out of His sight for all the sins Manasseh did "and for the innocent blood he shed. He filled all Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the LORD wouldn't forgive him.

³The rest of the history of Jehoiakim—everything he did, isn't it written in the annals of Judah's kings? ⁴Jehoiakim went to rest with

his fathers, and his son Jehoiachin succeeded him as king.

⁷The king of Egypt didn't again leave his country on a campaign because the king of Babylon had taken everything that belonged to the king of Egypt from the brook of Egypt to the Euphrates River.

Jehoiachin

⁸Jehoiachin was 18 years old when he started to rule and was king in Jerusalem for three months. His mother was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan in Jerusalem. ⁹He did wrong before the LORD as his father did.

¹⁰At that time the men of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. ¹¹Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to the city while his men were besieging it. ¹²Then Jehoiachin king of Judah came out with his mother, his servants, his officials and eunuchs to the king of Babylon, and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his rule. ¹³He also took away from there all the treasures of the LORD's temple and the treasures in the king's palace, and stripped the gold off all the furnishings that Solomon king of Israel made in the LORD's temple, as the LORD had said. ¹⁴He took into captivity all Jerusalem, all the officials, and all the soldiers—10,000 captives—and all the carpenters and smiths. Nobody was left but the poorest in the country. ¹⁵He took Jehoiachin as a prisoner to Babylon; and the king's mother, the king's wives, his eunuchs, and the leading men of the country he took from Jerusalem into captivity in Babylon; ¹⁶and all the citizens who owned property—7,000—and 1,000

carpenters and smiths, all the men who could fight in war, the king of Babylon brought as prisoners to Babylon.

Zedekiah

¹⁷The king of Babylon made the king's uncle Mattaniah the king to succeed him and changed his name to Zedekiah. ¹⁸Zedekiah was 21 years old when he started to rule and was king in Jerusalem for 11 years. His mother was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah in Libnah. ¹⁹He did wrong before the LORD just as Jehoiakim had done.

²⁰The LORD was angry; that's why this came on Jerusalem and Judah till He had put them out of His sight.

Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

25 In the ninth year of his rule, the 10th day of the 10th month, Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem with his whole army and camped against it, and they built siege walls all around it. ²The siege of the city lasted till the 11th year of King Zedekiah. ³On the ninth of the (fourth) month the famine in the city was so severe there was no food for the common people.

⁴The city was split open, and that night all the soldiers went the way of the gate between the two walls which was by the king's garden. While the Chaldeans were attacking the city from all sides, the king took the road to the Jordan Valley. ⁵The army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and caught up with him in the plains of Jericho, and his whole army left him and was scattered. ⁶When they had captured the king, they brought him to the king of Babylon at Riblah, and they passed

sentence on him. ⁷They killed Zedekiah's sons while he was watching and then blinded Zedekiah. They put him in chains and took him to Babylon.

⁸On the seventh day of the fifth month, in the 19th year of King Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, a captain of the guard and officer of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. ⁹He burned the LORD's temple, the king's palace, and all the houses in Jerusalem, that is, he burned every important house. ¹⁰The whole army of the Chaldeans that was with the captain of the guard tore down the walls around Jerusalem. ¹¹Nebuzaradan captain of the guard took away as prisoners the rest of the people in the city, including those who deserted to the king of Babylon and any others of the crowd that remained. ¹²The captain of the guard left some of the poorest in the country to work in the vineyards and on the fields.

¹³The Chaldeans broke in pieces the bronze pillars at the LORD's temple, the stands, and the bronze pool at the LORD's temple and transported the metal from them to Babylon. ¹⁴They took the pots, shovels, snuffers, pans, and all the bronze utensils used in the service. ¹⁵If any censers or bowls were made of gold, the captain of the guard took the gold, and if any were silver, he took the silver. ¹⁶The two pillars, the one pool, the stands, which Solomon had made for the LORD's temple—the bronze in all these things couldn't be weighed. ¹⁷One pillar was 18 cubits high and had on it a bronze crown that was three cubits high. The network and the pomegranates around the crown

were all of bronze. The second pillar with its network was the same.

¹⁸The captain of the guard took the high priest Seraiah, the second priest Zephaniah, and the three doorkeepers, ¹⁹and from the city he took one army officer, five men who had access to the king who were still in the city, the officer who was in charge of mobilizing the people for war, and 60 of the ordinary people who still were in the city— ²⁰Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. ²¹The king of Babylon struck them down and killed them at Riblah in the country of Hamath. And so Judah left its land to go into captivity.

Gedaliah

²²Over the people that Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon left in the country he appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan. ²³When all the captains of the armed bands and their men heard the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah, they came to Gedaliah at Mizpah— Ishmael, Nethaniah's son, Johanan, Kareah's son, Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth of Netophah, and Jaazaniah of Beth-maachah with their men. ²⁴Gedaliah swore to them and to their men, telling them, "Don't be afraid of the officers of the Chaldeans. Live in the country and serve the king of Babylon and you will get along well."

²⁵But in the seventh month Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, son of Elishama, a descendant of the kings, came with 10 men and struck down Gedaliah so that he and the Judeans and Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah all died. ²⁶Then people of all classes and the captains of the

armed bands took off for Egypt because they were afraid of the Chaldeans.

Jehoiachin in Babylon

²⁷In the 37th year of the imprisonment of Jehoiachin king of Judah, on the 27th day of the 12th month, Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the first year of his rule, took Jehoiachin

king of Judah out of prison. ²⁸He talked kindly to him and gave him a seat higher than other kings who were with him in Babylon. ²⁹He changed his prison clothes and ate food continually before the king as long as he lived. ³⁰He was given a perpetual allowance from the king, a portion for every day as long as he lived.

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES

Adam to Abraham

1 Adam, Seth, Enosh, ²Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, ³Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, ⁴Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

⁵Japheth's sons were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. ⁶Gomer's sons were Ashkenaz, Diphath, and Togarmah. ⁷Javan's sons were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.

⁸Ham's sons were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. ⁹Cush's sons were Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Raama, and Sabteca. Raama's sons were Sheba and Dedan. ¹⁰Cush was the father of Nimrod, who began to be a mighty person on earth. ¹¹Mizraim was the father of Lydians, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites, ¹²Pathrusties, Casluhites (from whom came the Philistines) and the Caphtorites. ¹³Canaan was the father of Sidon, his firstborn, Heth. ¹⁴the Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, ¹⁵Hivites, Arkites, Sinites. ¹⁶Arvadites, Zemarites, and Hamathites.

¹⁷Shem's sons were Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, Aram; Aram's sons were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Meshech. ¹⁸Arpachshad was the father of Shelah, and Shelah was the father of Eber. ¹⁹Eber had two sons. The name of the one was Peleg, since in his time the earth was divided. His brother's name was Joktan. ²⁰Joktan was the father of Almodad, Sheleph,

Hazarmaveth, Jerah, ²¹Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, ²²Ebal, Abimael, Sheba, ²³Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were Joktan's sons.

²⁴Shem, Arpachshad, Shelah, ²⁵Eber, Peleg, Reu, ²⁶Serug, Nahor, Terah, ²⁷Abram, that is Abraham, ²⁸whose sons were Isaac and Ishmael.

²⁹Their descendants were as follows. Ishmael's first son was Nebaioth, then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, ³⁰Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, ³¹Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These were Ishmael's sons.

³²Keturah, Abraham's concubine, had sons. She was the mother of Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. Jokshan's sons were Sheba and Dedan. ³³Midian's sons were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were Keturah's sons.

³⁴Abraham was the father of Isaac. Isaac's sons were Esau and Israel. ³⁵Esau's sons were Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. ³⁶Eliphaz's sons were Teman, Omar, Zephi, Gatam, Kenaz, and of Timna Amalek.* ³⁷Reuel's sons were Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.

³⁸Seir's sons were Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. ³⁹Lotan's sons were Hori and Homam, and Timna was Lotan's sister. ⁴⁰Shobal's sons were Alian, Manahath, Ebal, Shephi, and Onam. Zibeon's sons were Aiah and Anah. ⁴¹Anah's son was Dishon, whose sons were Hamran, Eshban,

*Timnah was Amalek's mother (Gen. 36:12)

Ithran, and Cheran. "Ezer's sons were Bilhan, Zaavan, Jaakan. Dishan's sons were Uz and Aran.

"And these are the kings who ruled in Edom before any king ruled over Israel: Bela, Beor's son; and the name of his city was Dinhabah. "When Bela died, Jobab, Zerah's son from Bozrah, succeeded him as king. "When Jobab died, Husham from the country of the Temanites succeeded him as king. "When Husham died, Hadad, Bedad's son, who defeated Midian on the plateau of Moab, succeeded him as king; and the name of his city was Avith. "When Hadad died, Samlah from Masrekah succeeded him as king. "When Samlah died, Shaul from Rehoboth on the River succeeded him as king. "When Shaul died, Baalhanan, Achbor's son, succeeded him as king. "When Baalhanan died, Hadad succeeded him as king; and the name of his city was Pai. His wife's name was Mehetabel the daughter of Matred, Mezahab's daughter. "Then Hadad died.

Edom's chiefs were: chief Timna, chief Aliah, chief Jetheth, "chief Oholibamah, chief Elah, chief Pinon, "chief Kenaz, chief Teman, chief Mibzar, "chief Magdiel, and chief Iram. These were Edom's chiefs.

Israel to David

2 These were Israel's sons: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar and Zebulun, "Dan, Joseph and Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

"Judah's sons were Er, Onan, and Shelah. He and Bathshua, the Canaanite woman, were the parents of these three. Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked before the LORD, and

He killed him. "Judah and his daughter-in-law Tamar were the parents of Perez and Zerah. Judah had five sons in all.

"Perez' sons were Hezron and Hamul. "Zerah's sons were Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara—five in all. "Carmi's son was Achar, who troubled Israel by taking goods that were under sacred ban. "Ethan's son was Azariah.

"Hezron's sons were Jerahmeel, Ram, and Caleb. "Ram was the father of Amminadab. Amminadab was the father of Nahshon, leader of the people of Judah. "Nahshon was the father of Salma, and Salma was the father of Boaz. "Boaz was the father of Obed, and Obed was the father of Jesse. "Jesse's oldest son was Eliab; the next was Abinadab; the third was Shimea; "the fourth was Nethanel; the fifth was Raddai; "the sixth was Ozem; the seventh was David. "Their sisters were Zeruiah and Abigail. Zeruiah had three sons: Abishai, Joab, and Asahel. "Abigail was the mother of Amasa, whose father was Jether, the Ishmaelite.

Judah's Other Descendants

"Hezron's son Caleb and his wife Azubah had a son named Jerioth and her other sons were Jesher, Shobab, and Ardon. "Azubah died, and Caleb married Ephrath, and they had a son whose name was Hur. "Hur was the father of Uri, and Uri was the father of Bezalel.

"Afterwards Hezron had relations with the daughter of Machir, the father of Gilead. He married her when he was 60 years old, and they had a son whose name was Segub. "Segub was the father of Jair, who had 23 towns in Gilead. "Geshur and Aram

captured the tent-villages of Jair, with Kenath and its villages, 60 towns. All these were the descendants of Machir, the father of Gilead. ²⁴After Hezron died Caleb had relations with Ephrathah, the wife of Hezron his father, and had a son by the name of Ashhur, the father of Tekoa.

Jerahmeel's Line

²⁵The oldest son of Jerahmeel, the oldest son of Hezron, was Ram, then Bunah, Oren, Ozem, Ahijah. ²⁶Jerahmeel had another wife, whose name was Atarah; she was the mother of Onam.

²⁷The sons of Ram, the oldest son of Jerahmeel, were Maaz, Jamin, and Eker. ²⁸Onam's sons were Shammai and Jada. Shammai's sons were Nadab and Abishur. ²⁹The name of Abishur's wife was Abihail. The names of their sons were Ahban and Molid. ³⁰Nadab's sons were Seled and Appaim, but Seled died without children. ³¹Appaim's son was Ishi, and Ishi's son was Sheshan, and Sheshan's son was Ahlai. ³²The sons of Jada, the brother of Shammai, were Jether and Jonathan; and Jether died without children. ³³Jonathan's sons were Peleth and Zaza. These were the descendants of Jerahmeel.

Now Sheshan had no sons, but only daughters. ³⁴And Sheshan had an Egyptian servant by the name of Jarha. ³⁵to whom Sheshan gave his daughter as a wife; and they had a son by the name of Attai. ³⁶Attai was the father of Nathan. Nathan was the father of Zabad. ³⁷Zabad was the father of Ephlal. Ephlal was the father of Obed. ³⁸Obed was the father of

Jehu. Jehu was the father of Azariah. ³⁹Azariah was the father of Helez. Helez was the father of Eleasah. ⁴⁰Eleasah was the father of Sisamai. Sisamai was the father of Shallum. ⁴¹Shallum was the father of Jekamiah. Jekamiah was the father of Elishama.

Caleb's Line

⁴²The firstborn of Caleb, the brother of Jerahmeel, was Mesha, who was the father of Ziph, and his son was Mareshah, the father of Hebron. ⁴³Hebron's sons were Korah, Tappuah, Rekem, and Shema. ⁴⁴Shema was the father of Raham, the father of Jorkeam. Rekem was the father of Shammai. ⁴⁵Shammai's son was Maon, and Maon was the father of Bethzur. ⁴⁶Ephah, Caleb's concubine, was the mother of Haran, Moza, and Gazez. Haran was the father of Gazez. ⁴⁷Jahdai's sons were Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph. ⁴⁸Maacah, Caleb's concubine, had sons whose names were Sheber and Tirhanah. ⁴⁹She was also the mother of Shaaph, the father of Madmannah, and Sheva, the father of Machbenah and the father of Gibeon. Caleb's daughter was Achsah. ⁵⁰These were Caleb's sons.

Hur's Line

The sons of Hur, Ephrath's oldest son, were Shobal, the father of Kiriath-jearim. ⁵¹Salma, the father of Bethlehem, and Hareph, the father of Beth-gadar. ⁵²Shobal, the father of Kiriath-jearim, had sons—he was a seer for half of the Manahathites.^b ⁵³The families of Kiriath-jearim were the Ithrites, the

^bOr "Haroeah, who was over half of the Manahathites." Compare 4:2

Puthites, the Shumathites, and the Mishraitites; from these came the people of Zorah and Eshtaol.

¹⁴The sons of Salma were Bethlehem, the Netophathites, Atroth, Beth-joab, half of the Manahathites, the Zorites, ¹⁵the Sophrites who lived at Jabez, the people of Tira, Shimea, and Sucah. These are the Kenites who came from Hammath, the father of the house of Rechab.

David's Line

3 These were David's sons who were born to him in Hebron: Amnon was the first; his mother was Ahinoam from Jezreel. The second was Daniel; his mother was Abigail from Carmel. ²The third was Absalom; his mother was Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur. The fourth was Adonijah, Haggith's son. ³The fifth was Shephatiah by Abital. The sixth was Ithream, the son of his wife Eglah. ⁴He had six sons in Hebron, where he was king for seven years and six months. He was king in Jerusalem for 33 years.

⁵The following were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon; the mother of these four was Bathshua,^c Ammiel's daughter; and ⁶Ibhar, Elishama, Eliphelet, ⁷Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, ⁸Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet—nine. ⁹All these were David's sons; beside these there were the sons of the concubines. Tamar was their sister.

¹⁰Solomon's son was Rehoboam; his son was Abijah; his son was Asa; his son was Jehoshaphat; ¹¹his son was Joram; his son was Ahaziah; his

son was Joash; ¹²his son was Amaziah; his son was Azariah; his son was Jotham; ¹³His son was Ahaz; his son was Hezekiah; his son was Manasseh; ¹⁴his son was Amon; his son was Josiah; ¹⁵Josiah's first son was Johanan; the second was Jehoiakim; the third was Zedekiah; the fourth was Shallum. ¹⁶Jehoiakim's son was Jeconiah; his son was Zedekiah. ¹⁷Jeconiah the prisoner's son was Shealtiel. ¹⁸and also Malchiram, Pedaiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah. ¹⁹Pedaiah's sons were Zerubbabel and Shimei. Zerubbabel's sons were Meshullam and Hananiah, and Shelomith was their sister; ²⁰also five more: Hashubah, Ohel, Berechiah, Hasadiah, and Jushab-hesed. ²¹Haniah's sons were Pelatiah and Jeshaiah. Then there were Rephaiah's sons, Arnan's sons, Obadiah's sons, Shecaniah's sons. ²²Shecaniah's sons were Shemaiah,^d Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah, Shaphat—six. ²³Neariah's sons were Elioenai, Hizkiah, Azrikam—three. ²⁴Elioenai's sons were Hodaviah and Eliashib, Pedaiah, Akkub, Johanan, Delaiah, Anani—seven.

Judah's Line

4 Judah's descendants were Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur, and Shobal. ²Reaiah, Shobal's son, was the father of Jahath. Jahath was the father of Ahumai and Lahad. These were the families of the Zorathites.

³These were the sons of Etam: Jezreel, Ishma, and Idbash; their sister's name was Hazelelponi. ⁴Penuel was the father of Gedor, and Ezer was the father of Hushah. These

^cThis is Bathsheba; see 2 Sam. 11:3.

^dProbable reading, Hebrew adds "and the sons of Shemaiah were . . ."

were the sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephrathah, the father of Bethlehem.

⁵Ashhur, Tekoa's father, had two wives, Helah and Naarah. ⁶Naarah bore him Ahuzzam, Hopher, Temeni, and Haahashtari; these were Naarah's sons. ⁷Helah's sons were Zereth, Izohar, and Ethnan. ⁸Koz was the father of Anub, Zobeab, and the families of Aharhel the son of Harum. ⁹Jabez was more honorable than his brothers; his mother called him Jabez, saying, "His birth was painful." ¹⁰Jabez prayed to the God of Israel: "I pray You would bless me and widen my border and Your hand would be with me and free me from evil so it may not hurt me!" And God gave him what he asked for.

¹¹Chelub, Shuhah's brother, was the father of Mehir, who was the father of Eshton. ¹²Eshton was the father of Bethrapha, Paseah, and Tehinnah, who was the father of Imnahash. These were the men of Rechab.

¹³Kenaz' descendants were Othniel and Seraiah. The sons of Othniel were Hathath and Meonothai. ¹⁴Meonothai was the father of Ophrah. Seraiah was the father of the Geharashites; these people were craftsmen. ¹⁵The sons of Caleb the son of Jephunneh were Iru, Elah, and Naam; and Elah's son was Kenaz.

¹⁶Jehallelel's sons were Ziph, Ziphah, Tiria, and Asarel. ¹⁷Ezrah's sons were Jether, Mered, Ephher, and Jalon. Bithiah, Pharaoh's daughter, whom Mered married, had the following children: Miriam, Shammai, and Ishbah, the father of Eshtemoa. ¹⁸His Jewish wife was the mother of Jered the father of Gedor, Heber the father of Soco, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah.

¹⁹The sons of Hodiah's wife, the sister of Naham, were the father of Keilah the Garmite, and Eshtemoa

the Maacathite. ²⁰Shimon's sons were Amnon, Rinnah, Benhanan, and Tilon. Ishi's descendants were Zoheth and Zoheth's son.

²¹The sons of Shelah, Judah's son, were Er the father of Lecah, Laadah the father of Mareshah, and the families of the guild of linen workers at Beth-ashbea; ²²also Jokim, the men of Cozeba, Joash, and Saraph, who took wives in Moab before returning to Bethlehem (the records are old). ²³They were the potters who lived at Netaim and Gederah. They lived there with the king, doing his work.

²⁴Simeon's sons were Nemuel, Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, and Shaul. ²⁵His son was Shallum, his son was Mibsam; his son was Mishma. ²⁶Mishma's son was Hammuel; his son was Zaccur; his son was Shimei. ²⁷Shimei had 16 sons and six daughters. But his brothers didn't have many children, and their whole tribe didn't get to be large as did the people of Judah.

²⁸They lived at Beersheba, Moladah, Hazarshual, ²⁹Bilhad, Ezem, Tolad, ³⁰Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag, ³¹Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susim, Beth-biri, and Shaaraim. These were their towns till David became king. ³²Their villages were Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Tochen, and Ashan—five towns, ³³with all the villages around these towns as far as Baal. This was where they lived, and they had their own genealogy.

³⁴Meshobab, Jamlech, Joshah son of Amaziah, ³⁵Joel, Jehu son of Joshibiah, son of Seraiah, son of Asiel, ³⁶Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benaiah, ³⁷Ziza son of Shiphi, son of Allon, son of Jedaiah, son of Shimri, son of Shemaiah. ³⁸These who are mentioned by name were

leaders in their families, and their clans grew large. ³⁰They moved to the outskirts of Gedor, on the east side of the valley, to find pasture for their flocks. ⁴⁰And they found pasture that was rich and good, and the land was large, peaceful, and carefree; for the people of Ham used to live there. ⁴¹And these men, registered above by name, came in the time of Hezekiah king of Judah, knocked down their tents and the dwellings they found there, and destroyed them as it still is today, and lived there in their place, because there was pasture for their flocks there. ⁴²And some from Simeon, 500 men, went to Mount Seir, led by Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, Ishi's sons, ⁴³and they struck down those who were left of the Amalekites, and they've lived there to this day.

Reuben's Line

5 The sons of Reuben, Israel's firstborn: He was the firstborn, but when he polluted his father's bed, his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph, Israel's son, but Joseph could not be enrolled in the genealogy as firstborn. ²For Judah grew strong among his brothers and the chief prince was to come from him, yet Joseph got the birthright.

³The sons of Reuben, Israel's firstborn, were Hanoah, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. ⁴Joel's son was Shemaiah; his son was Gog; his son was Shimei; ⁵his son was Micah; his son was Reaiah; his son was Baal; ⁶his son was Beerah; Tillegath-pilneser, king of Assyria, took him away as a captive; he was a prince in the tribe of Reuben. ⁷And his brothers according to their families, when they were enrolled according to

their descent, were as follows: The first was Jeiel; then Zechariah, ⁸and Bela son of Azaz, son of Shema, son of Joel, who lived in Aroer, as far as Nebo and Baal-meon; ⁹they also lived toward the east as far as the edge of the desert that extends from the river Euphrates, because their cattle were so many in the land of Gilead. ¹⁰At the time of Saul they fought a war against Hagar's descendants; they defeated them, and lived in their tents in the whole area east of Gilead.

Gad's Line

¹¹Gad's descendants lived opposite them in Bashan as far as Salcah. ¹²The first was Joel, the second was Shapham, then Janai and Shaphat in Bashan. ¹³Their brothers according to their clans were Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jacan, Zia, and Eberseven. ¹⁴These were the sons of Abihail son of Huri, son of Jaroah, son of Gilead, son of Michael, son of Jeshishai, son of Jahdo, son of Buz. ¹⁵Ahi son of Abdiel, son of Guni, was the leader of their clans. ¹⁶They lived in Gilead, in Bashan and its villages, and in all the pasture land of Sharon to its limits. ¹⁷All these were enrolled in genealogies when Jotham was king of Judah and Jeroboam was king of Israel.

¹⁸Of the descendants of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh, 44,760 soldiers were bold men who carried shield and sword, shot the bow, and were skilled in fighting. ¹⁹They fought a war against Hagar's descendants, with Jetur, Naphish, and Nodab. ²⁰They received help against them, and Hagar's descendants and all who were with them were put in

their hands. They had called on God in the battle, and He answered them because they trusted in Him.

²¹They took away their cattle: 50,000 of their camels, 250,000 sheep, 2,000 donkeys, and 100,000 captives.

²²Many were struck down, because the war was God's doing; and they lived in their land till the exile.

²³Half of the tribe of Manasseh lived in the land from Bashan to Baal-hermon, Senir, and Mount Hermon, where they were numerous. ²⁴These were the leaders of the clans: Ephraim, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, strong men who were bold and famous, leaders of their clans.

²⁵But they sinned against the God of their fathers and went lusting after the gods of the people of the country whom God had destroyed ahead of them. ²⁶Then the God of Israel moved Pul king of Assyria, that is, Tillegath-pilneser king of Assyria, to take Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh into captivity, and he brought them to Halah, Habor, Hara, and the river of Gozan, where they still are today.

The High Priests

6 Levi's sons were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. ²Kohath's sons were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. ³Amram's children were Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. Aaron's sons were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

⁴Eleazar was the father of Phinehas. Phinehas was the father of Abishua. ⁵Abishua was the father of Bukki. Bukki was the father of Uzzi. ⁶Uzzi was the father of Zerariah. Zerariah was the father of Meraioth. ⁷Meraioth was the father of Amariah. Amariah was

the father of Ahitub. ⁸Ahitub was the father of Zadok. Zadok was the father of Ahimaaz. ⁹Ahimaaz was the father of Azariah. Azariah was the father of Johanan. ¹⁰Johanan was the father of Azariah—he was the one who served as priest in the temple Solomon built in Jerusalem. ¹¹Azariah was the father of Amariah. Amariah was the father of Ahitub. ¹²Ahitub was the father of Zadok. Zadok was the father of Shallum. ¹³Shallum was the father of Hilkiah. Hilkiah was the father of Azariah. ¹⁴Azariah was the father of Seraiah. Seraiah was the father of Jehozadak. ¹⁵Jehozadak went away when the LORD used Nebuchadnezzar to take Judah and Jerusalem away into exile.

Levi's Line

¹⁶Levi's descendants were Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. ¹⁷And these are the names of Gershom's sons: Libni and Shimei. ¹⁸Kohath's sons were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. ¹⁹Merari's sons were Mahli and Mushi.

Levi's families as they were descended from their fathers were as follows: ²⁰Gershom's son was Libni; his son was Jahath; his son was Zimham; ²¹his son was Joah; his son was Iddo; his son was Zerah; his son was Jeatherai.

²²Kohath's descendants were as follows: His son was Amminadab; his son was Korah; his son was Assir; ²³his son was Elkanah; his son was Ebiasaph; his son was Assir; ²⁴his son was Tahath; his son was Uriel; his son was Uzziyah; his son was Shaul. ²⁵Elkanah's sons were Amasai and Ahimoth. ²⁶Elkanah's descendants were as follows: His son was Zophai; his son

was Nahath; ²⁷his son was Eliab; his son was Jeroham; his son was Elkanah; ²⁸Samuel's sons were Joel^e the firstborn, and the second Abijah.

²⁹Merari's descendants were as follows: Mahli; his son was Libni; ³⁰his son was Shimei; his son was Uzzah; his son was Shimeah; his son was Haggiah; his son was Asaiah.

³¹David put the following in charge of the music in the LORD's house after the ark was placed there. ³²They played their music in front of the tabernacle where God met with His people till Solomon built the LORD's temple in Jerusalem, and they did their duties as they were prescribed for them. ³³These are the men who served, and their descendants. Of Kohath's descendants there was Heman the singer, son of Joel, son of Samuel, ³⁴son of Elkanah, son of Jeroham, son of Eliel, son of Toah, ³⁵son of Zuph, son of Elkanah, son of Mahath, son of Amasai, ³⁶son of Elkanah, son of Joel, son of Azariah, son of Zephaniah, ³⁷son of Tahath, son of Assir, son of Ebiasaph, son of Korah, ³⁸son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, son of Israel. ³⁹There was Heman's relative Asaph, who stood at his right; he was the son of Berechiah, son of Shimeah, ⁴⁰son of Michael, son of Baaseiah, son of Malchiah, ⁴¹son of Ethni, son of Zerah, son of Adaiah, ⁴²son of Ethan, son of Zimmah, son of Shimei, ⁴³son of Jahath, son of Gershon, son of Levi.

⁴⁴On the left were their relatives, Merari's sons: Ethan son of Kishi, son of Abdi, son of Malluch, ⁴⁵son of Hashabiah, son of Amaziah, son

of Hilkiah, ⁴⁶son of Amzi, son of Bani, son of Shemer, ⁴⁷son of Mahli, son of Mushi, son of Merari, son of Levi. ⁴⁸Their relatives, the Levites, were appointed for all the service of the tabernacle, the house of God.

Aaron's Line

⁴⁹Aaron and his descendants offered the sacrifices on the altar of burnt offerings and on the altar of incense, did all the work of the most holy place, and atoned for Israel, just as Moses, God's servant, ordered. ⁵⁰These were Aaron's descendants: His son was Eleazar; his son was Phinehas; his son was Abishua; ⁵¹his son was Bukki, his son was Uzzi; his son was Zerariah; ⁵²his son was Meraioth; his son was Amariah; his son was Ahitub; ⁵³his son was Zadok; his son was Ahimaaaz. ⁵⁴These are the places where they lived, according to their settlements in their territory. Of Aaron's descendants the clan of Kohath had the (first) lot. ⁵⁵They were given Hebron in the country of Judah and the pasture land around it, ⁵⁶but the fields of the city and its villages were given to Caleb, Jephunneh's son. ⁵⁷Aaron's descendants were given Hebron as a city of refuge, and Libnah with its pastures, Jattir, Eshtemoa with its pastures, ⁵⁸Hilen with its pastures, Debir with its pastures, ⁵⁹Ashan with its pastures, Beth-shemesh with its pastures. ⁶⁰From the tribe of Benjamin they received Geba with its pastures, Alemeth with its pastures, and Anathoth with its pastures. The total number of cities of their families was 13.

^eJoel (1 Sam. 8:2). The Hebrew here omits the name.

⁴The rest of Kohath's descendants were given 10 cities by lot from the clan of the tribe, from the half-tribe, the half of Manasseh.^f

⁵Gershom's descendants received by lot according to their families 13 cities from the tribe of Issachar, the tribe of Asher, the tribe of Naphtali, and the tribe of Manasseh in Bashan. ⁶Merari's descendants received by lot according to their families 12 cities from the tribe of Reuben, the tribe of Gad, and the tribe of Zebulun.

⁷So Israel gave the Levites the cities with their pastures. ⁸They gave by lot these cities that have been mentioned by name from the tribe of Judah, the tribe of Simeon, and the tribe of Benjamin.

⁹Some of the families of Kohath's descendants had cities of their territory from the tribe of Ephraim. ¹⁰They were given as cities of refuge Shechem with its pastures in the hills of Ephraim, Gezer with its pastures, ¹¹Jokmeam with its pastures, Beth-horon with its pastures, ¹²Aijalon with its pastures, Gath-rimmon with its pastures; ¹³and from the half-tribe of Manasseh, Aner with its pastures and Bileam with its pastures, for the families of the rest of Kohath's descendants.

¹⁴Gershom's descendants received from the clan of the half-tribe of Manasseh Golan in Bashan with its pastures and Ashtaroth with its pastures; ¹⁵and from the tribe of Issachar, Kedesh with its pastures, Laberath with its pastures, Ramoth with its pastures, and Nem with its pastures; ¹⁶and from the tribe of Asher, Mashal with its pastures, Abdon with its pastures,

¹⁷Hukok with its pastures, and Rehob with its pastures; ¹⁸and from the tribe of Naphtali, Kedesh in Galilee with its pastures, Hammon with its pastures, and Kiriathaim with its pastures.

¹⁹The rest of Merari's descendants received from the tribe of Zebulun Rimmono with its pastures, Tabor with its pastures; ²⁰and on the other side of the Jordan, near Jericho but east of the Jordan, they received from the tribe of Reuben Bezer in the wilderness with its pastures, Jahzah with its pastures, ²¹Kedemoth with its pastures, Mephaath with its pastures; ²²and from the tribe of Gad, Ramoth in Gilead with its pastures, Mahanaim with its pastures, ²³Heshbon with its pastures, and Jazer with its pastures.

Issachar's Line

7 Issachar's sons were Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron—four. ²Tola's sons were Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Ibsam, and Shemuel. These men were leaders of the clans of Tola, according to their descent. In David's time their able men totaled 22,600. ³Izrahiah was Uzzi's son, and Izrahiah's sons were Michael, Obadiah, Joel, and Isshiah—five; all of them were leaders. ⁴In addition to these, according to their descent and clans, were 36,000 men ready for battle; they had many wives and children. ⁵Their relatives, that is, all of Issachar's families as they were enrolled, numbered 87,000 able men in all.

Benjamin's Line

⁶Benjamin had three sons—Bela,

^f See Joshua 21:5 for the probable meaning of this verse.

Becher, and Jediael. ⁷Bela's descendants were Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri—five, leaders of their clans; their enrollment was 22,034 able men. ⁸Becher's descendants were Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth, and Alemeth. All these were Becher's descendants. ⁹Their enrollment according to their descent, with the leaders of their clans, was 22,200 able men. ¹⁰Jediael's son was Bilhan. Bilhan's sons were Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Chenaanah, Zethan, Tarshish, and Ahishahar. ¹¹All these were Jediael's descendants, who were the leaders of their clans that numbered 17,200 able men who could go out to war. ¹²The Shuppites and Huppites were Ir's descendants; the Hushites were descendants of another.*

Naphtali's Line

¹³Naphtali's sons were Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shallum, descendants of Bilhah.

Manasseh's Line

¹⁴Manasseh's sons: Asriel was the son of his Aramean concubine; she also bore Machir, the father of Gilead. ¹⁵Machir took a wife from the Huppites and Shuppites. His beloved's name was Maacah. The name of his second wife was Zelophehad, and he had daughters. ¹⁶And Maacah, Machir's wife, had a son, and she called him Peresh. His brother's name was Sheresh, and his sons were Ulam and Rakem. ¹⁷Ulam's son was Bedan. These were the sons of Gilead son of Machir, son of Manasseh. ¹⁸His

sister Hammolecheth bore Ishhod, Abiezer, and Mahlah. ¹⁹Shemida's sons were Ahian, Shechem, Likhi, and Aniam.

Ephraim's Line

²⁰Ephraim's son was Shuthelah; his son was Bered; his son was Tahath; his son was Eleadah; his son was Tahath; ²¹his son was Zabab; his son was Shuthelah. Ezer and Elead were killed by the natives of Gath when they came down to take away their cattle. ²²Their father Ephraim mourned a long time, and his brothers came to comfort him. ²³Then he and his wife again had a son, and he called him Beriah, because calamity had come to his home. ²⁴His daughter was Sheerah, who built the Lower and Upper Beth-horon, and Uzzensheerah. ²⁵His son was Rephah; his son was Resheph; His son was Telah; His son was Tahan; ²⁶his son was Ladan; his son was Ammihud; his son was Elishama; ²⁷his son was Nun; his son was Joshua.

²⁸They owned property and lived at Bethel and its villages, eastward at Naaran and westward at Gezer with its villages, at Shechem and its villages, as far as Gaza and its villages. ²⁹The tribe of Manasseh had Beth-shean and its villages, Tannach and its villages, Megiddo and its villages, Dor and its villages. There lived the descendants of Joseph, the son of Israel.

Asher's Line

³⁰Asher's sons were Imnah, Ishvah, Beriah, and their sister was Serah. ³¹Beriah's sons were Heber and Malchiel, who was the father of

*See Gen. 46:23.

Birzaith. ¹²Heber was the father of Japhlet, Shomer, Hotham, and their sister Shua. ¹³Japhlet's sons were Pasach, Bimhal, and Ashvath; these were Japhlet's sons. ¹⁴The sons of Shomer his brother were Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram. ¹⁵His brother Helem's sons were Zophah, Imna, Shelesh, and Amal. ¹⁶Zophah's sons were Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah. ¹⁷Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilsha, Ithran, and Beera. ¹⁸Jether's sons were Jephunneh, Pispa, and Ara. ¹⁹Ulla's sons were Arah, Hanniel, and Rizia. ²⁰All these were Asher's descendants, leaders of their clans, chosen and able men leaders among princes. Their enrollment as fighting men totaled 26,000.

Benjamin's Line

8 Benjamin's firstborn son was Bela; the second was Ashbel; the third was Aharah; ²the fourth was Nohah; the fifth was Rapha. ³Bela's sons were Addar, Gera, Abihud. ⁴Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah. ⁵Gera, Shephuphan, and Huram.

⁶These were Ehud's sons who were leaders of the clans of the people living at Geba and who were led away captive to Manahath; ⁷Naaman, Ahijah, and Gera—he led them away to captivity. Ehud was also the father of Uzza and Ahihud.

⁸Shaharaim had children in the country of Moab after he divorced his wives Hushim and Baara. ⁹He and his wife Hodesh had the following sons: Jobab, Zibia, Meshah, Malcam. ¹⁰Jeuz, Sachia, and Mirmah. These were his sons, leaders of clans. ¹¹He and Hushim were the parents of Abitub and Elpaal.

¹²Elpaal's descendants were Eber,

Misham, and Shemed, who built Ono and Lod with its villages. ¹³and Beriah and Shema, who were the leaders of the clans of the people living in Aijalon, who drove off the people living in Gath. ¹⁴And Ahio, Shashak, Jeremoth, ¹⁵Zebadiah, Arad, and Eder, ¹⁶Michael, Ishpah, and Joha were Beriah's sons. ¹⁷Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber, ¹⁸Ishmerai, Izliah, and Jobab were Elpaal's sons. ¹⁹Jakim, Zichri, Zabdi, ²⁰Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel, ²¹Adaiah, Beraiah, and Shimrath were Shimei's sons. ²²Ishpan, Eber, Eliel, ²³Abdon, Zichri, Hanan, ²⁴Hananiah, Elam, Anthothijah, ²⁵Iphdeiah, and Penuel were Shashak's sons. ²⁶Shamsherai, Shehariah, Athaliah, ²⁷Jaare-shiah, Elijah, and Zichri were Jeroham's sons. ²⁸These were the leaders of clans by their descent; they lived in Jerusalem.

²⁹In Gibeon lived the father of Gibeon, and his wife's name was Maacah. ³⁰His first son was Abdon; then Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab, ³¹Gedor, Ahio, Zecher, and ³²Mikloth, who was the father of Shimeah. These lived with their relatives in Jerusalem, not far from their other relatives. ³³Ner was the father of Kish, and Kish was the father of Saul. Saul was the father of Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal. ³⁴Jonathan's son was Meribbaal, and Meribbaal was the father of Micah. ³⁵Micah's sons were Pithon, Melech, Tarea, and Ahaz. ³⁶Ahaz was the father of Jehoaddah. Jehoaddah was the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri. Zimri was the father of Moza. ³⁷Moza was the father of Binea. His son was Raphah. His son was Eleasah. His son was Azel. ³⁸Azel had six sons, whose names were Azrikam, Bocheru,

Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, Hanan. All these were Azel's sons. ³⁰His brother Eshek's sons were as follows: The first was Ulam; the second was Jeush; the third was Eliphelet. ⁴⁰Ulam's sons were able men, skilled bowmen. They had many sons and grandsons, 150. All these were Benjamin's descendants.

The Community of Returned Exiles

9 All Israel was registered by descent, and they are recorded in the Book of the Kings of Israel. Judah was taken away into exile in Babylon because they had sinned. ²Now the first to settle again on their lands and in their cities were: lay Israelites, the priests, the Levites, and the temple servants.

³Jerusalem was settled by descendants of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh: ⁴Uthai son of Ammihud, son of Omri, son of Imri, son of Bani, of the descendants of Perez son of Judah. ⁵Of the descendants of Shilah, Asaiah the firstborn and his sons. ⁶And of the descendants of Zerah, Jeuel and their relatives. 690.

⁷Of the descendants of Benjamin, Sallu son of Meshullam, son of Hodaviah, son of Hassenuah, ⁸Ibneiah son of Jeroham, Elah son of Uzzi, son of Michri, and Meshullam son of Shephatiah son of Reuel, son of Ibniah, ⁹and their relatives according to their descent, 956. All these were leaders of their clans.

The Priests and Levites at Jerusalem

¹⁰There were the following priests: Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, Jachin. ¹¹Azariah son of Hilkiah, son of Meshullam, son of Zadok, son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the

officer in charge of God's temple, ¹²Adaiah son of Jeroham, son of Pashhur, son of Malchiah, and Maasai son of Adiel, son of Jahzerah, son of Meshullam, son of Meshillemith, son of Immer, ¹³and their relatives, leaders of their clans, 1,760 able men for the work of the service of God's temple.

¹⁴And the following Levites: Shemaiah son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son of Hashabiah, of Merari's sons, ¹⁵and Bakbakkar, Heresh, Galal, Mattaniah son of Mica, son of Zichri, son of Asaph, ¹⁶Obadaiah son of Shemaiah, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun, and Berechiah son of Asa, son of Elkanah, who lived in the villages of the people of Netophah.

¹⁷The gatekeepers were Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman, and their relatives (Shallum being the leader), ¹⁸previously stationed at the king's gate on the east side. They were the gatekeepers for the camps of Levites. ¹⁹Shallum son of Kore, son of Ebiasaph, son of Korah, and the members of his clan, Korah's descendants, were responsible for serving as watchmen at the thresholds of the tabernacle as their fathers had been in charge of guarding the entrances to the LORD's camp. ²⁰Phinehas, Eleazar's son, formerly was the overseer in charge of them—the LORD was with him. ²¹Zechariah, Meshelemiah's son, was the keeper of the gate at the entrance of the tabernacle where God met with His people. ²²All who were chosen to be doorkeepers at the thresholds totaled 212. Their genealogies were recorded in their villages. David and Samuel the seer appointed them to their positions of trust. ²³So they and their descendants were guards

in charge of the gates of the LORD's house, that is, the tabernacle. ¹⁴The doorkeepers were on the four sides, east, west, north, and south. ¹⁵Their relatives had to come from their villages, from time to time, to serve under them for a period of seven days. ¹⁶The four chief gatekeepers, trustworthy men, Levites, were in charge of the chambers and the treasures of God's temple. ¹⁷They lodged around God's temple because they had to watch it and open it every morning.

¹⁸Some of them were in charge of the utensils for the service. They would count them when they brought them in and took them out. ¹⁹Others were appointed over the furniture, the holy utensils, the flour, wine, olive oil, incense, and spices. ²⁰Some of the priests' sons prepared the mixture of spices. ²¹Mattithiah, a Levite, the first son of Shallum, Korah's descendant, was entrusted with preparing the flat loaves. ²²Some of their Kohathite relatives had the duty every Sabbath to set the bread out in rows.

²³These were the singers, the leaders of the clans of Levites. They lived in rooms in the temple and were free from other duties because they were on duty day and night. ²⁴They were the leaders of the clans of Levites according to descent. These leaders lived in Jerusalem.

Saul's Family

¹Jeiel, the father of Gibeon, lived in Gibeon. His wife's name was Maacah. ²His first son was Abdon; then Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab, ³Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah, and Mikloth. ⁴Mikloth was the

father of Shimeam. These lived with their relatives in Jerusalem near their other relatives.

⁵Ner was the father of Kish. Kish was the father of Saul. Saul was the father of Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal. ⁶Jonathan's son was Meribbaal, and Meribbaal was the father of Micah. ⁷Micah's sons were Pithon, Melech, and Tahrea. ⁸Ahaz was the father of Jarah. Jarah was the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri, and Zimri was the father of Moza. ⁹Moza was the father of Binea; his son was Rephaiah; his son was Eleasah; his son was Azel. ¹⁰Azel had six sons, and their names were Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan. These were Azel's sons.

The Death of Saul

10 The Philistines fought against Israel, and the men of Israel, fleeing from the Philistines, fell down dead on Mount Gilboa. ²The Philistines pursued Saul and his sons, and they struck down Saul's sons Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua. ³The battle went hard against Saul, and the archers got him within reach of their bows, and he was wounded by the archers.

⁴"Draw your sword," Saul told his armor-bearer, "and stab me with it, or these uncircumcised men will come and abuse me." But his armor-bearer was afraid and refused. Then Saul took the sword and fell on it. ⁵When his armor-bearer realized that Saul was dead, he too fell on his sword and died. ⁶So Saul and his three sons and all his men died together.

⁷When all the people of Israel who were in the valley saw their army

had fled and Saul and his sons were dead, they left their cities and fled. So the Philistines came and lived in them.

⁸The next day when the Philistines came to strip the wounded, they found Saul and his sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. ⁹They stripped him and took his head and his weapons and sent men around the country of the Philistines to tell the news to their idols and the people. ¹⁰They put his weapons in the temple of their gods and fastened his head to the temple of Dagon.

¹¹When all the people of Jabesh-gilead heard about everything the Philistines did to Saul, ¹²their able-bodied men came and took away the bodies of Saul and his sons, brought them to Jabesh, buried their remains under the terebinth tree in Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

¹³So Saul died for the wrong he did against the LORD, for not doing what the LORD told him, and also for asking a medium for information. ¹⁴He didn't ask the LORD, and so He killed him and turned the kingdom over to David, Jesse's son.

David Becomes King

11 All Israel gathered around David at Hebron. "We are your own flesh and blood," they said. ²"Before now, when Saul was king, you led the forces of Israel and the LORD your God told you, 'You will be the shepherd and the leader of My people Israel.'" ³So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron. David made a covenant with them before the LORD at Hebron, and they anointed David king of Israel, as the LORD had said through Samuel.

⁴David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which is Jebus; there the

Jebusites were living in the country. ⁵The people who lived at Jebus told David, "You will not get in here." But David took the stronghold of Zion, which is David's city.

⁶"Whoever is the first to kill a Jebusite," David said, "will be made a leader and a captain." Joab, Zeruah's son, was the first to go up, and he became the captain.

⁷David lived in the stronghold, and so it was called David's city. ⁸He built the city all around, starting from the Millo, and Joab repaired the rest of the city. ⁹David grew stronger and stronger, and the LORD of armies was with him.

¹⁰Now these were the chief among David's heroes, who became powerful with him in his kingdom and with all Israel made him king, according to the LORD's word regarding Israel. ¹¹This is the list of David's heroes. Jashobeam the Hachmonite was the leader of the Thirty. He raised his spear against 300 and struck them down at one time. ¹²After him came Eleazar son of Dodo the Ahohite, who was one of the three heroes. ¹³He was with David at Pas-dammim. There the Philistines gathered to fight. There was a plot of ground full of barley; and the army fled from the Philistines. ¹⁴But they stood in the middle of the plot, held it, and struck down the Philistines. So the LORD saved them with a great victory.

¹⁵Once three of the 30 leading men went down to David's rock at the cave of Adullam while the army of the Philistines was camping in the valley of Rephaim. ¹⁶David was then in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines was in Bethlehem.

¹⁷David was thirsty and said, "I wish someone would get me a drink of water from Bethlehem's well

that's by the gate." ¹⁸So the three heroes broke through the Philistine lines and drew water from Bethlehem's well that was by the gate. They took it and brought it to David. Then David refused to drink it and poured it out before the LORD. ¹⁹"God forbid," he said, "that I should do this. Should I drink the blood of these men who risked their lives? They got this water at the risk of their lives." So he refused to drink it. This is what the three heroes did.

²⁰Abishai, Joab's brother, was the chief of the Thirty. He raised his spear against 300, killed them, and so he won a name among the Thirty. ²¹He was the most honored of the Thirty and became their leader but didn't come up to the Three.

²²Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, an able man from Kabzeel who had done some great things, struck down two Moabite heroes. Once he went down into a pit when it was snowing and killed a lion. ²³He also killed an Egyptian 7½ feet tall. The Egyptian had in his hand a spear like a weaver's beam, but Benaiah went down to him with a club, grabbed the spear from the Egyptian's hands, and killed him with his own spear. ²⁴These are the things Benaiah son of Jehoiada did, and he was named among the thirty heroes. ²⁵He was honored above the Thirty but didn't come up to the Three. David put him in charge of his bodyguard.

²⁶The great heroes were as follows: Asahel, Joab's brother, Elhanan son of Dodo of Bethlehem, ²⁷Shammoth the Harodite, Helez the Pelonite, ²⁸Ira son of Ikkesh of Tekoah, Abiezer from Anathoth, ²⁹Sibbecai the Hushathite, Ilai the Ahoite, ³⁰Maharai from Netophah,

Heled son of Baanah from Netophah, ³¹Ithai son of Ribai from Gibeah of Benjamin, Benaiah from Pirathon, ³²Hurai from the brooks of Gaash, Abiel from Beth-arabah, ³³Azmaveth from Bahurim, Elishba from Shaalbon, ³⁴Bene-Hashem the Gizonite, Jonathan son of Shage the Hararite, ³⁵Ahiam son of Sachar the Hararite, Eliphal, Ur's son, ³⁶Hepher the Mecherathite, Ahijah the Pelonite, ³⁷Hezro the Carmelite, Naari, Ezbai's son, ³⁸Joel, Nathan's brother, Mibhar, Hagri's son, ³⁹Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Berothite, the armor-bearer of Joab, Zeruiah's son, ⁴⁰Ira the Ithrite, Gareb the Ithrite, ⁴¹Uriah the Hittite, Zabab, Ahlai's son, ⁴²Adina son of Shiza, of Reuben, a leader of the tribe of Reuben, was over the Thirty, ⁴³Hanan, Maacah's son, and Joshaphat the Mithnite, ⁴⁴Uzzia from Ashteroth, Shama and Jeiel, sons of Hotham from Aroer, ⁴⁵Jediael son of Shimri, and Joha his brother, the Tizite, ⁴⁶Eliel the Mahavite, Jeribai and Joshaviah, Elnaam's sons, Ithmah the Moabite, ⁴⁷Eliel, Obed, and Jaasiel from Zobah.

David's Army

12 These are the men who came to David at Ziklag when Saul, the son of Kish, was still keeping him from going where he wanted to. They were among the heroes who fought alongside of him. ²They were armed with bows and could sling stones and shoot arrows with their bows with the right hand or the left. They were from Benjamin, Saul's relatives. ³The leader was Achiezer, then Joash, the sons of Shemaah from Gibeah; Jeziel and Pelet, Azmaveth's

sons; Beracah and Jehu from Anathoth; ⁴Ishmaiah from Gibeon, a hero among the Thirty and one of their leaders; Jeremiah, Jahaziel, Johanan, and Jozabad from Gederah; ⁵Eluzai, Jerimoth, Bealiah, Shemariah, and Shephatiah from Haruph; ⁶Elkanah, Isshiah, Azarel, Joezer, and Jashobeam, Korah's descendants; ⁷Joelah and Zebadiah, Jeroham's sons from Gedor.

⁸Some men left Gad to join David at the stronghold in the wilderness; they were able men, trained soldiers, ready to fight with shield and spear. They looked like lions and were fast as gazelles on the hills. ⁹Ezer was the first; the second was Obadiah; the third was Eliab; ¹⁰the fourth was Mishmannah; the fifth was Jeremiah; ¹¹the sixth was Attai; the seventh was Eliel; ¹²the eighth was Johanan; the ninth was Elzabad; ¹³the 10th was Jeremiah; the 11th was Machbannai. ¹⁴These descendants of Gad were captains in the army; the least was ready to fight a hundred, and the best a thousand. ¹⁵These were the men who crossed the Jordan in the first month when it was overflowing all its banks and put to flight all the people in the valleys to the east and west.

¹⁶Some of the men of Benjamin and of Judah came to the stronghold, to David. ¹⁷David went out to meet them. "If you've come to me as friends," he responded to them, "and to help me, then I'll be one with you. But if you've come to betray me to my enemies when I've done no crime, may the God of our fathers see it and punish you."

¹⁸Then the Spirit came on Amasai, a leader of the Thirty: "We are yours, David, and on your side, son of Jesse. May everything go well

with you and well with those who help you, because your God is helping you."

David welcomed them and made them officers in his army.

¹⁹Some men had deserted from Manasseh to join David when he went with the Philistines against Saul (although David didn't help the Philistines, because after considering the matter, their rulers sent him away; "He will desert us at the cost of our heads," they said, "and join his master Saul"). ²⁰When he went to Ziklag, these men from Manasseh deserted to join him: Adnah, Jozabad, Jediael, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu, Zillethai, each commanding his thousand in Manasseh. ²¹They helped David against the band of raiders because they were all able fighting men and commanders in the army. ²²From day to day men came to David to help him until there was a large army, like God's army.

²³This is the record of the bands of men equipped for war who joined David at Hebron, to turn over Saul's kingdom to him, as the LORD had said: ²⁴from Judah, men equipped for war, carrying shields and lances, 6,800; ²⁵from Simeon, able fighting men, 7,100; ²⁶from Levi, 4,600, ²⁷along with Jehoiada, leader of Aaron's clan, with whom were 3,700 men, ²⁸and Zadok, a young hero from whose clan there were 22 captains; ²⁹from Benjamin, Saul's tribe, 3,000 men, though most of them had stayed loyal to Saul's family; ³⁰from Ephraim, 20,800 able fighting men, famous in their clans; ³¹from half of the tribe of Manasseh 18,000 who had been selected to come and make David king; ³²from the men of Issachar who understood the times so that they knew what Israel should do

there were 200 leaders, with their kinsmen under their command; ²³from Zebulun 50,000 men drilled in the art of war with every kind of weapon, who could wage a battle with singleness of purpose; ²⁴from Naphtali 1,000 captains and with them 37,000 who wielded shield and spear; ²⁵from Dan 28,600 ready for battle; ²⁶from Asher 40,000 fit and ready for battle; ²⁷from the other side of the Jordan, from Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh 120,000 with all kinds of weapons to fight.

²⁸All these fighting men prepared for battle came with a single purpose to Hebron, to make David king of all Israel; and all the rest of Israel also was unanimous for making David king. ²⁹They were there with David three days, eating and drinking, for their relatives had prepared for them. ³⁰And also their neighbors as far as Issachar, Zebulun, and Naphtali brought food on donkeys and camels, on mules and oxen; plenty of bread, fig cakes, raisin clusters, wine, olive oil, as well as cattle and sheep, because Israel was happy.

The Sacred Ark

13 David consulted with the officers of thousands and of hundreds, that is, with every leader. ²"If you approve," he told the whole assembly of Israel, "and if the LORD our God lets us succeed, we will send to the rest of our relatives in all the districts of Israel, and also to the priests and Levites in their cities and pasture lands, so they may join us. ³Then we shall bring the sacred ark of our God home to us because we didn't use it

to worship God in the time of Saul. ⁴The whole assembly promised to do that because all the people approved. ⁵So David gathered all Israel from Shihor near Egypt to the entrance of Hamath to bring God's ark from Kiriath-jearim.

⁶David and all Israel went up to Kiriath-jearim, which belongs to Judah, to bring up from there the ark which bears the name of the LORD enthroned above the angels.^b ⁷They moved God's chest on a new wagon from Abinadab's home; Uzza and Ahio drove the wagon. ⁸David and all Israel were dancing before God with all their might, with songs, with lyres and lutes, tambourines, cymbals, and trumpets. ⁹When they came to the threshing-floor of Kidon, Uzza with his hand reached to hold the ark because the oxen were stumbling. ¹⁰Then the LORD got angry with Uzza and struck him down because he laid his hand on the ark, and so he died there before God.

¹¹David was angry because the LORD had burst out against Uzza. And so that place is still called "Bursting-on-Uzza" today. ¹²David was afraid of God that day. "How can I bring God's ark home to me?" he asked. ¹³So he didn't move God's ark home to himself, to David's city, but took it aside into the home of Obed-edom of Gath. ¹⁴God's ark stayed three months with the family of Obed-edom at his house, and the LORD blessed the family of Obed-edom and everything he had.

David's Palace and Children

14 Hiram king of Tyre sent ambassadors to David, also cedar lumber, masons, and

^b"Cherubim."

carpenters to build a house for him. ²David realized that the LORD had confirmed him as king of Israel, that his kingdom was highly honored for the sake of His people Israel.

³In Jerusalem David married more women, and had more sons and daughters. ⁴The names of the children he had in Jerusalem were as follows: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, ⁵Ibhar, Elishua, Elpelet, ⁶Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, ⁷Elishama, Beeliada, and Eliphelet.

Victory Over the Philistines

⁸When the Philistines heard David had been anointed king of all Israel, they all went up to fight David. David heard about it and went out to meet them. ⁹The Philistines invaded the country and spread out in the valley of Rephaim.

¹⁰David asked God, "Should I go up against the Philistines? Will You put them in my hands?"

"Attack them," the LORD told him, "and I will put them in your hands."

¹¹They attacked them at Baal-perazim, and David defeated them there. "By my hand God has broken through my enemies," David said, "like water breaking through." That is why that place is called Baal-perazim.ⁱ ¹²They had left their gods there, and David ordered them burned.

¹³The Philistines came again and spread out in the valley. ¹⁴Again David asked God.

"Don't go up after them," God answered him. "Go around and come at them alongside the balsam trees. ¹⁵And when you hear the sound of footsteps in the

tops of the balsam trees, then go out and fight because God goes ahead of you to defeat the Philistine army."

¹⁶David did what God ordered, and they defeated the Philistine army from Gibeon to Gezer. ¹⁷David's fame spread to all the districts, and the LORD made all the nations afraid of him.

David Prepares Jerusalem for the Sacred Ark

15 He put up buildings for himself in his city, and prepared a place for God's ark and set up a tent for it. ²Then David said, "Only the Levites should carry God's ark because the LORD has chosen them to carry God's ark and serve Him forever."

³David had all Israel meet at Jerusalem to bring the LORD's ark to the place he prepared for it. ⁴David also gathered Aaron's descendants and the Levites. ⁵There was Uriel, the leader of Kohath's descendants, with 120 of his relatives. ⁶And Asaiah, the leader of Merari's descendants, with 220 of his relatives. ⁷And Joel, the leader of Gershon's descendants, with 130 of his relatives. ⁸And Shemaiah, the leader of Elizaphan's descendants, with 200 of his relatives. ⁹And Eliel, the leader of Hebron's descendants, with 80 of his relatives. ¹⁰And Amminadab, the leader of Uzziel's descendants, with 112 of his relatives.

¹¹David called for the priests, Zadok and Abiathar, and for the Levites, Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab. ¹²and told them, "You are the leaders of the clans of the Levites. You and your relatives, sanctify

ⁱ"Lord of breaches."

yourselves, and then bring the ark of the LORD, the God of Israel, to the place I prepared for it. ¹¹It was because you weren't there the first time that the LORD our God burst out on us; we hadn't come to seek Him in the right way."

¹²So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹³And the Levites carried God's ark by poles on their shoulders as Moses had ordered according to the LORD's instructions.

¹⁴David told the leaders of the Levites to appoint as musicians men from their tribe who could play music on instruments, on lutes, lyres, and cymbals, to produce joyful music for singing. ¹⁵So the Levites appointed Heman, Joel's son; and of his relatives, Asaph, Berechiah's son; and of their relatives, Merari's descendants, Ethan, Kushaiah's son; ¹⁶and with them, their relatives of the second order, Zechariah, Ben-jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, and Obed-edom and Jeiel as the doorkeepers. ¹⁷And the musicians Heman, Asaph, and Ethan were appointed to make music with bronze cymbals; ¹⁸and Zechariah, Jaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah with lutes in a high key; ¹⁹and Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiahu, Obed-edom, Jeiel, and Azariah, to lead the music on an eight-stringed lyre.^k ²⁰Chenaniah, a leader of the Levites, set the pitch in the singing; he gave instruction in this because he was skilled at

it. ²¹Berechiah and Elkanah were doorkeepers for the ark. ²²Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, Eliezer, the priests, blew the trumpets before God's ark; and Obed-edom and Jehiah were doorkeepers for the ark.

²³So David, the elders of Israel, and the commanders of thousands went to bring up the ark of the LORD's covenant from Obed-edom's house with a celebration. ²⁴Because God helped the Levites who carried the ark of the LORD's covenant, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams. ²⁵David was dressed in a robe of fine linen, and so were all the Levites who carried the ark, and the musicians, and Chenaniah, the leader who set the pitch for the musicians. David also wore a linen apron. ²⁶All Israel brought up the ark of the LORD's covenant with shouting, blowing horns and trumpets, with cymbals and loud music on lutes and lyres. ²⁷When the ark of the LORD's covenant came to David's city, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David dancing and celebrating, and she despised him in her heart.

16 They brought in the ark of God and set it inside the tent David had set up for it, and they offered burnt offerings and shared offerings before God. ²When David had finished offering burnt offerings and shared offerings, he blessed the people in the LORD's name. ³And he distributed to every man and woman in Israel a loaf of

ⁱAn unexplained musical term. See Ps. 46:1.

^kAnother unknown musical term. See Ps. 6:1.

bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins.

⁴He appointed some Levites to serve before the ark of the LORD, to offer prayers, thanks, and praise to the LORD, the God of Israel. ⁵Asaph was the leader; next to him were Zechariah, Jeiel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-edom, and Jeiel with lutes and lyres, and Asaph playing the cymbals; ⁶also Benaiah and Jahaziel the priests, blowing trumpets continually before the ark of God's covenant. ⁷On that day David for the first time entrusted Asaph and his relatives with the task of giving thanks to the LORD:

⁸Thank the LORD. Call on His name.

Tell among the nations what He has done.

⁹Sing songs to Him;

sing praises to Him.

Speak of the wonderful things He has done.

¹⁰Praise His holy name.

May those who seek the LORD be glad.

¹¹Seek the LORD and His strength; always go to Him for help.

¹²Remember the wonderful things He has done,

His awful deeds, and the judgments He has spoken.

¹³O descendants of His servant Israel, you chosen descendants of Jacob!

¹⁴He is the LORD our God! His judgments are in all the earth.

¹⁵Remember His covenant forever, the word He ordered a thousand generations to keep,

¹⁶the covenant He made with Abraham,

the oath He swore to Isaac;

¹⁷He set it up as a decree for Jacob, as an everlasting covenant for Israel,

¹⁸when He said, "I will give you the land of Canaan as your lot and heritage."

¹⁹They were only a few, a little group of strangers there,

²⁰going back and forth from nation to nation and from one kingdom to another people,

²¹He didn't let anyone wrong them, and for their sake He warned kings:

²²"Don't touch My anointed people, and don't harm My prophets."¹

²³Sing to the LORD, all the earth, from day to day tell how He saves.

²⁴Tell about His glory among the nations, about the wonderful things He does among all people,

²⁵because the LORD is great and ought to be praised and be held in awe above all gods.

²⁶All the gods of the people are worthless idols, but the LORD made the heavens.

²⁷Majesty and honor are before Him; strength and joy are in His place.

²⁸Give to the LORD, you tribes of people,

¹Compare vv. 8-22 with Ps. 105:1-15.

give to the LORD glory and strength.

²⁸Give to the LORD the glory of His name.

Bring a present and come before Him.

Worship the LORD in beautiful garments.

²⁹Tremble before Him, all the earth.

He made the earth stand firm so that it cannot be moved.

³⁰Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice,

and let it be said among the nations.

“The LORD is King!”

³¹Let the sea roar, and all that is in it.

Let the fields be delighted, and everything in them.

³²Then the trees of the forest will shout for joy before the LORD when He comes to judge the world.^m

³³“Thank the LORD because He is forever good and kind.”

³⁴And say, ‘Save us, O God our Savior,

and gather us and deliver us from the nations,

so we will thank Your holy name and boast in praising You.’

³⁵Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,

from everlasting to everlasting.

And all the people said, “Amen!” and praised the LORD.^o

³⁶David left Asaph and his relatives before the ark of the LORD’s covenant, to serve before the ark continually as they were needed every day; ³⁷he left Obed-edom with 68 of his relatives, Obed-

edom, Jeduthun’s son, and Hosah to be doorkeepers. ³⁸He left Zadok the priest, with his relatives the priests, to be before the tabernacle of the LORD at the high place in Gibeon; ³⁹they were to offer burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of burnt offerings regularly, morning and evening, according to everything written in the LORD’s law that He ordered for Israel. ⁴⁰With them were Heman and Jeduthun and the rest who had been selected by name and chosen to give thanks to the LORD because He is kind forever. ⁴¹With them were Heman and Jeduthun to play music on trumpets, cymbals, and the instruments that accompany sacred songs; Jeduthun’s sons were at the gate.

⁴²Then all the people left, and everyone went home; David also went back to bless his household.

David’s Kingdom

17 When David lived in his palace, he told the prophet Nathan, “I’m living in a cedar palace, while the ark of the LORD’s covenant is under curtains.”

²“Do whatever you’re planning,” Nathan answered David, “because God is with you.”

³But that night God talked to Nathan: ⁴“Go and tell My servant David,” He said. ⁵“The LORD says this: You are not to build Me a temple to live in. ⁶I haven’t lived in a temple from the time I brought Israel out till now, but I’ve gone from tent to tent and from one tabernacle to another. ⁷Wherever I went in all Israel, did I ever ask any of the judges of Israel, whom I

^mCompare vv. 23-33 with Ps. 96:1-13. ^oCompare v. 34 with Ps. 107:1.

^oCompare vv. 35-36 with Ps. 106:47-48.

ordered to be shepherds of My people. 'Why haven't you built Me a cedar temple?' 'And now tell My servant David, the LORD of armies says this: I took you from the sheepfold, from following sheep, to be a leader of My people Israel. 'I was with you everywhere you went, destroyed all your enemies before you, and made your name like the names of the great men of the world. 'And I will give My people Israel a place and plant them so they will live in their own place. They will no more be troubled, nor will wicked people consume them as they did before, 'when I first appointed judges over My people Israel. And I will subdue all your enemies. I am telling you the LORD will build for you a house.⁹ 'When the time comes for you to go and be with your ancestors, I will set up your Descendant after you. He will come from your offspring, and I will establish His kingdom. 'He will build Me a temple, and I will establish His throne forever. 'I will be His Father, and He will be My Son, and I will never stop being kind to Him as I did to your predecessor. 'And I will have Him stand in My house and in My kingdom forever, and His throne will be established forever.'

¹⁰Nathan told David everything he had been told and everything he had seen.

David Prays

¹⁶Then King David went in and sat before the LORD. "Who am I, LORD God?" he asked. "And what is my family that you have brought me so far? 'But You, O God, didn't consider this far enough, so You

have spoken of Your servant's family in the distant future and have seen me as a man who is exalted, O LORD God. 'And what more can I say to You about the honor done to Your servant when You already know Your servant? 'LORD, You have done all this for Your servant's sake, and according to Your own purpose You have caused me to experience all this greatness. 'LORD, just as we have heard, there's no one like You; there is no God beside You. 'And who is like Your people Israel, the one nation in the world whom God came to redeem and make His people? You have made a name for Yourself by great and terrible deeds, by driving out nations before Your people whom You redeemed from Egypt. 'You appointed Israel to be Your people forever, and You, LORD, have been their God. 'And now, LORD, may what You promised about Your servant and his family be forever true; do what You promised. 'Let it be confirmed, and may Your name be great forever, so it may be said, 'The LORD of armies is the God of Israel and will be God for Israel'; then Your servant David's family will be established before You. 'You, my God, have revealed to me that You will build my family; and so Your servant has found the courage to pray before You. 'And now, LORD, You are God, and You have promised Your servant this good thing. 'And now You have been pleased to bless Your servant's family so it will continue forever before you; because You, LORD, have blessed it, it will be blessed forever.'

17
7 2 Cor 6:18.
Rev 1:5.
Rv 21:7.
Mt 2:6.
11 Jn 7:42.
12 Lk 1:32-33.
13 2 Co 6:18.
Heb 1:5.
Rv 21:7.
14 Lk 1:32-33

⁹Or "I will make you great and . . ." ⁹Or, "a dynasty."

David's Victories

18 Later David defeated the Philistines, subdued them, and took Gath and its villages from the control of the Philistines. ²He defeated Moab, and its people became David's subjects, bringing him tribute. ³David defeated Hadadezer, king of Zobah at Hamath, as he went to set up a monument at the river Euphrates. ⁴David took from him 1,000 chariots, 7,000 horses, and 20,000 footsoldiers. David cut the sinews of all the chariot horses, leaving only 100.

⁵When the Syrians of Damascus came to help Hadadezer, king of Zobah, David struck down 22,000 men of Syria. ⁶David put garrisons^r in the Syria of Damascus, and the Syrians became David's subjects, bringing tribute. The LORD gave David victories everywhere he went.

⁷David took the golden shields that Hadadezer's officers had and brought them to Jerusalem. ⁸David took much bronze from Hadadezer's cities, Tibhath and Cun. With it Solomon made the bronze pool, the bronze pillars, and the bronze utensils.

⁹When Tou, king of Hamath, heard David had defeated the whole army of Hadadezer, king of Zobah, ¹⁰he sent his son Hadoram to King David to greet him and congratulate him for fighting with Hadadezer and defeating him, for Hadadezer often fought with Tou. He brought all kinds of gold, silver, and bronze utensils. ¹¹King David dedicated these to the LORD with the silver and the gold he took from the other nations, from Edom, Moab,

Ammon, the Philistines, and Amalek.

¹²Abishai, Zeruiah's son, struck down 18,000 men of Edom in the valley of salt. ¹³He put garrisons^r in Edom, and all its people became David's subjects. The LORD gave victories to David everywhere he went.

David Defeats the Ammonites

¹⁴David ruled over all Israel and did what was just and right for all his people. ¹⁵Joab, Zeruiah's son, was in charge of the army. Jehoshaphat, Ahilud's son, was the recorder. ¹⁶Zadok, Ahitub's son, and Abimelech, Abiathar's son, were the priests. Shavsha was the secretary. ¹⁷Benaiah, Jehoiada's son, was in charge of the Cherethites and Pelethites. David's sons were the first attendants of the king.

19 After this Nahash, king of the Ammonites, died, and his son Hanun ruled in his place. ²"I'll be kind to Hanun the son of Nahash," David said; "his father was kind to me." So David sent messengers to comfort him about his father, and David's men came to the country of the Ammonites, to Hanun, to comfort him.

³But the leaders of the Ammonites asked Hanun, "Do you think David is honoring your father when he sends men to comfort you? Haven't his men come to you to inspect and explore the country in order to overthrow it?" ⁴So Hanun took David's men, shaved them, and cut away half of their garments up to the hips and sent them away.

^rGreek. Hebrew omits "garrisons." ^rOr "governors."

⁸When people went and told David about his men, he sent messengers to meet them—the men felt very much ashamed—and the king told them, “Stay in Jericho till your beards have grown, and then come home.”

⁹When the Ammonites saw they had made themselves disgusting to David, Hanun and the Ammonites sent 1,000 talents of silver to hire chariots and horses for themselves from the Syrians in Mesopotamia and the Syrians of Maacah and Zobah. ¹⁰So they hired 32,000 chariots, and the king of Maacah with his army came and camped before Medeba. The Ammonites gathered from their cities and came for the battle.

¹¹When David heard about it, he sent Joab with the whole army of the best fighting men. ¹²The Ammonites came out and got ready for battle at the entrance of the city, and the kings who had come were by themselves in the open country.

¹³When Joab saw he was under attack in front and behind, he selected men from all the picked men of Israel and got them ready to meet the Syrians. ¹⁴He put his brother Abishai in charge of the rest of the army, which got ready to meet the Ammonites. ¹⁵“If the Syrians are too strong for me,” he said, “you come to rescue me. And if the Ammonites are too strong for you, I’ll rescue you. ¹⁶Have courage and fight boldly for our people and the cities of our God. And may the LORD do what He considers right.”

¹⁷So Joab and his troops advanced toward the Syrians to fight them, but they fled from them. ¹⁸When the Ammonites saw that the Syrians had fled, they also fled from his brother Abishai and took refuge in

the city. Then Joab went back to Jerusalem.

¹⁹When the Syrians saw that Israel had defeated them, they sent messengers to get the Syrians who were beyond the river, with Shophach, commander of Hadadezer’s army, leading them.

²⁰David heard about it and mustered all Israel, crossed the Jordan, advanced toward them, and got ready to attack. When David got his army in position, the Syrians began the battle. ²¹But the Syrians fled from Israel, and David killed 7,000 chariot fighters and 40,000 foot soldiers; he also killed Shophach, their commander. ²²When Hadadezer’s men realized that Israel had defeated them, they made peace with David and became subject to him. And never again were the Syrians willing to help the Ammonites.

20 Then came spring, the time when kings go out to war, and Joab led out the main force of the army and ravaged the Ammonite countryside. He went and besieged Rabbah, but David remained in Jerusalem. Joab defeated Rabbah and tore it down. ²David took the crown off Milcom’s head: its weight was found to be a talent of gold; and there was a precious stone in it. It was put on David’s head. He also took much spoil from the city. ³He brought out the people who were there, and put them to work with saws, iron harrows, and axes. This is what David did to all the cities of the Ammonites. Then David and all the people went back to Jerusalem.

⁴After that war broke out at Gezer with the Philistines, then Sibbecai, Hushah’s descendant, killed Sippai,

a descendant of the Rephaites; and they were subdued. ⁵There was another war with the Philistines in which Elhanan, Jair's son, struck down Lahmi, the brother of Goliath from Gath; the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam. ⁶There was another battle at Gath, and there was a tall man who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, 24 in all; he also was a descendant of the Rephaites. ⁷When he defied Israel, Jonathan, the son of David's brother Shimea, struck him down. ⁸These were the descendants of the Rephaites from Gath; David and his men struck them down.

21 Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to count Israel. ¹"Go," David told Joab and the leaders of the people, "and count Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, and bring me a report so I may know how many there are."

²"May the LORD multiply His people a hundred times more than they are," Joab said, "but, my lord the king, aren't they all your servants? Why should my lord demand this? Why should he bring guilt on Israel?"

³But the king's order overruled Joab. He left and went through all Israel and came back to Jerusalem. ⁴Joab reported the results of counting the people to David: Israel had a total of 1,100,000 men who could draw a sword, and Judah had 470,000 men drawing swords. ⁵He didn't include Levi and Benjamin in the number because Joab was disgusted with the king's order. ⁶God didn't like this business, and He struck a blow at Israel.

⁷"It was a great sin for me to do this," David said to God. "And now

take away Your servant's guilt; I have acted very foolishly."

⁸The LORD spoke to Gad, David's seer: ⁹"Go and tell David, the LORD says this: 'I'm offering you three things. Choose which one of them I shall do to you.'"

¹⁰Gad went to David and said to him, "The LORD says this: 'Take your choice, ¹¹either three years of famine, or three months during which your enemies will sweep you away when their sword falls on you, or the LORD's sword for three days—a plague in the country, with the LORD's angel destroying in the whole country of Israel.' Now decide what answer I should take back to Him who sent me."

¹²"I'm in great trouble," David told Gad. "Please let me fall into the LORD's hands, because He is very merciful; don't let me fall into the hands of men."

¹³So the LORD sent a plague on Israel, and 70,000 men of Israel died. ¹⁴God also sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it, but as he was going to destroy it, the LORD, seeing it, changed his mind about destroying it. "It is enough!" He said to the destroying angel. "Drop your sword." The LORD's angel had been standing by the threshing-floor of Ornan, the Jebusite. ¹⁵When David looked up, he saw the LORD's angel standing between earth and heaven, with his drawn sword in his hand, stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, who were covered with sackcloth, bowed down with their faces on the ground. ¹⁶"Am I not the one who ordered the people to be counted? I am the one who sinned and did this wrong! But these sheep, what have they done? O LORD my God, lay Your hand on me and on my clan,

but not on Your people by a plague.”

¹⁸The LORD’s angel told Gad to tell David to go up and erect an altar for the LORD on the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. ¹⁹When Gad spoke to him in the LORD’s name, David went up. ²⁰Ornan, who was threshing wheat, turned around and saw the angel, and his four sons who were with him hid.

²¹When David came to Ornan, Ornan looked up and saw David. So he left the threshing-floor and kneeled with his face on the ground before David. ²²“Let me have the land this threshing-floor is on,” David asked Ornan, “and I will build on it an altar for the LORD. Sell it to me for the full price. Then the plague among the people will be stopped.”

²³“Take it,” Ornan told David, “and may my lord the king do what he thinks is right. See, I’m giving also the cattle for burnt offerings, the threshing instruments for fuel, and the wheat for food offerings. I’m giving it all.”

²⁴“No,” King David told Ornan, “I want to buy it for the full price. I will not take what is yours for the LORD and offer burnt offerings that cost me nothing.” ²⁵David gave Ornan by weight 600 shekels of gold for the place.

²⁶David built an altar there for the LORD and offered burnt offerings and shared offerings and called on the LORD, and He answered him by fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offerings. ²⁷So the LORD spoke to the angel, and he put his sword back in its scabbard.

²⁸At that time, when David saw the LORD had answered him at the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he offered sacrifice there. ²⁹The LORD’s tabernacle

that Moses had made in the wilderness and the altar of burnt offering was then at the high place at Gibeon. ³⁰but David could not go there to consult God because he was frightened by the sword of the LORD’s angel.

The Temple

22 Then David said, “This is where the temple of the LORD God will be, and here will be Israel’s altar for burnt offerings.”

¹David ordered that the strangers in the land of Israel be gathered. And he appointed stone-cutters to cut stones in order to build God’s temple. ²David also got ready a great quantity of iron for nails, for the clamps on the doors of the gates, and so much bronze that it couldn’t be weighed; ³also cedar lumber that couldn’t be estimated, because the men of Sidon and Tyre brought so much cedar lumber to David.

⁴David thought, “My son Solomon is a young boy, and the temple that should be built for the LORD must be magnificent, something praised and glorified in all other countries. I’ll get the materials ready for him.” So David made great preparations before he died.

⁵He called for his son Solomon and ordered him to build a temple for the LORD, the God of Israel. ⁶“I planned to build a temple for the name of the LORD my God,” David told his son Solomon. ⁷“But the LORD told me, ‘You have poured out much blood and fought great wars. You are not to build a temple for My name because you have poured out so much blood on the ground before Me. ⁸You have a son who will enjoy peace. I will give him peace from all the enemies around him. His name

will be Solomon, and in his time I will give Israel peace and rest. ¹⁰He will build a temple for My name. He will be My son, and I will be his Father, and I will establish forever his throne as king of Israel.' ¹¹Now, my son, the LORD be with you. You will be successful and build the temple of the LORD your God as He said about you. ¹²May the LORD give you understanding and intelligence as He orders you to take charge of Israel, and keep the instruction of the LORD your God. ¹³Then you will succeed if you will conscientiously keep the commands and decrees the LORD gave Moses for Israel. Be strong and bold. Don't be afraid or terrified. ¹⁴You see, despite my troubles I have provided for the LORD's temple 100,000 talents of gold, 1,000,000 talents of silver, and bronze and iron that are too much to weigh. I have also prepared wood and stones, and you may add to these. ¹⁵You also have many to do the work, stonemasons and carpenters and men skilled to do any kind of work. ¹⁶The gold, silver, bronze, and iron are more than can be counted. Get to work, and may the LORD be with you!"

¹⁷David ordered all the leaders of Israel to help his son Solomon: ¹⁸"Isn't the LORD your God with you, and hasn't He given you peace with all who are around you? He has put in my hands the people who live in this country, and the country has been subdued before the LORD and His people. ¹⁹Now give your hearts and lives to searching for the LORD your God, and start building the holy place of the LORD God so that you can bring the ark of the LORD's

covenant and God's holy vessels into the temple that will be built for the LORD's name."

The Levites

23 When David had reached a ripe old age, he made his son Solomon king of Israel. ²He gathered all the leaders of Israel and the priests and Levites. ³The Levites were counted, every male who was 30 years and older, and there were 38,000; ⁴24,000 of these should supervise the work on the LORD's temple; 6,000 should be officers and judges; ⁵4,000 should be doorkeepers; and 4,000 should praise the LORD with the instruments David made¹ for praise.

⁶David divided them into orders according to Levi's sons: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. ⁷Ladan and Shimei were Gershon's descendants. ⁸Ladan had three sons: Jehiel was the first, then Zetham and Joel. ⁹Shimei had three sons: Shelomith, Haziël, and Haran. These were the leaders of the clans of Ladan. ¹⁰Shimei's sons were Jahath, Zina, Jeush, and Beriah—these were Shimei's four sons. ¹¹Jahath was the first, and Zizah was the second; but Jeush and Beriah didn't have many sons; so they were counted as one clan.

¹²Kohath had four sons: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. ¹³Amram's sons were Aaron and Moses. And Aaron was set apart to be sanctified as most holy, he with his sons forever, to offer sacrifices before the LORD, to serve Him, and give the blessing in His name forever. ¹⁴The sons of Moses, the man of God, were counted with the tribe of Levi. ¹⁵Moses' sons were

¹Heb "I made"

Gershon and Eliezer. ¹⁶Gershom's first son was Shebuel. ¹⁷Eliezer's first son was Rehabiah, and Eliezer had no other sons; but Rehabiah had many sons. ¹⁸Izhar's first son was Shelomith. ¹⁹Hebron's first son was Jeriah, the second was Amariah, the third was Jahaziel, and the fourth, Jekameam. ²⁰Uzziel's first son was Micah, and the second, Isshiah.

²¹Merari's sons were Mahli and Mushi. Mahli's sons were Eleazar and Kish. ²²Eleazar died without having any sons but only daughters; their relatives, the sons of Kish, married them. ²³Mushi had three sons: Mahli, Eder, and Jeremoth.

²⁴These were Levi's descendants according to their clans, with the leaders of their clans registered on a list of names that included everyone 20 years old and up, who had to do the menial work of the LORD's temple. ²⁵David had said, "The LORD, the God of Israel, has given His people rest, and He will now live in Jerusalem forever. ²⁶The Levites will no more have to carry the tabernacle and all the equipment used in its service." ²⁷David's last instructions were to count Levi's descendants who were 20 years old and older; ²⁸they were to stand beside Aaron's descendants to serve at the LORD's temple: they were to be in charge of the courtyards and the rooms of the temple, to keep all the holy things clean and to do the menial work of God's temple; ²⁹they were also responsible for setting out the bread, for the flour of the food offerings, for the wafers baked without yeast, the griddle cakes and the pastries, and for all weights and measures. ³⁰They were to stand every morning to give thanks and

praise to the LORD and were to do the same in the evening; ³¹they were always before the LORD whenever burnt offerings were to be made, on Sabbaths, at the first of the month, and on the appointed festivals, according to the number required; ³²and they were to take care of the tabernacle where God met with His people, and the holy place, and help their relatives, Aaron's descendants, as they served in the LORD's temple.

The Priests

24 Aaron's descendants were divided as follows. Aaron's sons were Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. ²But Nadab and Abihu died before their father, without having any sons, and so Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests.

³With the help of Zadok, Eleazar's descendant, and of Ahimelech, Ithamar's descendant, David divided them according to their appointment to serve. ⁴Since Eleazar's descendants were found to have more clan leaders than Ithamar's descendants, they were divided in such a way that Eleazar's descendants had 16 clan leaders and Ithamar's descendants had eight clan leaders. ⁵Both groups were divided alike by lot because there were officers of the sanctuary and officers of God among both Eleazar's and Ithamar's descendants. ⁶Shemaiah the scribe, Nethanel's son, a descendant of Levi, recorded their names in the presence of the king, the princes, Zadok the priest, Ahimelech son of Abiathar, and the clan leaders of both the priests and Levites. One clan was chosen for Eleazar, another for Ithamar, and so on.

¹The first lot that came out was for Jehoiarib, the second for Jedaiah, ²the third for Harim, the fourth for Seorim, ³the fifth for Malchiah, the sixth for Mijamin, ⁴the seventh for Hakkoz, the eighth for Abijah, ⁵the ninth for Jeshua, the 10th for Shecaniah, ⁶the 11th for Eliashib, the 12th for Jakim, ⁷the 13th for Huppah, the 14th for Jeshebeab, ⁸the 15th for Bilgah, the 16th for Immer, ⁹the 17th for Hezir, the 18th for Happizez, ¹⁰the 19th for Pethahiah, the 20th for Jehezkel, ¹¹the 21st for Jachin, the 22d for Gamul, ¹²the 23d for Delaiah, the 24th for Maaziah.

¹³This was the order in which they were appointed to come to serve at the LORD's temple as their ancestor Aaron prescribed it and as the LORD, the God of Israel, ordered him.

¹⁴In regard to the rest of Levi's descendants, there was Shubael, of Amram's sons; Jehdeiah, of Shubael's sons. ¹⁵The first of Rehabiah's sons was Isshiah.

¹⁶There was Shelomoth, of Izhar's descendants; Jahath, of Shelomoth's sons. ¹⁷Jeriah was the first of Hebron's sons; the second was Amariah; Jahaziel, the third; Jekameam, the fourth. ¹⁸Micah was a son of Uzziel; Shamir, a son of Micah. ¹⁹Isshiah was Micah's brother; Zechariah, a son of Isshiah. ²⁰Merari's sons were Mahli and Mushi. ²¹Merari's descendants by his son Jaaziah were Shoham, Zaccur, and Ibri. ²²Mahli's son was Eleazar, who had no sons. ²³Jerahmeel was the son of Kish. ²⁴Mushi's sons were Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth. These were

Levi's descendants according to their clans.

²⁵So these clans, representing families of the firstborn as well as the younger, also cast lots like their relatives, Aaron's descendants. This they did before King David, Zadok, Ahimelech, and the leaders of the clans of the priests and Levites.

The Temple Music

25 With the help of the captains of the army, David appointed sons of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun to serve as prophets with lyres, lutes, and cymbals, and this is the list of the men who were to render this special service: ¹Of the sons of Asaph there were Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and Asharelah—Asaph's sons, directed by Asaph, who served as prophet under the king's direction. ²With Jeduthun there were his six sons: Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiiah, Shimei,^u Hashabiah, Mattithiah, directed by their father Jeduthun as he served as a prophet with a lyre, thanking and praising the LORD. ³With Heman were his sons: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, and Jerimoth. Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romamti-ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, Mahazioth. ⁴All these were the sons of Heman, the king's seer, so that he might be mighty in God's matters; God gave Heman 14 sons and three daughters. ⁵All these sang at the LORD's temple under their fathers' direction: Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman, with cymbals, lyres, and lutes, for the service of God's temple, under the king's supervision. ⁶The total of

^uHeb lacks "Shimei"

these along with their relatives who were trained to sing to the LORD, all skillful singers, was 288.

⁸They cast lots for their assignment of duties, the small as well as the great, the skilled and the learner. ⁹The first lot came out for Joseph the son of Asaph.

The second was for Gedaliah; he with his relatives and sons were 12.

¹⁰The third was for Zaccur; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

¹¹The fourth was for Izri; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

¹²The fifth was for Nethaniah; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

¹³The sixth was for Bukkiah; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

¹⁴The seventh was for Jesarelah; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

¹⁵The eighth was for Jeshaiah; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

¹⁶The ninth was for Mattaniah; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

¹⁷The 10th was for Shimei; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

¹⁸The 11th was for Azarel; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

¹⁹The 12th was for Hashabiah; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

²⁰The 13th was for Shubael; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

²¹The 14th was for Mattithiah; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

²²The 15th was for Jeremoth; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

²³The 16th was for Hananiah; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

²⁴The 17th was for Joshbekashah; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

²⁵The 18th was for Hanani; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

²⁶The 19th was for Mallothi; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

²⁷The 20th was for Eliathah; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

²⁸The 21st was for Hothir; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

²⁹The 22d was for Giddalti; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

³⁰The 23d was for Mahazioth; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

³¹The 24th was for Romamti-ezer; he with his sons and relatives were 12.

The Doorkeepers

26 Here are the divisions of the doorkeepers: Among Korah's descendants there was Meshelemiah the son of Kore, of the descendants of Asaph. ²Meshelemiah's first son was Zechariah; the second was Jediel; the third, Zebadiah; the fourth, Jathniel; ⁵the fifth was Elam; the sixth, Jehohanai; the seventh, Eliehoenai. ⁶Obed-edom's first son was Shemaiah; the second, Jehozabad; the third, Joah; the fourth, Sachar; the fifth, Nethanel; ⁸the sixth, Ammiel; the seventh, Issachar; the eighth, Peullethai—God had blessed him. ⁹His son Shemaiah had sons who ruled over their clan because they were able men. ¹⁰Shemaiah's sons were Othni and his brothers Rephael, Obed, Elzabad, able men; and also Elihu and Semachiah. ¹¹All these were Obed-edom's descendants, who with their sons and relatives were able and strong men for the service; Obed-edom had 62 men. ¹²Meshelemiah's sons and relatives were 18 able men. ¹³The first son of Hosah, of the descendants of Merari, was Shimri; although he was not the firstborn, his father made him the first. ¹⁴The second was Hilkiah; the third, Tebaliah; the fourth, Zechariah. There were, in all, 13 sons and relatives of Hosah.

¹⁵These divisions of doorkeepers

with their leading men were responsible, along with their relatives, to serve at the LORD's temple. ¹³They cast lots, small and great alike, by their clans for every gate. ¹⁴The lot for the east side went to Shelemiah. They also cast lots for his son Zechariah, a wise counselor, and by lot he got the north side. ¹⁵Obed-edom got the south side, and his sons got the storehouse. ¹⁶Shuppim and Hosah got the west side with the Shallecheth gate at the upper road; here one watch was beside another. ¹⁷On the east side there were six Levites; on the north there were four daily; on the south, four daily; and at the storehouse two and two. ¹⁸At the roofless structure^v on the west there were four at the road and two at the structure itself. ¹⁹These were the divisions of the doorkeepers among Korah's and Merari's descendants.

Other Levites and Their Responsibilities

²⁰Ahijah, a Levite, was in charge of the treasuries of God's temple and the treasuries of the dedicated gifts. ²¹Ladan's descendants, that is Gershon's descendants through Ladan who became the leaders of Ladan's clans, were the ²²Jehielites; the descendants of the Jehielites were Zetham and Joel his brother; they were in charge of the treasuries of the LORD's temple. ²³A descendant of Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel ²⁴was Shebuel, the descendant of Gershom, Moses' son; he was the highest official in charge of the treasuries. ²⁵Among his relatives was Eliezer's son Rehabiah; his son was Jeshaiiah; his

son was Joram; his son was Zichri; and his son was Shelomith. ²⁶This Shelomith and his relatives were in charge of all the treasures of the dedicated gifts that King David, the leaders of the clans, the captains of thousands and hundreds, and the commanders of the army had dedicated. ²⁷(They dedicated some of the spoils taken in battle to support the LORD's temple.) ²⁸And everything that Samuel the seer, Saul son of Kish, Abner son of Ner, and Joab son of Zeruiah had dedicated, anything that anyone dedicated was under the supervision of Shelomith and his relatives.

²⁹Among Izhar's descendants, Chenaniah and his sons were to be officers and magistrates in charge of Israel's affairs outside of Jerusalem. ³⁰Among Hebron's descendants there were Hashabiah and his relatives, 1,700 able men, who were to oversee Israel west of the Jordan in regard to all the work of the LORD and the service of the king. ³¹Among Hebron's descendants Jeriah was the leader. In the 40th year of David's rule a search was made of Hebron's descendants in their generations according to their clans and among them were found able men at Jazer in Gilead. ³²His relatives were 2,700 able men, leaders of clans; David made them overseers of the tribe of Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh in every matter related to God and the king.

Military Organization

27 This is a list of the Israelites, the leaders of clans, the commanders of thousands and of hundreds and their officers,

^vOr "court," but meaning uncertain.

who were serving the king in every way, coming for a month at a time and leaving, for all the months of the year, each division consisting of 24,000 men. ²Jashobeam, Zabdiel's son, was commander of the first division, for the first month; in his division there were 24,000. ³He was a descendant of Perez, and the chief of all the officers of the army for the first month. ⁴Dodai, Ahoh's descendant, was commander of the division for the second month; it was his division, but Mikloth was its executive officer; in his division there were 24,000. ⁵The third commander of the army, for the third month, was Benaiah the son of the priest Jehoiada; he was chief, and in his division there were 24,000. ⁶This Benaiah was one of the Thirty and commander of the Thirty as well as his division; his son was Ammizabad. ⁷The fourth, for the fourth month, was Asahel, Joab's brother, and after him his son Zebadiah; in his division there were 24,000. ⁸The fifth, for the fifth month, was Shammuth, Izrah's descendant; in his division there were 24,000. ⁹The sixth, for the sixth month, was Ira the son of Ikkesh from Takoah; in his division there were 24,000. ¹⁰The seventh, for the seventh month, was Helez, a Pelonite from the sons of Ephraim; in his division there were 24,000. ¹¹The eighth, for the eighth month, was Sibbecai, the descendant of Hushah, a Zerahite; in his division there were 24,000. ¹²The ninth, for the ninth month, was Abiezer from Anathoth, a Benjamite; in his division there were 24,000. ¹³The 10th, for the 10th month, was Mahrai from Netophah, a Zerahite; in his division there were 24,000. ¹⁴The 11th, for the 11th

month, was Benaiah from Pirathon, a descendant of Ephraim; in his division there were 24,000. ¹⁵The 12th, for the 12th month, was Huldai from Netophah, Othniel's descendant; in his division there were 24,000.

Tribal Organization

¹⁶Men in charge of the tribes of Israel: Eliezer, Zichri's son, was the governor of Reuben; Shephatiah, Maacah's son, was the governor of Simeon; ¹⁷Hashabiah, Kemuel's son, was the governor of Levi, and Zadok, of Aaron; ¹⁸Elihu, one of David's brothers, was the governor of Judah; Omri, Michael's son, was the governor of Issachar; ¹⁹Ishmaiah, Obadiah's son, was the governor of Zebulun; Jerimoth Azriel's son, was the governor of Naphtali; ²⁰Hoshea, Azaziah's son, was the governor of Ephraim; Joel, Pedaiah's son, was the governor of half of the tribe of Manasse; ²¹Iddo, Zechariah's son, was the governor of the half of Manasse that was in Gilead; Jassiel, Abner's son, was the governor of Benjamin; ²²Azarel, Jeroham's son, was the governor of Dan. These were the officers of the tribes of Israel.

Counting Israel

²³David didn't count those under 20 years, because the LORD had promised Israel would become as many as the stars in the sky. ²⁴Joab, Zeruiah's son, started to count them but didn't finish. God was angry with Israel for this, and no report of it was included in the history of King David.

David's Overseers

¹⁹Azmaveth, Adiel's son, was in charge of the goods stored by the king. Jonathan, Uzziah's son, was in charge of the goods in the fields, cities, villages, and towers. ²⁶Ezri, Chelub's son, was in charge of those who worked in the fields cultivating the ground. ²⁷Shimei from Ramah was in charge of the vineyards, and Zabdi from Shepham was in charge of storing the wine that came from the vineyards. ²⁸Baal-hanan from Gedor was in charge of the olive trees and fig-mulberry trees in the low hills, and Joash was in charge of storing the oil. ²⁹Shitrai from Sharon was in charge of the cattle grazing in Sharon. Shaphat, Adlai's son, was in charge of the herds in the valleys. ³⁰Obil, Ishmael's descendant, was in charge of the camels. Jehdeiah from Meronoth was in charge of the donkeys. ³¹Jaziz from Hagar was in charge of the flocks. All these were overseers of King David's property.

³²Jonathan, David's close relative, a counselor, a man of understanding and learning, and Jehiel, Hachmoni's son, were in charge of the king's sons. ³³Ahithophel was the king's adviser. Hushai, the Archite, was the king's friend. ³⁴After Ahithophel were Jehoiada, Benaiah's son, and Abiathar. Joab was the commander of the king's army.

David Plans the Temple

28 David gathered at Jerusalem all the governors of Israel, the officials of the tribes and divisions that served the king, the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, the overseers of all the property and cattle of the king and his sons, along with the palace

officials, the seasoned soldiers and the special forces. ²Then David rose to his feet. "Listen to me, my relatives and my people," he said.

"I have planned a temple where the ark of the LORD's covenant can rest, as a stool for the feet of our God, and I have made preparations to build it. ³But God told me, 'You are not to build a temple for My name. You have fought wars and poured out blood.' ⁴But the LORD, the God of Israel, chose me from my father's family to be king of Israel forever because he had chosen Judah to be a leader, and my father's family in the tribe of Judah, and He was pleased to choose me among my father's sons, to make me king of all Israel. ⁵And of all my sons (the LORD has given me many sons) He chose my son Solomon to sit on the throne of Israel, where the LORD is King. ⁶And He told me, 'Your son Solomon will build a temple with courts for Me because I have chosen him to be My son, and I will be his Father. ⁷I will establish his kingdom forever if he will be firm in doing what I have ordered and decided, as he does now.' ⁸And now, while all Israel, the LORD's community, watches us and our God hears us—do and study everything the LORD your God has ordered, so that you may have this good land and afterward leave it as an inheritance to your children forever.

⁹"And you, my son Solomon, learn to know your father's God and serve Him loyally and eagerly, because the LORD searches all the hearts and understands everything we think and plan. If you search for Him, He will let you find Him, but if you leave Him, He will reject you forever. ¹⁰Be careful, then, because the LORD has chosen you to

build a temple as His holy place. Be strong and do it."

"Then David gave his son Solomon the pattern of the porch and its buildings, its storerooms, upper rooms and inner rooms, and the room for the atoning cover; ¹²and the pattern of everything he by the Spirit was planning: the courts of the LORD's temple, all the special rooms on all sides where the treasures of God's temple and the dedicated gifts would be stored; ¹³the divisions of priests and Levites and all the work done for the service of the LORD's temple, and all the utensils for the service of the LORD's temple; ¹⁴the weight of gold to be used for all the utensils for each service; ¹⁵also the weight of the golden lampstands and their golden lamps, the weight of gold for each lampstand; the weight of silver for each silver lampstand and its lamps, as each lampstand was to be used in the service; ¹⁶the weight of gold for each table with the rows of bread, and the silver for the silver tables; ¹⁷and the forks, bowls, and cups of pure gold; the weight for each covered golden bowl, and the weight for each covered silver bowl; ¹⁸and the altar of incense made of refined gold; also his plan for the chariot, that is, the golden angels^w with their outspread wings covering the ark of the LORD's covenant. ¹⁹"All this was written for me by the LORD; He made clear to me all the work to be done according to the plan."

²⁰"Be strong and courageous." David also told his son Solomon, "and do it. Don't be afraid or terrified, because the LORD God, my God, will be with you. He will not fail

you or forsake you till all the work for the service of the LORD's temple is done. ²¹Here are also the divisions of the priests and Levites for all the service of God's temple; and for all this work you will have every kind of willing and skillful worker to do it. Also all the governors and people will be at your command."

29 King David said to the whole assembly: "My son Solomon, whom alone God has chosen, is just a boy, and the work is great because this is not a palace for a man but for the LORD God. ²Now, with all my might I have prepared for the temple of my God plenty of gold for golden things, silver for silver things, bronze for bronze things, iron for iron things, wood for wooden things, onyx stones and settings, black stones, stones of different colors, all kinds of fine stones, and marble. ³More than that, I delight in the temple of my God, and I have a treasure of gold and silver that is my own, and so I'm giving it for the temple of my God beside everything else I prepared for the holy temple: ⁴3,000 talents of gold from Ophir, and 7,000 talents of refined silver, to cover the walls of the buildings, ⁵for the golden things, for the silver things, and for everything the craftsmen will make. Who else, then, is willing to make an offering and consecrate himself to the LORD today?"

⁶Then the governors of the clans, the governors of the tribes of Israel, the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and the managers of the king's work offered willingly, ⁷and they gave for the service of God's

^w"cherubim"

temple 5,000 talents of gold (10,000 darics), 10,000 talents of silver, 18,000 talents of bronze, and 100,000 talents of iron. "Whoever happened to have stones gave them to be stored for the LORD's temple; Jehiel, Gershon's descendant, was in charge of these. "The people were very glad because everyone gave so willingly and wholeheartedly to the LORD.

King David also was very glad, and "he blessed the LORD while the whole community was watching. "Blessed are You," David said. "LORD God of Israel, our Father, from everlasting to everlasting. "Yours, LORD, is the greatness, power, splendor, glory, and majesty, yes, everything in heaven and on earth is yours. You are the King, LORD, and as Head lifted up over everything. "Riches and honor are before You; You rule over everything. In Your hand is power and strength, and You can make anyone great and strong. "Now then, our God, we are thankful to You and are praising Your wonderful name. "But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer so willingly? Yes, everything comes from You, and we give You only what has come from Your hands. "We are guests and strangers before You like all our fathers. Our days are like a shadow on the ground, and there's no hope. "LORD our God, from Your hands comes all this wealth with which we prepare to build You a temple for Your holy name, and all of it is Yours. "I know, my God, You test the heart and delight in honesty. With an honest heart I have willingly offered all these things, and now I've been delighted to see Your people here offering so

willingly to You. "LORD God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, keep Your people thinking like this forever, and direct their hearts toward Yourself. "Give my son Solomon a loyal heart, so he will obey what You say, order, and decree, and do everything to build the palace I have prepared."

Solomon Anointed King

"Then David said to the whole assembly, "Bless the LORD your God!" And the whole assembly blessed the LORD, the God of their fathers, and bowed down to the LORD and the king and worshiped. "They sacrificed to the LORD and on the next day offered burnt offerings to the LORD, a thousand bulls, a thousand rams, a thousand lambs, with their drink offerings, and many sacrifices for all Israel. "They ate and drank with great joy before the LORD that day and for the second time made David's son Solomon king and anointed Him for the LORD to be the prince, and Zadok to be the priest.

"Then Solomon sat on the LORD's throne as king succeeding his father David. All went very well, and all Israel obeyed him. "All the governors and able men, and also all of King David's sons submitted to King Solomon. "The LORD made Solomon very great in the eyes of all Israel and gave him a royal majesty such as no king of Israel had before him.

"David, Jesse's son, had been king of all Israel "and ruled over Israel 40 years, 7 years in Hebron, and 33 years in Jerusalem. "He died at a ripe old age, rich and honored, and then his son Solomon succeeded him as king.

29
11 MI 6.13

²⁹What happened to King David from the first to the last was written down by Samuel, the Seer, Nathan, the prophet, and Gad, the Seer.

³⁰including everything about his rule, his might, and what happened to him, to Israel, and all the kingdoms in the different countries.

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES

Solomon's Greatness

1 Solomon, David's son, established himself as king, and the LORD his God was with him and made him very great.

Solomon spoke to all Israel, to the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, to every prince of Israel, the leaders of the clans. Then Solomon went with all Israel to the high place at Gibeon where the tabernacle was in which God met with them and which Moses, the LORD's servant, had made in the wilderness. David had brought God's ark from Kiriath-jearim to a place prepared for it; he had built a tent for it in Jerusalem. The bronze altar that Bezalel son of Uri, son of Hur, had made was there in front of the LORD's tabernacle. There Solomon and the assembly worshiped the LORD; and there Solomon went up to the bronze altar before the Lord, in front of the tabernacle where God met with them, and sacrificed a thousand burnt offerings on it.

The following night God appeared to Solomon. "Ask what you want me to give you," He told him.

"You were very kind to my father David," Solomon said to God, "and You made me succeed him as king. Now, LORD God, the promise You made to my father David has come true, because You have made me king of a people who are many, like the dust on the ground. Give me, then, wisdom and knowledge that I may lead these people, for who can serve as the

judge of this great people of Yours?"

"Since you've had this in your heart," God told Solomon, "and you have not asked for wealth, treasures, or honor, or the life of those who hate you, and didn't even ask for a long life, but you ask that you may have wisdom and knowledge to judge My people over whom I made you king, you are given wisdom and knowledge, and I will also give you riches, treasures, and honor such as no kings had before you or will have after you."

Solomon came from the high place, the tabernacle where God met with them at Gibeon, to Jerusalem, and he ruled Israel.

Solomon gathered chariots and horses until he had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horses. He placed them in the chariot cities as well as with the king in Jerusalem.

The king provided silver and gold in Jerusalem like stones, and as many cedars as there are fig-burberries in the lowlands.

The horses Solomon had came from Egypt and Cilicia. The king's traders got them from Cilicia for a price. They would import a chariot from Egypt and export it for 600 shekels of silver, and a horse for 150 shekels; this is the way they exported them to all the Hittite and Syrian kings.

Planning the Temple

2 Solomon planned to build a temple for the LORD's name and a palace for himself as king.

Solomon counted 70,000 men to carry burdens and 80,000 to quarry

stones in the hills, and 33,000 to oversee them. ³Solomon sent a message to Hiram, king of Tyre: "Do as you did for my father David when you sent him cedar lumber to build a palace for him to live in. ⁴I want to build a temple for the name of the LORD my God, dedicate it to Him, burn the incense of fragrant spices before Him, and have the rows of bread there continually and the burnt offerings morning and evening, on Sabbaths and the first of every month and the festivals of the LORD our God—to be kept by Israel forever. ⁵The temple I'll build will be great because our God is greater than all other gods. ⁶But who has the power to build Him a temple when the heavens and the highest heavens cannot hold Him, and who am I to build Him a temple except as a place to sacrifice before Him? ⁷And now, send me a man with skill to work in gold, silver, bronze, iron, in red, crimson, and purple fabric, and who knows how to make engravings, to work with the skilled men that are with me in Judah and Jerusalem, whom my father David provided. ⁸Send me also cedar lumber, cypress, and sandal wood from Lebanon, because I know that your servants know how to cut lumber for building, and—my servants working with yours—⁹they'll prepare for me plenty of lumber, because the temple I want to build will be great and wonderful. ¹⁰I will give your servants who quarry stones and cut lumber 20,000 kors of crushed wheat, 20,000 kors of barley, 20,000 baths of wine, and 20,000 baths of olive oil."

"Then Hiram, king of Tyre, answered in a letter he sent to Solomon: "Because the LORD loves His people, He made you their

king." ¹¹Hiram added: "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who made the heavens and the earth and gave King David a wise son with understanding and intelligence so he can build the LORD's temple and a royal palace for himself to live in. ¹²And now, I'm sending a man with skill and intelligence, Hiram, my respected adviser. ¹³He's the son of a woman who descended from Dan, but whose father is a man of Tyre. He knows how to work with gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone, wood, with red, purple, and crimson fabric and with fine linen, how to do all kinds of engraving and make any kind of design that may be assigned to him, with the help of your skilled workmen and the skilled men of my lord David, your father. ¹⁴And now may my lord send the wheat, barley, olive oil, and wine he promised his servants. ¹⁵And we will cut lumber on Lebanon, all that you need, and bring it to you on rafts by sea to Joppa, and you will take it up to Jerusalem."

¹⁶Solomon counted all the men who were strangers in the country, of Israel, the way his father David had counted them, and they were found to be 153,600. ¹⁷Of these he made 70,000 burden carriers, 80,000 went to quarry in the hills, and 3,600 were overseers who put the people to work.

Building the Temple

3 Solomon began to build the LORD's temple in Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared to his father David and where David had prepared the site, on the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite. ²He started to build in the second month of the fourth year of his rule. ³This is how Solomon laid the

foundation to build God's temple. It was 60 cubits long and 20 wide, according to the old length of the cubit. ⁴The porch in front of the main structure was 20 cubits, equal to the width of the temple, and 20 cubits high. He covered the inside of it with pure gold. ⁵He lined the larger building with cypress and overlaid it with fine gold and made palms and garlands on it. ⁶He covered the building with precious stones to beautify it, and the gold was the gold from Parvaim. ⁷He also overlaid the building,^a the rafters, the threshold, and its walls and doors with gold, and carved angels^b on the walls.

⁸He made the most holy place. It was as long as it was wide, 20 cubits long and 20 wide. He covered it with fine gold, amounting to 600 talents. ⁹The golden nails weighed 50 shekels. He also covered the upper rooms with gold.

¹⁰In the most holy place he made two statues of angels and covered them with gold. ¹¹The combined length of the angels' wings was 20 cubits. A wing of one angel was 5 cubits and reached to the wall of the building, and the other wing was 5 cubits and touched a wing of the other angel; ¹²the wing of the other angel was 5 cubits and reached to the other wall of the building, and its other wing was 5 cubits and touched the wing of the first angel. So the angels spread their wings a distance of 20 cubits. ¹³They were standing on their feet facing the holy place.

¹⁴He made the curtain of purple, red, and crimson fabric, and fine linen, and decorated it with angels.

^athe holy place ^bcherubim

^cThis is the height of both added together

¹⁵He made two pillars in front of the temple. They were 35 cubits high,^c and the capital of each pillar was 5 cubits. ¹⁶He made a network and put it on the capitals of the pillars. He made a hundred pomegranates and put them on the network. ¹⁷He set up the pillars in front of the temple, one at the right and the other at the left. He called the right one He-Establishes and the left In-Him-Is-Strength.

4 He also made the bronze altar, 20 cubits long, 20 cubits wide, and 10 cubits high.

²He also made a pool of cast metal, 10 cubits across from rim to rim. It was round and 5 cubits high; and its circumference was 30 cubits. ³There were figurines of bulls under it all around, 10 every cubit, going all around the pool. The bulls were in two rows, cast in one piece with the pool. ⁴It stood on 12 bulls, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east; their hind parts were toward the center. The pool was set on them. ⁵It was a handbreadth thick. Its rim was like the rim of a cup, like a blossoming lily. It could hold 3,000 baths.

⁶He made 10 basins and put five at the right and five at the left, for washing. In them they rinsed the meat prepared for the burnt offering. The priests used the pool to wash themselves.

⁷He made 10 golden lampstands as prescribed and put them in the temple, five at the right and five at the left. ⁸He also made 10 tables and set them in the temple, five at

the right and five at the left. And he made 100 golden basins.

⁹He also made the court for the priests and the great court, with doors for the court, and covered the doors with bronze. ¹⁰He set the pool on the right side toward the southeast.

¹¹Huram made the pots, the shovels, and the sprinkling bowls. So Huram finished the work he did for King Solomon at God's temple: ¹²the two pillars with the bowl-shaped capitals at the top of the pillars, and the two networks to cover the bowl-shaped capitals at the top of the pillars; ¹³and the 400 pomegranates for the two networks, two rows of pomegranates for each network that covered the bowl-shaped capitals on top of the pillars. ¹⁴He made the 10 stands and the 10 basins on the stands; ¹⁵the one pool and the 12 bulls under it. ¹⁶The pots and shovels, the meat-forks, and all the other utensils Huram, the master counselor, made of polished bronze for King Solomon for the LORD's temple. ¹⁷The king cast them in the valley of the Jordan, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zeredah. ¹⁸Solomon made a large quantity of all those utensils; nobody estimated the weight of the bronze that was used.

¹⁹Solomon made all the utensils that were in God's temple, also the golden altar, the tables with the bread on them before God; ²⁰the lampstands with their lamps, all of pure gold, so they would burn as prescribed in front of the most holy place, ²¹with the flowers, the lamps, the tongs of gold—pure gold. ²²The snuffers, basins, pans for incense, and firepans were of the best gold. The doors of the

temple, the inner doors to the most holy place and the doors to the sanctuary, were made of gold.

Bringing Up the Chest of the Covenant

5 When all the work Solomon did for the LORD's temple was finished, Solomon brought the things his father David had dedicated, the silver and the gold and all the utensils, and put them in the storerooms of God's temple.

²Then Solomon gathered the elders of Israel and all the leaders of the tribes, the princes of the clans of Israel, to Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the LORD's covenant from David's city, which is Zion. ³All the men of Israel met with the king at the festival in the seventh month.

⁴When all the elders of Israel had come, the Levites took the ark ⁵and the tabernacle where God met with His people, and all the utensils in the tabernacle; the priests and Levites brought them up. ⁶King Solomon and the whole congregation of Israel who met with him before the ark sacrificed so many sheep and cattle they couldn't be recorded or counted. ⁷The priests brought up the ark of the LORD's covenant to its place in the inner room, the most holy place, under the wings of the angels. ⁸The angels spread their wings over the place where the ark was, and so the angels above it covered the ark and its poles. ⁹The poles were so long their ends could be seen from the holy place by anyone standing in front of the inner room, but they couldn't be seen outside; they are still there today. ¹⁰There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets Moses put there at Sinai when the LORD made

a covenant with Israel after they left Egypt.

"When the priests came out of the holy place (all the priests who were present had sanctified themselves without regard to their divisions), "all the Levites who were musicians, Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, and their sons and their relatives, were dressed in fine linen and stood east of the altar with cymbals, lutes, and lyres; and with them were 120 priests blowing trumpets. "The trumpeters and singers were to produce music in unison as they praised and thanked the LORD. Now when they raised their voices accompanied by the trumpets, cymbals, and the instruments for singing, and when they praised the LORD, "because He is good and forever kind," then the LORD's temple was filled with a cloud, "so that the priests couldn't stand and serve on account of the cloud; the LORD's glory filled God's temple.

Solomon's Address to the People

6 Then Solomon said, "O LORD, You intended to live in a dark cloud. "But I have built a royal house for You to live in, a place for You to live forever."

"Then the king turned around and blessed the whole assembly of Israel while they were all standing. "He said: "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel! With His mouth He made a promise to my father David, and with His hand He has carried it out, saying: "Ever since I brought My people out of Egypt, I chose no city in all the tribes of Israel in which to build a house where My name should be, nor did I choose a man to be a prince over My people Israel; "but now I've chosen Jerusalem that

My name should be there, and David to be over My people Israel."

"My father David planned to build a temple for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel, "but the LORD said to my father David, "You planned to build a temple for My name and you did well to plan it. "But you must not build the temple; your son, who will come from your body, will build the temple for My name." "And the LORD has done what He promised, and now I stand in my father's place and sit on the throne of Israel as the LORD promised, and I've built the temple for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. "And I've put there the ark, in which is the LORD's covenant that He made with Israel."

Solomon Prays

"He stood in front of the whole assembly of Israel, faced the LORD's altar, and spread out his hands. "Solomon had made a bronze platform that he put in the middle of the court, 5 cubits long, 5 wide, and 3 cubits high, and he stood on it; then he kneeled before the whole assembly, spread out his hands to heaven, "and said: "LORD God of Israel, there is no god like You in heaven and on earth, keeping Your covenant and showing mercy to Your servants whose hearts are loyal in their living before You. "You have done for Your servant David, my father, what You promised him. With Your mouth You said it and with Your hand You have done it, and so it is today.

"And now, LORD God of Israel, continue to do for Your servant, my father David, what You promised him when You said, 'You will always have a man before Me sitting on the throne of Israel if only your de-

scendants will watch their ways to live according to My law as you have lived before Me.' 17And now, LORD God of Israel, may the promise You made Your servant David come true.

18"But does God really live with men on earth? Heaven, yes the highest heaven, cannot hold You; how much less this temple I built! 19Yet pay attention to the prayer and pleading of Your servant, LORD my God, and listen to what Your servant is praying out loud before You. 20May Your eyes watch day and night over this temple, the place where You promised to put Your name. Listen to what Your servant is praying toward this place, 21and hear the pleading of Your servant and Your people Israel when they pray toward this place; yes, hear in heaven where You live, and when You hear, forgive.

22"If anyone sins against another and has to take an oath, and so comes and swears before Your altar in this temple, 23then hear in heaven and act and judge Your servants by punishing the wicked and giving him what he deserves and by vindicating the righteous and giving him according to his righteousness.

24"If Your people Israel sin against You and so the enemy defeats them, but then they repent, confess Your name, pray and plead before You in this temple, 25then hear in heaven, forgive the sins of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land You gave them and their fathers.

26"When the sky is shut up and there's no rain because they sin against You, if then they pray toward this place, confess Your name, and turn away from their sins because You have made them

suffer. 27then hear in heaven and forgive the sins of Your servants and Your people Israel and teach them how to live a good life; and let rain fall on Your land that You gave Your people as an inheritance.

28"When there is a famine in the land, a plague, blight, mildew, swarms of destructive grasshoppers, when their enemies are in the country and besieging their gates, whatever plague or sickness there may be, 29if anyone or all Your people Israel pray and plead, and each one who experiences the suffering or pain spreads out his hands toward this temple, 30then hear in heaven where You live, and forgive, and give to everyone whatever he deserves, for You know his heart; yes, You alone know the hearts of human beings. 31Then they will fear You and walk in Your ways as long as they live on the land You gave our fathers.

32"Also the stranger who isn't one of Your people Israel but has come from a distant country because of Your great name, Your mighty hand and outstretched arm—when such people come and pray toward this temple, 33then hear in heaven where You live and do everything for which the stranger asks, so that like Your people Israel all the people in the world will know Your name and fear You and will know that this temple I built is called by Your name.

34"When Your people go out to fight against their enemies wherever You send them, and they pray to You in the direction of this city that You chose and this temple have built for Your name, 35then hear in heaven what they pray and plead, and do for them what is right.

36"When they sin against You—

there's no one who doesn't sin—and You are angry with them and put them in the hands of an enemy who takes them away as prisoners to another country, far or near. "if in the land where they are taken as prisoners they return to their senses, repent, and plead with You while in exile, saying, 'We have sinned, done wrong, and have been wicked.' "if they return to You with all their hearts and all their souls in that country where they are in exile, and they pray in the direction of this country which You gave their fathers, the city You chose and the temple I built for Your name, "then hear in heaven where You live, hear what they pray and plead, and do for them what is right; forgive Your people who have sinned against You.

"And now, my God, may Your eyes be open and Your ears be listening to what is prayed in this place.

"And now rise, LORD God, come to Your resting-place, You and the ark of Your strength. May Your priests, LORD God, be dressed in salvation, and Your saints be happy and prosperous. "LORD God, don't reject Your anointed one. Remember how kind You were to Your servant David!"

The LORD's Glory

7 When Solomon finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offerings and the other sacrifices, and the LORD's glory filled the temple. "The priests couldn't go into the LORD's temple because the LORD's glory filled the LORD's temple. "When all the Israelites

saw the fire come down and the LORD's glory on the temple, they kneeled down with their faces on the pavement. They worshiped and praised the LORD, "because He is good and forever kind."

The Temple Dedicated

"The king and all the people were sacrificing before the LORD. "King Solomon sacrificed 22,000 cattle and 120,000 sheep. So the king and all the people dedicated God's temple.

"The priests were standing at their appointed places and also the Levites with their instruments that King David made to accompany the singing whenever he used them to praise and thank the LORD "because He is forever kind." The priests were opposite the Levites blowing their trumpets, and all Israel was standing up.

"Solomon had sanctified the inner area of the court that was in front of the LORD's temple, and there he offered burnt offerings and the fat of shared offerings, because the bronze altar Solomon had made couldn't hold the burnt offerings, the food offering, and the fat.

"At that time Solomon also celebrated the festival^d for seven days, and all Israel with him, a very large gathering coming from everywhere, from the entrance of Hamath to the wadi of Egypt. "On the eighth day there was a closing assembly. They had dedicated the altar for seven days and celebrated the festival for another seven days. "On the 23rd day of the seventh month he dismissed the people to their homes, happy and in good spirits because the LORD had

^dof booths

been so good to David and Solomon and to His people Israel.

The LORD Appears to Solomon

"When Solomon finished the LORD's temple and the king's palace, and so succeeded in everything he had in mind for the LORD's temple and his own palace, ¹²the LORD appeared to Solomon at night. "I have heard your prayer," He said to him, "and have chosen this place for Myself as a temple for sacrifices. ¹³When I shut up the sky so that there is no rain, or I order the grasshoppers to consume the country, or send a plague among My people, "if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray, search for Me, repent of their evil ways, then I will hear from heaven and forgive their sins and heal their country.

¹⁴"Now My eyes will be open and My ears will hear those who pray at this place. ¹⁵Now I have chosen and sanctified this temple so that My name will be there forever, and My eyes and My heart will always be there. ¹⁶If you will live before Me as your father David lived and do everything I ordered you to do, and keep My laws and regulations, ¹⁷I will establish the throne of your kingdom as I promised your father David, saying, 'You will always have a man ruling over Israel.' ¹⁸But if you turn away and forsake My laws and My commandments that I put before you, and you go and serve other gods and worship them, ¹⁹then I will tear them up by the roots from the ground on which I put them and will reject this temple which I consecrated and make it an example and a taunt among all the people. ²⁰This temple will become rubble, and all who pass by will be

amazed and ask, 'Why did the LORD do this to this country and this temple?' ²¹And people will answer, 'Because they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers who brought them out of Egypt, and they took hold of other gods and worshiped and served them; that is why He brought all this calamity on them.' "

Solomon's Other Projects

8 After the 20 years in which Solomon built the LORD's temple and his own palace, ²Solomon rebuilt the cities Hiram gave him, and he had Israelites live in them.

³Then Solomon went to Hamath-zobah and conquered it. ⁴He built Tadmor in the wilderness and all the storage cities that he built in Hamath. ⁵He rebuilt the upper Beth-horon and the lower Beth-horon into cities fortified with walls, double gates, and bars, ⁶and Baalath and all his storage cities and all his cities for chariots or horses and all that Solomon wanted to build in Jerusalem, Lebanon, and in all the territory he ruled over.

⁷All the people who were left of the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, who were not of Israel ⁸and whom the Israelites didn't wipe out, their descendants who were left in the land after them—from these Solomon raised a force of slaves, and that's what they are today. ⁹But Solomon didn't use Israelites as slaves to do this work; they were the soldiers, captains and lieutenants, and commanders of his chariots and horses. ¹⁰King Solomon also had 250 administrative officers who governed the people.

¹¹Solomon brought up Pharaoh's daughter from David's city to a palace he built for her, because he

said, "My wife will not live in the palace of David, king of Israel, because these places to which the LORD's ark has come are holy."

¹²Then Solomon offered burnt offerings to the LORD on the LORD's altar that he built in front of the porch; ¹³he offered whatever the law of Moses required for every day, on Sabbaths, the first of the month, the three annual festivals, the festival of bread without yeast, the festival of weeks, and the festival of booths. ¹⁴As his father David had prescribed, he set up the divisions of the priests for their services and the Levites for their appointed places to lead in praise and to work with the priests, doing whatever needed to be done each day; and he also set up the divisions of doorkeepers at every gate as David, the man of God, had ordered it. ¹⁵They didn't fail to do what the king had ordered the priests and the Levites to do in any matter, including the treasures. ¹⁶And all Solomon's work on the LORD's temple from the laying of the foundation to the finished work was accomplished: The LORD's temple was now complete.

¹⁷Then Solomon went to Ezion-geber and to Eloth on the seashore in the country of Edom. ¹⁸Huram had his servants bring ships to him and men who knew the sea. They went with Solomon's men to Ophir and imported 450 talents of gold and brought them to King Solomon.

The Queen of Sheba

9 When the queen of Sheba heard the news about Solomon, she came to test Solomon at Jerusalem with puzzling questions. She came with great wealth, camels carrying spices, much gold and

valuable stones. When she came to Solomon, she told him everything that was on her mind. ²Solomon answered all her questions; there was nothing too difficult for Solomon, that he couldn't explain to her.

³When the queen of Sheba saw Solomon's wisdom, the palace he built, ⁴the food on his table, how his officers sat and his servants stood, and their dress, the stairs on which he went up to the LORD's temple, it left her breathless. ⁵"It is true," she told the king, "what I heard in my country about you and your wisdom. ⁶But I didn't believe what I was told till I came and saw it with my own eyes; and I wasn't told about half of your great wisdom. You have far more than I heard. ⁷"Happy are your men, and happy are these servants of yours who can always stand before you and listen to your wisdom. ⁸The LORD your God be blessed, who has delighted in you and set you on His throne so you might rule for the LORD your God. Because your God has loved Israel he has established them forever and made you king over them to do what is just and right."

⁹She gave the king 120 talents of gold, a great quantity of spices, and valuable stones; there never were such spices as those the queen of Sheba gave King Solomon.

¹⁰Huram's servants and Solomon's servants who brought gold from Ophir also brought sandalwood and valuable stones. ¹¹The king used the sandalwood to make walks to the LORD's temple and to the king's palace, and lyres and lutes for the singers; no one had seen anything like them in the land of Judah.

¹²King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba anything she asked for in

1:7 ⁹ Mt 12:42

addition to the equivalent of what she brought the king. Then she and her servants left and went back to her country.

¹³The gold that came to Solomon in one year weighed 666 talents, ¹⁴besides that which came from the business of traveling merchants. All the kings of Arabia and governors of the land also brought Solomon gold and silver.

¹⁵King Solomon made 200 large shields of beaten gold, using 600 shekels of gold to cover each shield. ¹⁶Also 300 small shields of beaten gold, using 300 shekels of gold to cover each shield. The king put these into the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon.

¹⁷The king also made a large ivory throne and covered it with pure gold. ¹⁸There were six steps to the throne, with a golden footstool fastened to the throne. There were armrests on each side of the seat, and two lions standing beside the armrests. ¹⁹Twelve lions stood there on the six steps, one on each end of each step—nothing just like this had been made in any other kingdom.

²⁰All the king's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the utensils of the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon were of the finest gold. Silver wasn't counted as anything in Solomon's time. ²¹The king had ships going to Tarshish with Hiram's men; once every three years the ships of Tarshish used to come bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.

²²So King Solomon had more riches and wisdom than all the other kings in the world. ²³And all the kings of the world wanted to visit Solomon, to hear the wisdom that God put in his heart. ²⁴Each of them would bring his tribute,

articles of silver and gold, clothes, arms, spices, horses, mules; so it went year after year.

²⁵Solomon had 4,000 stalls for horses and chariots, and 12,000 horses. He put some of these in chariot cities and others with the king in Jerusalem. ²⁶He ruled over all the kings from the Euphrates to the country of the Philistines and the border of Egypt. ²⁷Under his rule there was as much silver as there were stones in Jerusalem, and as many cedars as fig-mulberries in the lowlands. ²⁸Horses were imported for Solomon from Egypt and from all the other countries.

²⁹The rest of what happened to Solomon, from the first to the last, isn't it written in the history of the prophet Nathan, in the prophecy of Ahijah the man from Shiloh, and in the visions of Iddo the seer in regard to Jeroboam, Nebat's son?

³⁰Solomon was king of all Israel in Jerusalem for 40 years, ³¹and he went to rest with his fathers and was buried in the city of his father David; and his son Rehoboam succeeded him as king.

Rehoboam

10 Rehoboam went to Shechem because all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king.

¹Jeroboam, Nebat's son, had been in Egypt, where he fled from King Solomon. When he heard the news, he came back from Egypt. ²The people sent and called for him. So Jeroboam and all Israel came and talked to Rehoboam. ³"Your father made the yoke heavy for us," they said. ⁴"Now make your father's hard service and his heavy yoke he put on us lighter, and we'll serve you."

⁵"Come back to me the day after

tomorrow," he answered them. So the people went away.

"King Rehoboam consulted with the old men who served his father Solomon when he was still living. "What kind of answer do you advise me to give these people?" he asked them.

"If you try to be friendly to these people and please them and say kind things to them," they told him, "they will always be your servants."

"But he turned away from the advice the old men gave him, and he consulted with the young men who had grown up with him and were serving him. "What advice do you give?" he asked them, "so we may answer these people who told me, 'Make the yoke your father put on us lighter.'"

"The young men who had grown up with him said, "This is what you should tell the people who said to you, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, but you must make it lighter for us': tell them, 'my little finger is thicker than my father's waist. "Now, my father loaded you with a heavy yoke; I will add to it. My father punished you with whips; I will do it with scourges.'"

"Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day as the king had told them to do. "And the king gave them a harsh answer. King Rehoboam refused to take the advice of the old men "and, following the advice of the young men, told them, "He made your yoke heavy, but I will add to it. My father punished you with whips, but I will do it with scourges." "So the king refused to listen to the people; God arranged it this way, that the LORD might do as He told Jeroboam, Nebat's son, by Ahijah from Shiloh.

"When all Israel realized the king

refused to listen to them, the people answered the king, "What share have we in David? There's nothing for us in Jesse's son. Everyone in Israel, go home! Now look after your own family, David." So all Israel went home "and Rehoboam ruled only over the Israelites who lived in the cities of Judah.

"King Rehoboam sent Hadoram, who managed the slave labor, but the men of Israel stoned him to death, and King Rehoboam got on his chariot as fast as he could to flee to Jerusalem. "So Israel has rebelled against David's family to this day.

11 When Rehoboam came to Jerusalem, he gathered the people of Judah and Benjamin, 180,000 of the best soldiers, to fight against Israel and make Rehoboam king of all Israel again.

"But the LORD spoke to Shemaiah, the man of God: "'Tell Rehoboam, Solomon's son, king of Israel, and also all Israel in Judah and Benjamin, 'the LORD says this: 'Don't go up and fight against your fellow Israelites. Everyone of you, go home, because this is My doing.'"' They listened to what the LORD said and returned from going against Jeroboam.

"Rehoboam lived in Jerusalem and built walled cities in Judah. "He built Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa, "Beth-zur, Soco, Adullam, "Gath, Mareshah, Ziph, "Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah, "Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron, which are in Judah. "He made the fortifications stronger and put captains in them, and stores of food, oil, and wine. "In each city he stored shields and spears, and he made them very strong; so Judah and Benjamin remained his.

"Wherever there were priests

and Levites in Israel, they came from their territories and took up residence near Rehoboam. ¹⁴The priests gave up their land and their property and left for Judah and Jerusalem because Jeroboam and his descendants barred them from serving the LORD as priests ¹⁵and he appointed his own priests for the high places, for the demons, and for the calves he made. ¹⁶Those who in all the tribes of Israel devoted themselves to searching for the LORD, the God of Israel, followed them to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the LORD, the God of their fathers. ¹⁷So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah and made Rehoboam, Solomon's son, strong for three years for three years in the way of David and Solomon.

Rehoboam's Family

¹⁸Rehoboam married Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David, and of Abihail the granddaughter of Eliab the son of Jesse. ¹⁹She bore him the following sons: Jeush, Shemariah, and Zaham.

²⁰After her he married Maacah, Absalom's granddaughter. She bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith. ²¹Rehoboam loved Maacah, Absalom's granddaughter, more than all his other wives and concubines (he married 18 wives and had 60 concubines, and had 28 sons and 60 daughters).

²²Rehoboam appointed Abijah, Maacah's son, to be the head, the prince among his brothers, because he wanted to make him king. ²³He wisely placed some of his sons in all the different parts of Judah and Benjamin, in every walled city, and gave them plenty of food and got many wives for them.

12 When Rehoboam was established as king and was strong, he deserted the LORD's law, and all Israel with him. ²So in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, because they rebelled against the LORD, Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem ³with 12,000 chariots, 60,000 horses, and an army that couldn't be counted, coming up with him from Egypt were Libyans, Sukkites, and Ethiopians.

⁴He captured the walled cities of Judah and came to Jerusalem.

⁵The prophet Shemaiah came to Rehoboam and the princes of Judah who had gathered in Jerusalem on account of Shishak. He told them, "The LORD says this: 'You have left Me, and so I too leave you in Shishak's hands.'" ⁶Then the captains of Israel and the king humbled themselves. "The LORD is righteous!" they said.

⁷When the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, the LORD spoke to Shemaiah: "They have humbled themselves. I will not destroy them. In a little while I will give them an escape and not use Shishak to pour out My anger on Jerusalem. ⁸But they will be subject to him so that they may learn the difference between serving Me and serving the governments of foreign countries."

⁹Shishak king of Egypt attacked Jerusalem and captured the treasures in the LORD's temple and in the king's palace, taking everything away, also the golden shields Solomon made. ¹⁰So King Rehoboam made bronze shields to take their place and ordered the captains of the guards who guarded the door of the king's palace to take charge of them. ¹¹As often as the king went to the LORD's temple,

the guards came and carried them, and then they took them back to the guardroom.

"But when he humbled himself, the LORD was no longer angry with him and didn't completely destroy him; and things went well in Judah.

"King Rehoboam strengthened himself in Jerusalem and ruled. Rehoboam was 41 years old when he became king, and ruled for 17 years in Jerusalem, the city the LORD chose out of all the tribes of Israel to put His name there. His mother was an Ammonite woman by the name of Naamah. "He did wrong because he wasn't determined to seek the LORD.

"Isn't the history of Rehoboam, from the first to the last, written in the annals of the prophet Shemaiah and of the seer Iddo "according to the genealogical enrollment"? Rehoboam and Jeroboam were always fighting. "Rehoboam went to rest with his fathers and was buried in David's city, and his son Abijah succeeded him as king.

Abijah

13 Abijah started to rule over Judah in the 18th year of Jeroboam. 'He ruled three years in Jerusalem. His mother was Micaiah, the daughter of Uriel from Gibeah.

There was war between Abijah and Jeroboam. 'Abijah got ready for battle with an army of 400,000 chosen fighting men, and Jeroboam prepared to oppose him with 800,000 chosen and bold fighters.

"Then Abijah got up on mount Zemaraim, which is in the hills of Ephraim. "Jeroboam and all Israel, listen to me!" he called out. "'Shouldn't you know that the LORD, the God of Israel, made David

and his descendants the kings of Israel forever by a covenant of salt? "But Jeroboam son of Nebat, the servant of Solomon son of David, rebelled against the LORD. 'There came to him empty-headed and worthless men, and they strongly opposed Rehoboam, Solomon's son, when Rehoboam was young and fainthearted and couldn't oppose them. "And now, do you mean to oppose the LORD's royal rule by David's descendants? You are a big crowd, and with you are the golden calves Jeroboam made to be your gods. "Didn't you drive out the LORD's priests, Aaron's descendants, and the Levites, and make your own priests, like the people of foreign countries? Anyone who comes to be consecrated with a young bull of the herd and seven rams can become a priest of those who are no gods. "But as for us, the LORD is our God. We have not left Him. There are priests who are Aaron's descendants serving the LORD, and the Levites are doing their work. "These offer burnt offerings to the LORD every morning and every evening and sweet incense; there are the rows of bread on the pure table, and the golden lampstand with its lamps to burn every evening, because we're doing what the LORD our God tells us; but you have forsaken Him. "And now, God is with us as our Leader, and His priests with their battle trumpets will sound the call to fight against you. Men of Israel, don't fight against the LORD, the God of your fathers, because you can't succeed."

"But Jeroboam had sent an ambush around to get at them from behind. So they were in front of Judah, and the ambush was behind

them. ¹⁴When Judah looked around, they saw themselves attacked in front and behind. They cried to the LORD, and the priests blew the trumpets. ¹⁵and the men of Judah raised the battle cry. And when they raised the battle cry, God struck Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah. ¹⁶The Israelites fled before Judah, and God put them in their hands. ¹⁷So Abijah and his men struck them down in a great defeat, and 500 chosen men of Israel fell slain. ¹⁸So the Israelites were humbled at that time, and the men of Judah won because they depended on the LORD, the God of their fathers. ¹⁹Abijah pursued Jeroboam and took cities away from him, Bethel with its villages, Jeshanah with its villages, and Ephron with its villages.

²⁰Jeroboam had no more strength left in the time of Abijah. And the LORD struck him so that he died.

²¹But Abijah became strong. He took 14 wives and had 22 sons and 16 daughters. ²²Everything else about Abijah, how he lived and what he said, is written in the story of the prophet Iddo.

14 And Abijah went to rest with his fathers and was buried in David's city, and his son Asa succeeded him as king. In his time the land had peace for 10 years.

Asa

¹Asa did what was good and right before the LORD his God. ²He put away the strange altars, broke down the sacred pillars, and cut down the sacred poles. ³He told Judah to search for the LORD, the God of their fathers, and do what the Law and the Commandments

said. ⁴From all the cities of Judah he put away the high places and the altars for incense. And with him the kingdom had peace.

⁵He built cities with walls in Judah. He had no war in those years, because the LORD gave him rest. ⁷He told Judah, "Let us build these cities and make walls around them with towers, gates, and bars. The country is still ours, because we have searched for the LORD our God. We have searched for Him, and He has given us rest all around." So they built, and everything went well.

⁸Asa had an army of 300,000 men of Judah, armed with large shields and spears, and 280,000 men of Benjamin, armed with small shields and shooting with bows, all of them good fighters.

⁹Then Zerah the Ethiopian with a million men and 300 chariots came to attack them, coming as far as Mareshah. ¹⁰Asa went out to meet him, and they got ready for battle in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah.

¹¹Asa called on the LORD his God. "LORD," he said, "there is no one beside You to step between the mighty and the weak and to help. Help us, LORD our God, because we depend on You, and in Your name we go against this horde. You are the LORD our God. Let no man be strong enough to oppose You."

¹²The LORD struck down the Ethiopians before Asa and Judah so that the Ethiopians fled. ¹³Asa and his troops pursued them as far as Gerar; so many of the Ethiopians fell that they could not counterattack: they were smashed before the LORD and His army. They took a lot of spoil ¹⁴and attacked all the cities around Gerar, because the LORD

terrified them. They plundered all the cities, for they were full of spoil. ¹⁵They also struck down those pasturing the cattle and took away many sheep and camels as they went back to Jerusalem.

15 God's Spirit came on Azariah, Oded's son. ²He went out to meet Asa. "Listen to me, Asa," he told him, "and all you of Judah and Benjamin. The LORD is with you when you are with Him. If you will search for Him, He will let you find Him. But if you desert Him, He will desert you. ³Many times Israel was without the true God, without a priest who taught, and without the law. ⁴But when they were in trouble, they turned to the LORD, the God of Israel. When they looked for Him, He let them find Him. ⁵In those times no one lived peacefully, because everybody was confused. ⁶Nation fought with nation, city with city; God had confused them with every kind of trouble. ⁷But you must be strong and not discouraged, because your work will be rewarded."

⁸When Asa heard what the prophet Oded prophesied, he took courage and put away the abominations from all of Judah, Benjamin, and the cities he had captured in the hills of Ephraim. He also repaired the LORD's altar in front of the porch of the LORD.

⁹Then he gathered all Judah and Benjamin and the people who had come from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon to stay with them, because many of them left Israel to come to him when they saw the LORD his God was with Asa. ¹⁰So they gathered at Jerusalem in the third month of the 15th year of Asa's rule. ¹¹On that day they sacrificed

to the LORD a part of the spoils they had gotten, 700 cattle and 7,000 sheep. ¹²They made a covenant to seek the LORD, the God of their fathers, with all their heart and soul. ¹³And anyone who wouldn't seek the LORD, the God of Israel, was to be killed, young or old, man or woman. ¹⁴They made their oath to the LORD with loud shouting and the blowing of trumpets and horns. ¹⁵All Judah was delighted with the oath, because they took it with all their hearts; and when they looked for the LORD eagerly, He let them find Him. And the LORD gave them peace all around.

¹⁶King Asa also removed his grandmother Maacah from being queen mother, because she had made a disgraceful image for a sacred pole. Asa cut down her image, crushed it, and burned it in the Kidron valley. ¹⁷Although the high places were not put away from Israel, Asa was at heart perfectly loyal all his life. ¹⁸He brought the silver, the gold, and the utensils he and his father had consecrated into God's temple.

Asa's War with Baasha

¹There was no war till the 35th year of Asa's rule.

16 In the 36th year of Asa's rule Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and fortified Ramah in order not to let anyone come from or go to Asa king of Judah.

²Then Asa brought out silver and gold from the storehouse of the LORD's temple and the king's palace and sent them to Benhadad king of Syria, who was living in Damascus. ³"Let's have a treaty between me and you," he said, "as there was

between my father and yours. I'm sending you silver and gold. Break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel so he will leave and let me alone."

"Benhadad did what King Asa asked him. He sent the commanders of his armies to the cities of Israel. They attacked Ijon, Dan, and Abel-maim, and all the store-cities of Naphtali. "When Baasha heard the news, he quit fortifying Ramah and stopped work on it.

"Then King Asa took all Judah, and they carried the stones and the wood with which Baasha had fortified Ramah, and they used them to fortify Geba and Mizpah.

"At that time the seer Hanani came to Asa king of Judah. "Because you depended on the king of Syria and not on the LORD your God," he said, "the army of the king of Syria has escaped your hands. "Were not the Ethiopians and Libyans a vast army with very many chariots and horses? But when you depended on the LORD, He put them in your hands. "The LORD's eyes scan the whole world to use His strength for those whose hearts are altogether loyal to Him. You acted foolishly in this matter, because from now on you will have wars."

"But Asa got angry with the seer and put him in the stocks, for his words had made Asa furious. Asa also treated other people cruelly at that time.

"Everything about Asa, from the first to the last, is written in the Scroll of the Kings of Judah and Israel.

"In the 39th year of his rule Asa had a disease of his feet that was very severe; he didn't go to the LORD for help but to doctors.

"Asa went to rest with his fathers

when he died in the 41st year of his rule. "He was buried in the burial place he had cut out for himself in David's city. They laid him on a bed full of spices and different kinds of perfumes made by a perfumer. They lit a great fire in his honor.

Jehoshaphat

17 His son Jehoshaphat succeeded him as king, and he fortified himself against Israel. "He put troops in all the fortified cities of Judah and placed garrisons in Judah and the cities of Ephraim that his father Asa had taken.

"The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he lived in the earlier ways of his ancestor David and didn't go to the idols of Baal "but to his father's God for help and lived by His commandments and not according to what Israel was doing. "So the LORD established the kingdom in his hand. All Judah brought gifts to Jehoshaphat, and he had plenty of riches and honor. "He felt encouraged in the LORD's ways and also got rid of the high places and sacred poles in Judah.

"In the third year of his rule he sent his officers, Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah, to teach in the towns of Judah. "With them were the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, Tobadonijah; and with them were the priests, Elishama and Jehoram. "They taught in Judah, having the Scroll of the Law of the LORD with them, and went through all the towns of Judah, teaching the people.

"The LORD's terror came on all the kingdoms of the lands around Judah, so that they didn't fight with Jehoshaphat. "Some of the Philis-

tines brought tribute and a lot of silver. The Arabs also brought him flocks, 7,700 rams, and 7,700 he-goats. "So Jehoshaphat grew to be very great. He built fortresses and store-cities in Judah. "He had great stores in the cities of Judah and a force of able fighting men in Jerusalem. "These are their totals according to their clans. Judah's regimental commanders were Commander Adnah, and with him 300,000 bold fighters; "next to him was Commander Jehohanan, and with him 280,000; "next to him was Amasiah, Zichri's son, who volunteered to serve the LORD, and with him 200,000 seasoned fighting men. "In Benjamin there was Eliada, a bold fighter, and with him were 200,000 armed with bow and shield. "Next to him was Jehozabad, and with him 180,000 armed for battle. "These were the men who served the king besides those whom the king put in the fortified cities all over Judah.

18 Jehoshaphat had great wealth and honor. And he allied himself with Ahab by marriage. "After some years he went down to visit Ahab in Samaria. Ahab slaughtered many sheep and cattle for him and the people who were with him, and persuaded him to go up with him against Ramoth in Gilead.

"Will you go with me to Ramoth in Gilead?" Ahab king of Israel asked Jehoshaphat king of Judah.

"I will be like you in this," he answered him, "and my troops like your troops. "We will join you in the war. But first of all," Jehoshaphat told the king of Israel, "please ask what the LORD says."

"Then the king of Israel gathered

400 prophets. "Should we go and fight against Ramoth in Gilead or not?" he asked them.

"Go up," they said. "God will put it in the king's hands."

"But Jehoshaphat asked, "Isn't there a prophet of the LORD here anymore so we can ask him?"

"There is still another man by whom we can ask the LORD," the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat. "But I hate him; he prophesies nothing good about me but always evil. He is Micaiah, Imla's son."

"The king shouldn't say that," Jehoshaphat said.

"Then the king of Israel called an officer. "Hurry and get Micaiah, Imla's son," he said.

"The king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah sat each on his throne, dressed in their robes, and they were on the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria, and all the prophets were prophesying before them. "Then Zedekiah, Chenaanah's son, made iron horns for himself. "The LORD says this," he said, "with these you will push down Aram till they are destroyed." "And all the prophets were making the same prophecy. "Attack Ramoth in Gilead," they said, "and win a victory. The LORD will put it in the king's hands."

"The messenger who had gone to call Micaiah told him: "Now look! The prophets are all agreed in telling the king something good. Please talk like one of them and tell something good."

"As the LORD lives," Micaiah said, "I will say what my God says."

"When he came to the king, the king asked him, "Micaiah, should we go to fight Ramoth in Gilead or not?"

"Attack," he said, "and win a victory; they'll be put in your hands."

¹⁵"How many times do I have to put you under oath," the king asked him, "to make you tell me nothing but the truth in the LORD's name?"

¹⁶"I saw all Israel scattered in the hills," he said, "like sheep without a shepherd. And the LORD said, 'These have no master. Each should go home peacefully.'"

¹⁷"Didn't I tell you," the king of Israel asked Jehoshaphat, "he would prophesy nothing good about me but only evil?"

¹⁸"Hear what the LORD says," he said. "I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and the whole army of heaven was standing at His right and left. ¹⁹'Who will deceive Ahab king of Israel,' the LORD asked, 'so he will attack and fall at Ramoth in Gilead?' One said one thing, and another said another.

²⁰"Then a spirit stepped up and stood before the LORD. 'I'll deceive him,' he said.

" 'How?' the LORD asked.

²¹" 'I will go out,' he said, 'and become a lying spirit in the mouth of all His prophets.'

" 'You will deceive him,' he said, 'and also succeed. Go and do that.' ²²And now you see, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these prophets of yours, but the LORD speaks evil about you."

²³Zedekiah, Chenaanah's son, went up to Micaiah and hit him on the cheek. "Which way did the spirit go," he asked, "when he left me to talk to you?"

²⁴"You will see," Micaiah answered, "that day when you go into an inner room to hide."

²⁵"Take Micaiah," the king of Israel said, "and bring him back to

Amon, the governor of the city, and to Joash, the king's son, ²⁶and say, 'The king says this, "Put this fellow in prison and feed him a scant ration of bread and water till I come back safely."'

²⁷"If you really come back safely," Micaiah answered, "the LORD hasn't spoken by me." And he added, "All you people, listen."

²⁸So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, went up to Ramoth in Gilead. ²⁹"I will disguise myself before going into battle," the king of Israel told Jehoshaphat, "and you dress in your clothes." So the king of Israel disguised himself, and then they went into battle.

³⁰The king of Syria had given orders to the captains of his chariots. "Don't fight with anyone at all except the king of Israel."

³¹When the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, "It's the king of Israel!" and they turned around to fight against him. But Jehoshaphat cried out. So the LORD helped him, and God led them to leave him. ³²When the captains of the chariots saw he wasn't the king of Israel, they turned away from him.

³³A man drew a bow to shoot at random, and hit the king between the lower armor and the breastplate. So he told the driver of the chariot, "Turn and take me away from these troops—I'm badly wounded." ³⁴The battle got more violent that day, but the king of Israel kept himself standing in the chariot over against the Syrians until evening, but when the sun went down, he died.

19 Jehoshaphat king of Judah came back home safely to

¹⁸
¹⁶ Mt 9:36;
Mk 8:34

Jerusalem. ²Then Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him. "Should you help the wicked," he asked King Jehoshaphat, "and love those who hate the LORD? For this the LORD is angry with you. ³Yet there is some good found in you: You have rid the land of the sacred poles and made up your mind to go to God for help."

"While Jehoshaphat was living in Jerusalem, he went out again among the people from Beersheba to the hills of Ephraim and brought the people back to the LORD, the God of their fathers. ⁵He appointed judges in the country, in each and every fortified city of Judah. ⁶"Consider what you do," he told the judges: "when you judge, you don't do it for men but for the LORD, who is with you when you make your decisions. ⁷And now, may the fear of the LORD be upon you. Watch what you do; the LORD our God is not unjust; He shows no preference for anyone and takes no bribes."

"Also in Jerusalem Jehoshaphat appointed Levites, priests, and leaders of the tribes of Israel to serve as judges and decide cases. These lived in Jerusalem. ⁹"Fear the LORD, as you do this," he ordered them, "be faithful with undivided minds. ¹⁰Whenever a case comes before you from your kinsmen living in their towns, whether it involves bloodshed or the breaking of a law or a commandment, a rule, or a regulation, you shall warn them not to become guilty before the LORD, making Him angry with both you and them. Do this and you will not be guilty. ¹¹And now, Amariah the high priest will be in charge of you in every religious matter, and Zebadiah, Ishmael's son, ruler of the tribe of Judah, in

every civil matter. The Levites are ready to serve you as officers. Be strong and act, and the LORD be with those who do right."

20 Later the Moabites, Ammonites, and some of the Meunites with them came to fight against Jehoshaphat. ²Some men came and told Jehoshaphat, "A large mass of people are coming against you from the other side of the sea, from Edom, and they are already in Hazazon-tamar (Engedi)."

"Frightened, Jehoshaphat decided to go to the LORD for help. He proclaimed a fast in all Judah. ³Judah gathered to get help from the LORD, the people coming from all the towns of Judah to get help from the LORD. ⁴Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah on the temple grounds of the LORD before the new court. ⁵"LORD, God of our fathers," he said, "aren't You God in heaven? And aren't You the one who rules over all the kingdoms of the nations? You have the power and might so that nobody can oppose You. ⁶Didn't You, our God, drive out those living in this country before Your people Israel and give it to the descendants of Your friend Abraham forever? ⁷And they have lived in it and built a holy place for Your name in it, saying, ⁸"If calamity comes to us, war, judgment, plague, famine, we will stand before this temple and before You, because Your name is in this temple, and we will cry to You in our troubles, and then You will hear us and save us. ⁹And now here are the Ammonites, Moabites, and the people of Mount Seir. You didn't let Israel invade them when they came out of Egypt, and they turned away from them and didn't destroy them. ¹¹And

²⁰
7 Jk 2:23

this is how they are paying us back, by coming to drive us out of Your possession that You gave us to inherit. "Our God, won't You punish them? We don't have the strength to face this vast crowd that is attacking us. We don't know what to do, but we're looking to You." "All Judah with their babies, their wives, and their children were standing before the LORD.

"Then the LORD's Spirit came on Jahaziel son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, one of the descendants of Asaph and Levi. "Listen to me, all Judah," he said, "and you people living in Jerusalem, and King Jehoshaphat. The LORD tells you this: 'Don't let this vast crowd frighten or terrify you, because the battle isn't yours but God's. "Tomorrow go down against them. They are coming up the slope of Ziz. You will find them at the end of the valley before the wilderness of Jeruel. "You don't need to fight in this battle. Take your places, stand, and see how the LORD, who is on your side, will save you, Judah, and Jerusalem.' Don't be frightened or terrified. Tomorrow go out to meet them. The LORD is with you." "Jehoshaphat bowed down with his face on the ground, and all Judah and the people who lived in Jerusalem bowed before the LORD to worship Him. "And the Levites, descendants of Kohath and Korah, stood up to praise the LORD, the God of Israel, very loudly.

"They rose early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa. As they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said: "Listen to me, Judah and you people living in Jerusalem. Trust the LORD your God, and feel confident. Trust His prophets, and you will win." "When he had advised the people, he appointed those who were

to sing to the LORD and praise Him in beautiful holy garments as they went out before the army and sang, "Thank the LORD because He is forever kind!" "Just as they started to shout and praise, the LORD set an ambush against the Ammonites, Moabites, and the people of Mount Seir who had come into Judah, and they were hurt. "Then the Ammonites and Moabites attacked the people from Mount Seir to destroy them and wipe them out. And when they had completely wiped out the people of Seir, each one helped to destroy the other.

"Judah came to the watch-tower in the wilderness and looked for the horde—they were now corpses fallen to the ground, and none had escaped. "When Jehoshaphat and his troops came to take the spoils, they found among them a great quantity of goods, clothes, and precious ornaments, and they stripped off the spoils for themselves, but it was too much to carry away. They spent three days taking the spoils, there was so much. "On the fourth day they gathered in the Valley of Blessing. Because they blessed the LORD there, that place is still called the Valley of Blessing today.

"All the men of Judah and Jerusalem went back to Jerusalem with Jehoshaphat leading them. They were happy because the LORD had made them triumph over their enemies. "They came with lutes, lyres, and trumpets into Jerusalem to the LORD's temple.

"So the LORD terrified all the surrounding kingdoms when they heard how the LORD fought against Israel's enemies. "Now Jehoshaphat ruled in peace, since his God gave him rest all around.

"Jehoshaphat ruled over Judah. He was 35 years old when he started to

rule, and was king for 25 years in Jerusalem. His mother was Azubah, Shilhi's daughter. ²He lived in the ways of his father Asa, not turning away from it but doing what was right before the LORD. ³But the high places remained, and the people still didn't set their hearts on the God of their fathers.

⁴Everything else about Jehoshaphat, from the first to the last, is written in the history of Jehu, Hanani's son, which is included in the Scroll of the Kings of Israel.

⁵After this Jehoshaphat king of Judah allied himself with Ahaziah king of Israel, who led him to do wrong. ⁶He joined him in having ships go to Tarshish; they made the ships at Ezion-geber. ⁷Then Eliezer son of Dodavahu from Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat: "Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah, the LORD will destroy your work." And so the ships were wrecked and couldn't go to Tarshish.

Jehoram

21 Jehoshaphat went to rest with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in David's city, and his son Jehoram succeeded him as king. ²He had the following brothers, sons of Jehoshaphat: Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariah, Michael, and Shephatiah. All these were the sons of Jehoshaphat, king of Israel. ³Their father gave them many gifts—silver, gold, and other precious things, along with fortified cities in Judah—but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram, because he was the firstborn.

⁴After Jehoram had taken over his father's kingdom, he strengthened himself and then killed all his brothers with the sword, and also some of the princes of Israel.

⁵Jehoram was 32 years old when he became king, and he ruled eight years in Jerusalem. ⁶He lived in the ways of the kings of Israel just as Ahab's family had done, because he married Ahab's daughter, and he did wrong before the LORD. ⁷But the LORD did not want to destroy David's family on account of the covenant He made with David when He promised to give him and his sons a light that would burn forever.

⁸In his time Edom rebelled against Judah's control and set up a king for themselves. ⁹Jehoram went over to Edom with his officers and all his chariots. He had to get up at night and fight Edom because he and his chariot commanders were surrounded. ¹⁰But Edom rebelled and has been independent of Judah's control till now. At that time Libnah also rebelled against his control, because he had forsaken the LORD, the God of his fathers; ¹¹he made high places in the hills of Judah and caused the people of Jerusalem to be unfaithful and so led Judah astray.

¹²Then a letter came to him from the prophet Elijah: "The LORD, the God of your father David, says this: 'Because you haven't lived in the ways of your father Jehoshaphat or in the ways of Asa king of Judah, ¹³but have lived in the ways of the kings of Israel and have made Judah and the people of Jerusalem unfaithful, just as Ahab's family did, and you have killed your brothers, your father's family, who were better than you, ¹⁴the LORD will strike your people, your sons, your wives, and all your property with a great blow. ¹⁵You yourself will suffer many ailments along with a disease of the intestines which will cause them to fall out day by day.'"

¹⁶The LORD stirred up the spirit of

the Philistines against Jehoram, and the Arabs who live near the Ethiopians. ¹⁷They came up against Judah, broke into the country, and took away all the property that could be found in the king's palace, and also his sons and wives, so that no son was left except Jehoahaz, his youngest son. ¹⁸After all this the LORD struck him with an incurable disease in his intestines. ¹⁹As time went on and his life was coming to an end after two years, his intestines fell out during his sickness, and he died suffering severely.

His people lit no fire in his honor as they had done for his ancestors. ²⁰He was 32 years old when he started to rule, and was king in Jerusalem for eight years. He died unwanted and was buried in David's city, but not in the tombs of the kings.

Ahaziah

22 The people of Jerusalem made his youngest son Ahaziah king in his place, because the band of armed men who came with the Arabs to the camp had killed all the older sons. So Ahaziah son of Jehoram king of Judah ruled. ²Ahaziah was 42^e years old when he started to rule, and he ruled one year in Jerusalem. His mother was Athaliah, Omri's granddaughter. ³He also followed in the ways of Ahab's family, because his mother advised him to do wrong. ⁴He did wrong before the LORD, like Ahab's family, since after his father died they advised him so as to destroy him.

⁵Following their advice, he went with Jehoram, Ahab's son, king of Israel, to fight against Hazael king

of Syria at Ramoth in Gilead. There the Syrians wounded Jehoram. ⁶He went back to Jezreel to be healed of the wounds he got in Ramoth when he fought against Hazael, king of Syria. And Ahaziah, Jehoram's son, king of Judah, went down to see Jehoram, Ahab's son, in Jezreel, because he was sick.

⁷Ahaziah's downfall by his going to Jehoram was from God. When he came there, he went out with Jehoram to meet Jehu, Nimshi's son, whom the LORD had anointed to destroy Ahab's family. ⁸When Jehu was executing the judgment on Ahab's family, he found the princes of Judah, the nephews of Ahaziah, who were serving him, and he killed them. ⁹He searched for Ahaziah, and they captured him while he was hiding in Samaria. They brought him to Jehu and killed him; they buried him, for they said, "He is the grandson of Jehoshaphat, who searched for the LORD with all his heart." Now there was no one of Ahaziah's family able to rule.

Athaliah

¹⁰When Athaliah, Ahaziah's mother, saw that her son was dead, she proceeded to destroy all the royal family of the tribe of Judah. ¹¹But Jehosheba, the king's daughter, took Joash, Ahaziah's son, and stole him away from the king's sons, who were to be killed, and put him and his nurse in a bedroom. So King Jehoram's daughter Jehosheba, who was the priest Jehoiada's wife and Ahaziah's sister, hid him from Athaliah so that she didn't kill him. ¹²He was with them, hiding in God's temple, while Athaliah ruled the country.

^e22 according to 2 Kings 8:26

Opposition to Athaliah

23 In the seventh year Jehoiada reinforced himself by making a pact with certain captains of hundreds: Azariah, Jeroham's son, Ishmael, Jehohanan's son, Azariah, Obed's son, Maaseiah, Adaiah's son, and Elishaphat, Zichri's son. ²They went around in Judah, gathered the Levites from all the cities of Judah, and the leaders of the clans of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem. ³The whole gathering made a covenant with the king in God's temple. "There is the king's son," he told them. "He should be king, as the LORD promised regarding David's descendants. ⁴This is what you must do: A third of you priests and Levites who come in on the Sabbath must be on guard at the threshold gates; ⁵and a third at the king's palace, and a third at the Foundation Gate, and all the people must be in the courts of the LORD's temple. ⁶No one should come into the LORD's temple except the priests and the Levites who serve. They may enter because they are holy, but all other people should follow the ordinance of the LORD. ⁷The Levites should form a circle around the king, each with his weapons in his hands. Anyone who comes into the temple must be killed. Stay with the king wherever he goes."

⁸So the Levites and all Judah did as the priest Jehoiada ordered them. Each took his men, those who were going off duty on the Sabbath and those who were coming on duty on the Sabbath, because Jehoiada had not dismissed the outgoing divisions.

⁹The priest Jehoiada gave the

captains of hundreds King David's spears and small and large shields, which were in God's temple. ¹⁰He stationed all the troops, each with his lance in his hand, from the south side of the temple to its north side and by the altar and that part of the temple where the king was. ¹¹Then they brought out the king's son, put the crown on him, gave him the Law, and Jehoiada and his sons made him king, anointing him and crying, "Long live the king!"

¹²When Athaliah heard the people running and praising the king, she went into the LORD's temple to the people. ¹³There she saw the king standing by the pillar at the entrance, the captains and trumpeters beside the king, all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing trumpets, and singers with musical instruments leading in the songs of praise. Athaliah tore her clothes and cried, "Treason, treason!"

¹⁴So the priest Jehoiada brought out the captains of hundreds who were in charge of the army. "Bring her out under guard," he told them, "and anyone who tries to follow her must be killed with the sword." The priest had said, "Don't kill her in the LORD's temple." ¹⁵So they arrested her, and as she went into the entrance of the palace at the Horse Gate they killed her there.

¹⁶Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD,^f all the people, and the king that they would be the LORD's people. ¹⁷Then all the people went to the temple of Baal, tore it down, smashed his altars and images, and killed Mattan priest of Baal before the altars. ¹⁸Jehoiada appointed men to take charge of the

^fHeb reads "himself"

LORD's temple under the direction of the Levitical priests, whose divisions David had arranged for the LORD's temple, to offer burnt offerings to the LORD as it is written in the law of Moses, with joy and singing as David had directed them. ¹⁹He appointed gatekeepers for the gates of the LORD's temple so that no one could enter who was in any way unclean.

²⁰He took the captains of hundreds, the nobles, the governors of the people, and all the people of the land and brought the king down from the LORD's temple. They came through the Upper Gate to the royal palace and set the king on the throne of the kingdom. ²¹All the people were delighted, and the city was quiet after they had killed Athaliah with the sword.

Joash

24 Joash was seven years old when he became king, and he ruled for 40 years in Jerusalem. His mother was Zibiah from Beersheba. ²Joash did what was right before the LORD as long as the priest Jehoiada lived. ³Jehoiada got him two wives, and he had sons and daughters.

⁴After this, Joash planned to restore the LORD's temple. ⁵He gathered the priests and the Levites. "Go out to the cities of Judah," he said, "and collect money from every Israelite to repair the temple of your God from year to year, and do it quickly!" But the Levites didn't hurry.

⁶So the king called the high priest Jehoiada. "Why didn't you demand that the Levites collect from Judah and Jerusalem the tax Moses, the LORD's servant, required of the community of Israel for the Tent of

Testimony?" he asked. ⁷"The sons of that wicked woman Athaliah have broken into God's temple and used all the holy things of the LORD's temple to make images of Baal."

⁸Then the king told them what to do, and they made a box and set it outside the gate of the LORD's temple. ⁹Then they announced in Judah and Jerusalem that the tax which Moses, the LORD's servant, had laid on Israel in the wilderness should be brought in to the LORD. ¹⁰All the governors and all the people gladly brought in the money and dropped it into the box till the collection was completed. ¹¹Whenever the Levites brought the box to the king's officers and they saw how much money there was, the king's secretary and the high priest's officer would come, empty the box, and then carry it back to its place. Doing that from day to day, they collected a great sum. ¹²The king and Jehoiada gave it to the men who were in charge of repairing the temple, and they hired masons and carpenters to restore the LORD's temple, and also smiths who worked with iron and bronze to repair it. ¹³As these men labored, the work of reparation progressed; and they restored God's temple to its proper condition and reinforced it.

¹⁴When they finished, they brought the rest of the money to the king and Jehoiada, who used it to make utensils for the LORD's temple—utensils for the service and to make offerings, pans and vessels of gold and silver. And they offered burnt offerings in the LORD's temple continually as long as Jehoiada lived.

¹⁵Jehoiada lived to a ripe old age and died. He was 130 years old when he died. ¹⁶He was buried in

David's city with the kings because he had done good in Israel for God and His temple.

¹⁷After he died, the governors of Judah came and bowed down before the king, and the king listened to them. ¹⁸They forsook the temple of the LORD, the God of their fathers, and worshiped sacred poles and idols. This guilt of theirs brought vengeance on Judah and Jerusalem.

¹⁹But He sent prophets to them to bring them back to the LORD, and they warned them, but they didn't listen. ²⁰God's Spirit came on Zechariah son of Jehoiada the priest. Standing before the people, he told them: "God says this: 'Why are you breaking the LORD's commandments so that you can't prosper? Because you have forsaken the LORD. He has forsaken you.'" ²¹But they plotted against him and by the king's order stoned him in the court of the LORD's temple. ²²So King Joash did not remember how kind Jehoiada, Zechariah's father, had been to him, but killed his son. Dying, he said, "May the LORD see and avenge!"

²³Within a year the army of the Syrians attacked Joash. Coming into Judah and Jerusalem, they killed all the leading men among the people. And all the spoils they took from them they sent to the king of Damascus. ²⁴The Syrians had come with a small number of men, but the LORD put Joash's large army in their hands because they had forsaken the LORD, the God of their fathers. So the Syrians carried out God's sentence on Joash. ²⁵They left him suffering from many wounds. And when they had left, his own men plotted against him for murdering the son of the priest Jehoiada, and they killed him in his

bed. When he died, they buried him in David's city but not in the tombs of the kings. ²⁶These were the men who conspired against him: Zabab son of the Ammonitess Shimeath, and Jehozabad son of the Moabitess Shimrith. ²⁷The record about his sons and the many prophecies against him and the rebuilding of God's temple is in the commentary on the Scroll of the Kings. His son Amaziah succeeded him as king.

Amaziah

25 Amaziah was 25 years old when he began to rule. He ruled 29 years in Jerusalem. His mother was Jehoaddan from Jerusalem.

¹He did what was right in the LORD's eyes but not with all his heart. ²As soon as he had the kingdom firmly in his hands, he killed those men who murdered his father when he was king. ³He didn't kill their sons but went according to what was written in the Law, in the book of Moses, as the LORD had commanded: "Fathers must not die for their sons, and sons must not die for their fathers, but each one must die for his own sin."

⁴Amaziah gathered all Judah and Benjamin and arranged them according to their clans under commanders of thousands and of hundreds. He counted those who were 20 years and older and found he had 300,000 picked men fit for battle, who could handle spear and shield. ⁵He also hired 100,000 fighters from Israel for 100 talents of silver.

⁶But a man of God came to him. "King," he said, "the troops from Israel must not go with you, because the LORD isn't with Israel or with any of these men from Ephraim. ⁷If

you go anyhow, no matter how courageous you are in battle, God will make you fall before the enemy, for God has the power to help men and make them fall."

⁹Amaziah asked the man of God, "What should I do about the 100 talents I gave the troops from Israel?"

The man of God answered, "The LORD can give you much more than that."

¹⁰Then Amaziah separated the troops that had come to him from Ephraim and had them go home. But they got very angry at Judah and returned home furious.

¹¹Amaziah acted with courage and led his army out. When he came to the Salt Valley, he struck down 10,000 of the Edomites. ¹²The men of Judah captured another 10,000 alive, took them to the top of a rock, threw them down from the top of the rock, and dashed them to pieces.

¹³The men of the troop whom Amaziah sent back to keep them from going with him into battle made a raid on the towns in Judah from Samaria to Beth-horon. They struck down 3,000 of the people and took a lot of spoils.

¹⁴After Amaziah came back from defeating the Edomites, he brought the idols of the people of Seir, set them up as his gods, worshiped them, and sacrificed to them. ¹⁵The LORD got furious with Amaziah and sent a prophet to him who asked him: "Why do you go to the gods of those people for help? They couldn't save their own people from your hands."

¹⁶As he was talking, the king asked him: "Did we make you an adviser to the king? Stop it. Why should you be struck down?"

The prophet stopped. "I know,"

he said, "God is planning to destroy you because you did this and refused to listen to my advice."

¹⁷But after getting other advice Amaziah king of Judah sent a message to Joash son of Jehoahaz, son of Jehu, king of Israel. "Come," he said, "let us meet in battle."

¹⁸Joash king of Israel sent a message to Amaziah king of Judah: "A thistle in Lebanon said to a cedar in Lebanon, 'Let your daughter marry my son,' but a wild animal in Lebanon came along and tramped on the thistle. ¹⁹You say you defeated Edom, and you feel cocky enough to look for more glory. Stay home now. Why must you challenge disaster and fall, you and Judah with you?"

²⁰But Amaziah wouldn't listen. God wanted to put them in the hands of Joash because they had gone to Edom's gods for help. ²¹Joash king of Israel marched against him. He and Amaziah king of Judah met in battle at Beth-shemesh, which belongs to Judah. ²²Israel defeated Judah, and everyone ran home. ²³Joash king of Israel took Amaziah son of Joash, son of Jehoahaz, prisoner at Beth-shemesh and brought him to Jerusalem. And he tore down 400 cubits of the wall of Jerusalem, from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate. ²⁴And all the gold and silver, all the equipment he found with Obad-edom in God's temple, and the treasures in the king's palace, also the hostages, he brought back to Samaria.

²⁵Amaziah son of Joash king of Judah lived 15 years after Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel died.

²⁶The rest of Amaziah's history, from the first to the last—aren't they written in the Scroll of the Kings of Judah and Israel? ²⁷After

Amaziah turned away from the LORD, men in Jerusalem plotted against him. So he fled to Lachish. They sent men to Lachish after him, and they killed him there. ²⁸They brought him by horse and buried him with his fathers in the city of Judah.

Uzziah

26 Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was 16 years old, and made him king to succeed his father Amaziah. ²He built Elath, bringing it back to Judah after the king had gone to rest with his fathers. ³Uzziah was 16 when he became king, and he was king in Jerusalem 52 years. His mother was Jecoliah from Jerusalem. ⁴He did what was right before the LORD just as his father Amaziah had done. ⁵He went to God for help in the days of Zechariah, who was teaching in the fear of God. And as long as he went to the LORD for help, God gave him success.

⁶He went out and fought with the Philistines and tore down the wall of Gath, the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod. He built cities in the country of Ashdod and elsewhere among the Philistines. ⁷God helped him against the Philistines, the Arabs living in Gur-baal, and the Meunites. ⁸The Ammonites paid tribute to Uzziah, and his fame spread to the border of Egypt because he grew very strong. ⁹Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem, on the Corner Wall, on the Valley Gate, and at the Angle, and he fortified them. ¹⁰He built towers in the wilderness and dug many cisterns because he had a lot of herds in the lowlands and the plain. He had farmers and vineyard workers in

the hills and the fertile fields because he loved the soil.

¹¹Uzziah had an army of fighting men, whose regiments went to war according to the number mustered by the secretary Jeiel and the clerk Maaseiah. They were commanded by Hananiah, one of the king's officers. ¹²The total number of clan leaders of these courageous men was 2,600. ¹³Under them was an army of 307,500 who could fight with great ability to support the king against the enemy. ¹⁴For the whole army Uzziah prepared shields, spears, helmets, coats of armor, bows, and stones for slings. ¹⁵In Jerusalem he made machines designed by skillful men to be on the towers and corners to shoot arrows and big stones.

His fame spread far and wide, because he was wonderfully supported until he became strong. ¹⁶But when he was strong he got so puffed up it ruined him. He became disloyal to the LORD his God. He went into the LORD's temple to burn incense on the altar of incense. ¹⁷The priest Azariah went in after him with 80 of the LORD's courageous priests. ¹⁸They opposed King Uzziah. "You have no right, Uzziah," they told him, "to burn incense to the LORD. It is the right of the priests, Aaron's descendants, who are consecrated to burn incense. Get out of this holy place because you have been disloyal. The LORD God will not honor you for this."

¹⁹Then Uzziah got angry. While he held a censer in his hand to burn incense and was angry with the priests, leprosy broke out on his forehead in front of the priests in the LORD's temple as he was bending over the altar of incense. ²⁰The high priest Azariah watched

him and so did all the priests—there was the leprosy on his forehead. They rushed him away, and he himself was in a hurry to get out because the LORD had struck him. ²¹King Uzziah was a leper till he died, and being a leper he stayed in a separate house and also was excluded from the LORD's temple.

His son Jotham was in charge of the king's palace, governing the people of the country.

²²The rest of Uzziah's history from the first to the last, is recorded by the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz. ²³He went to rest with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in a cemetery that belonged to the kings, because people said, "He was a leper." His son Jotham succeeded him as king.

Jotham

27 Jotham was 25 years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for 16 years. His mother was Jerushah, Zadok's daughter. ²He did what was right before the LORD just as his father Uzziah had done—but he didn't invade the LORD's temple. However, the people continued to be corrupt.

³He built the upper gate of the LORD's temple and built up the wall at Ophel. ⁴He built towns in the hills of Judah, and in the wooded areas he built forts and towers. ⁵He fought with the king of the Ammonites and conquered them. That year the Ammonites gave him 100 talents of silver and 100,000 bushels of wheat and 100,000 bushels of barley. The Ammonites gave him the same amount in the second year and in the third.

⁶Jotham grew powerful because he lived right before the LORD his God.

⁷The rest of Jotham's history with all his wars and ways you will find recorded in the Scroll of the Kings of Israel and Judah. ⁸He was 25 years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for 16 years. ⁹And Jotham went to rest with his fathers and was buried in David's city. His son Ahaz succeeded him as king.

Ahaz

28 Ahaz was 20 years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for 16 years. He didn't do what was right before the LORD like his ancestor David. ²He lived like the kings of Israel and even cast metal images to serve as Baals. ³He burned sacrifices in the valley of Hinnom's son and burned his sons in fire—one of the abominable things done by the nations the LORD drove out ahead of Israel. ⁴He sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, on the hills, and under every green tree.

⁵And so the LORD his God put him in the hands of the king of Syria, who defeated him and took away many prisoners and brought them to Damascus. He also put him in the hands of the king of Israel, who defeated him in a great slaughter. ⁶Pekah, Remaliah's son, killed in Judah 120,000 on one day, all good fighting men, because they had forsaken the LORD, the God of their fathers. ⁷Zichri, a hero from Ephraim, killed Maaseiah the king's son, Azrikam the palace manager, and Elkanah, who was next to the king. ⁸The men of Israel took from their fellow Israelites 200,000 prisoners—women and children—and they also took a lot of spoil from them and brought it to Samaria.

"But there was a prophet of the LORD; his name was Oded. He went out to meet the army coming home to Samaria. "You see," he told them, "how the LORD, the God of your fathers, was so angry with Judah. He put them in your hands and you killed them in a rage that reached high heaven. ¹⁰And now you intend to put the people of Judah and Jerusalem under you as your male and female slaves. But aren't you, too, guilty of wrongs against the LORD your God? ¹¹Now listen to me and send back these prisoners you have taken from your fellow Israelites, because the LORD is furious with you."

¹²Then some leaders of Ephraim, Azariah son of Jehohan, Berechiah son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah son of Shallum, and Amasa son of Hadlai, got up to oppose those coming home from the war. ¹³"Don't bring the prisoners here," they told them. "You mean to make us guilty of this wrong against the LORD and add to our sins and guilt. Our guilt is already so great that the LORD is furious with Israel."

¹⁴So the armed men left the prisoners and the spoil in front of the leaders and the whole gathering. ¹⁵Then the men mentioned by name took charge of the prisoners and gave clothes from the spoil to all the naked. They dressed them, put sandals on them, gave them something to eat and drink, and anointed them. Carrying on donkeys all who were exhausted, they brought them to Jericho, the city of palms, near their own people. Then they returned to Samaria.

¹⁶At that time King Ahaz sent to the kings of Assyria to get help. ¹⁷The Edomites had again invaded Judah and defeated them and taken

away prisoners. ¹⁸And the Philistines had raided the lowland and the south of Judah and captured Bethshemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, Soco with its villages, Timnah with its villages, and Gimzo with its villages, and began living in them. ¹⁹The LORD humbled Judah on account of Ahaz king of Israel, who allowed depravity to spread and was unfaithful to the LORD.

²⁰Tillegath-pilneser king of Assyria came to him and, rather than strengthening him, made trouble for him. ²¹Ahaz plundered the LORD's temple and the palaces of the king and of the princes to pay off the king of Assyria, but it didn't help him. ²²In the time of his distress King Ahaz became even more unfaithful to the LORD, ²³and he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus who had defeated him. He thought, "The gods of the kings of Syria are helping them. I'll sacrifice to them so they will help me." But they only helped to ruin him and all Israel.

²⁴Ahaz collected the utensils in God's temple, cut them up, and closed the doors of the LORD's temple. He made altars for himself on every corner in Jerusalem. ²⁵And in each city of Judah he made high places to sacrifice to other gods, and so he made the LORD, the God of his fathers, angry.

²⁶The rest of his history and all his ways from the first to the last you will find written in the Scroll of the Kings of Judah and Israel. ²⁷Ahaz went to rest with his fathers and was buried in the city of Jerusalem because they didn't bring him into the burial place of the kings of Israel. His son Hezekiah succeeded him as king.

Hezekiah

29 Hezekiah became king when he was 25 years old, and he was king in Jerusalem for 29 years. His mother was Abijah, Zechariah's daughter. ²He did what was right before the LORD as his ancestor David had done. ³In his first year as king, in the first month, he opened the doors of the LORD's temple and repaired them.

⁴He brought in the priests and Levites and gathered them in the square on the east side. ⁵"Listen to me, Levites," he told them, "sanctify yourselves now and sanctify the temple of the LORD, the God of your fathers, and carry the filth out of the holy place. ⁶Our fathers were unfaithful. They did what is wrong before the LORD our God by deserting Him, turning away from the place where the LORD lives, and turning their backs to Him. ⁷They also shut the doors of the porch, put out the lamps, and didn't burn incense or offer burnt offerings in the holy place to the God of Israel. ⁸And so the LORD was angry with Judah and Jerusalem and made them a horror, something people deride and hiss at, as you can see with your own eyes. ⁹You see how our fathers were cut down by the sword, and our sons, daughters, and wives are in captivity for this. ¹⁰Now I have in mind to make a covenant with the LORD, the God of Israel, so that He may turn His blazing fury away from us. ¹¹Now don't be negligent, my sons. The LORD has chosen you to stand before Him, serve Him, be His servants, and bring sacrifices."

¹²So the Levites got started. From Kohath's descendants: Mahath, Amasai's son, and Joel, Azariah's

son. From Merari's descendants: Kish, Abdi's son, and Azariah, Jehallelel's son. From Gershon's descendants: Joah, Zimmah's son, and Eden, Joah's son. ¹³From Elizaphan's descendants: Shimri and Jeiel. From Asaph's descendants: Zechariah and Mattaniah. ¹⁴From Heman's descendants: Jehiel and Shimei. From Jeduthun's descendants: Shemaiah and Uzziel. ¹⁵These gathered the other Levites, sanctified themselves, and went in, obeying the king's order as the LORD had told him, to cleanse the LORD's temple. ¹⁶The priests went inside the LORD's temple to cleanse it, and all the unclean things they found in the LORD's temple they carried out into the court of the LORD's temple. Then the Levites took it to carry it outside to the brook Kidron. ¹⁷They started to sanctify on the first day of the first month, and on the eighth day they went into the LORD's porch and sanctified the LORD's temple for eight days, and finished on the 16th day of the first month.

¹⁸Then they went in to King Hezekiah. "We have cleansed all of the LORD's temple," they said. "and the altar for burnt offerings with all its utensils, the table with the rows of bread on it and all its utensils. ¹⁹also all the utensils King Ahaz threw out when he was king and unfaithful. We have restored them and sanctified them, and there they are in front of the LORD's altar."

Dedication of the Temple

²⁰Early in the morning Hezekiah gathered the leaders of the city and went up to the LORD's temple. ²¹They brought seven bulls, seven rams, seven lambs, and seven male goats as a sacrifice for sin for

the king's household, for the holy place, and for Judah. And he ordered the priests, Aaron's descendants, to sacrifice them on the LORD's altar.

²²So they killed the bulls, and the priests took the blood and dashed it against the altar. Then they killed the rams and dashed the blood against the altar. Then they killed the lambs and dashed the blood against the altar. ²³Then they brought the male goats for the sin offering before the king and the assembly, and they laid their hands on them. ²⁴The priests killed them and made their blood a sin offering at the altar to forgive all Israel, for the king had said the burnt offerings and sin offerings should be for all Israel.

²⁵He had the Levites stand in the LORD's temple with cymbals, lutes, and lyres as David, Gad the king's seer, and the prophet Nathan had ordered; for the LORD had ordered this by His prophets. ²⁶The Levites stood with David's instruments, and the priests with the trumpets. ²⁷Then Hezekiah ordered the sacrificing of burnt offerings on the altar. When the burnt offering started, the singing to honor the LORD also started, and the trumpets led by the instruments of David king of Israel. ²⁸The whole assembly bowed down during the singing and the blowing of the trumpets, all of it continuing till the burnt offering was finished. ²⁹When the burnt offerings were finished, the king and all who were with him kneeled and bowed down. ³⁰Then King Hezekiah and the leaders told the Levites to praise the Lord in the words of David and the seer Asaph. And they sang praises joyfully and bowed down and worshipped.

³¹"Now you have consecrated yourselves to the LORD," Hezekiah said. "Come near and bring sacrifices and thankofferings to the LORD's temple."

The congregation brought sacrifices and thankofferings, and everyone who wanted to brought burnt offerings. ³²The burnt offerings brought by the community totaled 70 bulls, 100 rams, 200 lambs. All these were a burnt offering to the LORD. ³³The consecrated animals were 600 bulls and 3,000 sheep. ³⁴But the priests were too few to be able to skin all the burnt offerings, and so the others of their tribe, the Levites, helped them till the work was done and the priests had sanctified themselves. The Levites had a better attitude toward sanctifying themselves than the priests. ³⁵There were also plenty of burnt offerings besides the fat of the shared offerings and plenty of drink offerings included with the burnt offerings. So the service in the LORD's temple was restored. ³⁶Hezekiah and all the people were delighted because of what God had prepared for the people. It had all happened quite suddenly.

The Passover

30 Hezekiah sent a message to all Israel and Judah and also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh to come to the LORD's temple in Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover of the LORD, the God of Israel.

¹The king, his leaders, and the whole assembly in Jerusalem discussed the matter and decided to celebrate the Passover in the second month. ²They couldn't celebrate it at the regular time because not

enough priests had sanctified themselves and the people hadn't gathered in Jerusalem. "The king and the whole assembly believed what they planned was right. "So they decided to send an announcement through all Israel from Beersheba to Dan to come and celebrate the Passover of the LORD, the God of Israel, in Jerusalem; for it had not been done by many people in the prescribed way.

"Runners took letters from the king and his officers through all Israel and Judah giving the king's order: "Israelites, turn back to the LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, so that He may return to the remnant of you who escaped from the kings of Assyria. "Don't be like your fathers and your relatives, who were unfaithful to the LORD, the God of their fathers, so that He made them a horror, as you saw. "Now don't be stubborn like your fathers. Give the LORD your pledge of loyalty and come to His holy place that He made holy forever, and serve the LORD your God so that He may turn His blazing fury away from you. "When you turn back to the LORD, your relatives and children will find mercy from their captors and will return to this country. The LORD your God is kind and merciful and will not turn His face away from you if you turn to Him."

"So the runners went from town to town in Ephraim and Manasseh, as far as Zebulun; but they laughed at them and made fun of them. "However, some from Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem. "God's hand also was on Judah, making them single-mindedly do

what the king and the leaders ordered at the Lord's command.

"Many people gathered at Jerusalem to celebrate the Festival of Bread Without Yeast in the second month—a very large crowd.

"Then the people took action and got rid of the altars in Jerusalem. They took all the altars of incense away and dumped them into the brook Kidron.

"They killed the Passover lamb on the 14th day of the second month. Feeling ashamed, the priests and Levites sanctified themselves and brought burnt offerings to the LORD's temple. "They stood in their place as it was assigned to them according to the law of Moses the man of God. The priests sprinkled the blood they received from the Levites. "There were many in the gathering who had not sanctified themselves. So the Levites had to kill the Passover lambs for all who weren't clean, to make them holy for the LORD. "Many people, many from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves. They ate the Passover but not in the prescribed way. Hezekiah prayed for them: "May the good LORD forgive "everyone who decides to search for God, the LORD, the God of his fathers, without being clean as the holy place requires." "And the LORD listened to Hezekiah and healed the people.

"And so the Israelites in Jerusalem celebrated the Festival of Bread Without Yeast seven days with great delight, praising the LORD from day to day. With loud music on their instruments the Levites and priests sang to the LORD. "Hezekiah encouraged all the Levites who had shown skill in

servicing the LORD. And they ate the festival meals seven days, sacrificing shared offerings and confessing the LORD, the God of their fathers.

²¹Then the whole assembly decided to add seven days, and so they happily celebrated seven more days. ²⁴This was because Hezekiah king of Judah had given the community 1,000 bulls and 7,000 sheep for sacrifices. And the leaders had given the community 1,000 bulls and 10,000 sheep. And so a large number of priests sanctified themselves.

²⁵Then the whole assembly of Judah was happy, as well as the priests and the Levites, and the whole crowd that came from Israel, and the strangers who came from the land of Israel as well as those who lived in Judah. ²⁸So there was great joy in Jerusalem. Since the time of Solomon, David's son, king of Israel, there had been nothing like this in Jerusalem.

²⁷Then the priests, Levi's descendants, got up and blessed the people; their voices were heard, and their prayers came up to His holy place in heaven.

Reforming the Worship

31 When this was over, all the Israelites who were there went out to the towns in Judah, smashed the idol pillars, cut down the sacred poles, and tore down the high places and the altars in all Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh till they had destroyed them all. Then all the Israelites returned to their towns, each to his own property.

²Hezekiah reappointed the priests and the Levites to their divisions. Each priest and Levite was put in a division according to the work he had to do: bringing burnt offerings

and shared offerings, serving, giving thanks, praising within the gates of the LORD's camp.

³He set aside a part of the king's possessions for burnt offerings, the morning and evening burnt offerings, those on the Sabbaths, the first of the month, and the festivals, as the LORD prescribed them in the Law. ⁴He told the people living in Jerusalem to give the priests and Levites what was due them so they could use their strength for the LORD's law. ⁵As soon as the king's word spread, the Israelites brought plenty of the firstfruits of grain, wine, oil, honey, and of every crop in the fields, and the tenth of everything in large quantities. ⁶The people of Israel and Judah living in the towns of Judah also brought a tenth of the cattle and sheep and a tenth of the holy things set aside for the LORD their God. They piled them up in heaps. ⁷In the third month they started piling them up, and in the seventh they finished. ⁸When Hezekiah and the leaders came and saw the heaps, they blessed the LORD and His people Israel.

⁹Hezekiah asked the priests and the Levites about the heaps. ¹⁰The high priest Azariah, of Zadok's family, said: "Since the people started to bring the offerings into the LORD's temple, we have had all we wanted to eat and much left over. The LORD has blessed His people, and there's a lot left over."

¹¹Then Hezekiah told them to prepare storerooms in the LORD's temple. When they had prepared them, ¹²they faithfully brought in the offerings and the tenth parts, and the hallowed gifts. The Levite Conaniah was the manager of these, and his brother Shimei was his assistant. ¹³And Jehiel, Azariah,

Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel, Ismachiah, Mahath, and Benaiah were caretakers under Conaniah and his brother Shimei, appointed by King Hezekiah and Azariah the manager of God's temple. ¹⁴Kore son of Imnah the Levite, the keeper at the East Gate, had to take care of the freewill offerings made to God; his responsibility was to distribute the offerings made to the LORD and the most holy gifts. ¹⁵Under him were Eden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, in the towns of the priests. They were to faithfully distribute to all the people of their tribe, young and old, according to their divisions, ¹⁶but to boys three years old and up without regard to their registration. They were to distribute to all who went into the LORD's temple to do the daily work each division was responsible for, ¹⁷and to the priests listed by their clans, and to the Levites 20 years of age and older according to what they were responsible for in their divisions. ¹⁸All in their families were registered including dependents, wives, sons, and daughters, the whole community, because they were to faithfully consecrate themselves for a holy work. ¹⁹As for the priests, Aaron's descendants, who lived in the suburbs of their cities—in every city men were appointed by name to give a share to every male among the priests and to everyone listed by family among the Levites.

²⁰This is what Hezekiah did in all Judah. He did what was good and right and true before the LORD his God. ²¹And everything he started in the service of God's temple, obeying the Law and the Command-

ments, seeking God's help, he did with all his heart; and he succeeded.

Sennacherib

32 After these evidences of loyalty Sennacherib king of Assyria came to invade Judah, besieging the fortified towns and meaning to conquer them for himself.

¹When Hezekiah saw how Sennacherib had come to fight against Jerusalem, ²he with his officers and troops made a plan to shut off the water of the springs outside the city; and they helped him do it. ³A big crowd was gathered, and they shut off all the springs and the brook that flowed through the country. They were saying, "Why should the kings of Assyria come and find plenty of water?"

⁴Then Hezekiah went to work vigorously; he rebuilt the wall where it was broken through, added to the towers, built another wall outside, strengthened the structure of David's city, and made plenty of missiles and shields. ⁵He appointed military commanders over the people, gathered them to him in the square by the gate of the city, and spoke words of encouragement. ⁶"Be strong and courageous. Don't be frightened or terrified by the king of Assyria and all the horde that is with him. We have more than he has. ⁷He has an arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and fight our battles." And so what Hezekiah king of Judah said made the people feel confident.

⁸After this, while Sennacherib king of Assyria and all his royal forces were besieging Lachish, he sent his men to Jerusalem, to Hezekiah king of Judah, and to all of Judah that was in Jerusalem to

say: ¹⁰“Sennacherib king of Assyria says this: ‘What makes you so confident while you live in Jerusalem under siege? ¹¹Isn’t Hezekiah misleading you and abandoning you to die without food or drink by saying, ‘The LORD our God will rescue us from the king of Assyria?’ ¹²Didn’t this Hezekiah get rid of His high places and His altars and tell Judah and Jerusalem. ‘Worship before one altar and sacrifice on it’? ¹³Don’t you know what I and my fathers have done to all the people of the countries? Were the gods of these people able to rescue their countries from me? ¹⁴Among all the gods of these nations whom my fathers totally destroyed was there one who could rescue his people from me that your God should be able to rescue you from me? ¹⁵Now don’t let Hezekiah deceive you and persuade you like this. Don’t believe him, because no god of any nation or kingdom could rescue his people from me or my fathers. How much less will your God rescue you from me!’”

¹⁶Sennacherib’s officers said still more against the LORD God and His servant Hezekiah. ¹⁷He also wrote a letter to defy the LORD, the God of Israel, and oppose Him by saying: “Like the gods of the people of those countries who couldn’t rescue their people from me, so Hezekiah’s God will not rescue His people from me.” ¹⁸His officers called loud in the Jewish language to the people of Jerusalem who were on the wall to ¹⁹righten them and demoralize them and so take the city. ²⁰They spoke of the God of Jerusalem as if He were like the gods of the people of the world that human hands have made.

²¹Then King Hezekiah and the

prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz prayed about this and called to heaven. ²²And the LORD sent an angel who killed all the fighting men of the army, the leaders and commanders in the camp of the king of Assyria; so he went back shamefaced to his own country. When he went into the temple of his god, some of his own sons struck him down with the sword. ²³So the LORD rescued Hezekiah and the people in Jerusalem from Sennacherib king of Assyria and from them all, and He took care of them all around.

²⁴Many were bringing offerings to the LORD in Jerusalem and precious gifts to Hezekiah king of Judah so that from then on he rose to importance in the eyes of all the nations.

Hezekiah’s Illness

¹In those days Hezekiah got sick and was about to die. He prayed to the LORD, who spoke to him and gave him a miraculous sign. ²Hezekiah didn’t return the kindness done to him but became proud, and the LORD was angry with him and with Judah and Jerusalem. ³Then realizing their pride, Hezekiah and the people in Jerusalem humbled themselves, and the LORD’s anger didn’t strike them in Hezekiah’s time.

⁴Hezekiah got very rich and was highly honored. He prepared storerooms for himself for silver, gold, precious stones, spices, shields, and every kind of precious article, ⁵also storehouses for his harvests of grain, wine, and olive oil, and barns for all his animals, both cattle and flocks. ⁶He made towns for himself with many sheep and cattle because God gave him lots of property.

³⁰It was Hezekiah who shut off the upper outlet of the water of Gihon and made the water go directly underground on the west side of David's city. Hezekiah succeeded in everything he did. ³¹Even in the matter of the envoys who were sent to him from the leaders of Babylon to ask about the miracle that had happened in the land—God did it to test him, to find out all that was in his heart.

³²The rest of Hezekiah's history, including his good works, is recorded in the vision of the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz and in the Scroll of the Kings of Judah and Israel. ³³Hezekiah went to rest with his fathers and was buried in the higher burial ground of David's descendants. When he died, all Judah and the people in Jerusalem honored him. His son Manasseh succeeded him as king.

Manasseh

33 Manasseh was 12 years old when he became king, and was king in Jerusalem for 55 years.

¹He did what was wrong before the LORD according to all the abominations of the nations the LORD drove out before Israel. ²He rebuilt the high places his father Hezekiah tore down, set up altars for the Baals, made sacred poles, and worshiped the whole army of heaven and served them. ³He built altars in the LORD's temple, of which the LORD had said: "My name will be in Jerusalem forever." ⁴He built altars for the whole army of heaven in the two courts of the LORD's temple. ⁵He burned his children in fire in the valley of Hinnom's son and practiced fortunetelling, charms, and sorcery, and appointed those who resorted to

ghosts and wizards. He did a lot of wrong before the LORD, making Him angry. ⁶He made a carved idol and had it set up in God's temple, of which God had told David and his son Solomon: "I will put My name forever in this temple and in Jerusalem, which I have selected from all the tribes of Israel. ⁷And I will not again remove Israel's feet from the land I appointed for their fathers if only they will carefully do everything I have commanded them to do, the whole law, the rules and regulations given by Moses." ⁸But Manasseh misled Judah and the people in Jerusalem and caused them to do more wrong than those nations the LORD destroyed before Israel.

⁹When the LORD talked to Manasseh and his people, they wouldn't listen. ¹⁰Then the LORD caused the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria to invade them, and they took Manasseh captive with a hook in his nose, kept him a prisoner in chains, and brought him to Babylon.

¹¹When he was in trouble, he pleaded with the LORD his God to be kind, and humbled himself very much before the God of his fathers. ¹²He prayed to Him, and the LORD turned to him, heard his pleading, and brought him back to Jerusalem to rule there. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD is God.

¹³After this he rebuilt the outer wall of David's city west of Gihon in the valley to the entrance of the Fish Gate, and he made it go around Ophel, raising it very high. He put army commanders in all the fortified cities in Judah. ¹⁴He took away the strange gods and the idol out of the LORD's temple and removed the

altars he had built on the hill of the LORD's temple and in Jerusalem and dumped them outside the city. ¹⁶He built the LORD's altar and sacrificed shared offerings and thank-offerings on it, and told Judah to serve the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁷But the people continued to sacrifice on the high places, but only to the LORD their God.

¹⁸The rest of Manasseh's history, with his prayer to his God and what the seers said to him in the name of the LORD, the God of Israel, you will find in the annals of the kings of Israel. ¹⁹His prayer also and how God turned to him, his sins and unfaithfulness and the sites where he built high places and set up the sacred poles and images before he humbled himself, you will find written in the history of the seers.

²⁰Manasseh went to rest with his fathers and was buried at his home, and his son Amon succeeded him as king.

Amon

²¹Amon was 22 years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for two years. ²²He did what was wrong before the LORD, as his father Manasseh had done. Amon sacrificed to all the images his father Manasseh made, and he served them. ²³He didn't humble himself before the LORD as his father Manasseh humbled himself, but this Amon increased his guilt.

²⁴His men conspired against him and murdered him in his home. ²⁵Then the people of the country struck down all who had conspired against King Amon, and the people of the country made his son Josiah king in his place.

Josiah

34 Josiah was eight years old when he started to rule, and was king in Jerusalem for 31 years. ²He did what was right before the LORD, living in the ways of his ancestor David without turning from them right or left.

³In the eighth year of his rule, while he was still a boy, he started seeking the God of his ancestor David, and in his 12th year he started to clean up Judah and Jerusalem, getting rid of the high places, the sacred poles, the carved and cast idols. ⁴Under his supervision they tore down the altars of the Baals. He cut down the incense altars that were above them. He smashed the sacred poles, the carved and cast idols, ground them to powder, and scattered it over the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. ⁵He burned the bones of the priests on their altars. And so he cleaned up Judah and Jerusalem. ⁶And in the towns of Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon, and as far as Naphtali he burned down their temples ⁷and tore down the altars, beat the sacred poles and idols to powder, cut down all the incense altars everywhere in the land of Israel. Then he went back to Jerusalem.

⁸In the 18th year of his rule as he was cleaning up the country and the temple, he sent Shaphan son of Azaliah, Maaseiah the mayor of the city, and Joah son of Joahaz, the recorder, to repair the temple of the LORD his God. ⁹They came to the high priest Hilkiah and gave him the money that had been brought to God's temple, which the Levites, the doorkeepers, had collected from Manasseh and Ephraim, from all

who were left in Israel, from all Judah and Benjamin, and from the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ¹⁰They gave the money to those who were responsible for the work in the LORD's temple, and these in turn handed it to the men doing the work of repairing and restoring the temple, ¹¹to the carpenters and builders to buy quarried stones and wood for the ties and beams of the buildings the kings of Judah had let go to ruin. ¹²The men worked conscientiously under the supervision of Jahath and Obadiah, Levites descended from Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam from the family of Kohath. The Levites were all able to play instruments for singing. ¹³They also were over the workmen and directed everyone on the job. Some of the Levites were secretaries; others were clerks and doorkeepers.

¹⁴When they took out the money that was brought into the LORD's temple, the priest Hilkiah found the book of the LORD's law written by Moses. ¹⁵Hilkiah told Shaphan the secretary, "I found the book of the law in the LORD's temple," and Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan.

¹⁶Shaphan took the book to the king and also reported to the king, "Your servants are doing everything assigned to them. ¹⁷They have melted the silver that was found in the LORD's temple and have given it to the men in charge and to those doing the work." ¹⁸Then Shaphan the secretary told the king, "The priest Hilkiah also gave me a book," and Shaphan read from it to the king.

¹⁹When the king heard what the Law said, he tore his clothes. ²⁰Then the king gave orders to Hilkiah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Abdon son

of Micah, Shaphan the secretary, and Asaiah the king's minister: ²¹"Go ask the LORD for me and those who are left in Israel and Judah about the contents of the book that was found. The LORD's fierce anger has been poured out on us because our fathers were not careful to do everything written in this book."

²²Then Hilkiah and the king's men went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum son of Tokhath, son of Hasrah, who was in charge of the king's wardrobe—she was living in the new sector of Jerusalem—and they told her this.

²³She answered them: "The LORD, the God of Israel, wants you to tell the man who sent you to me ²⁴that the LORD says: 'I am going to bring disaster on this place and its people, all the curses written in the book read to the king of Judah. ²⁵because they have left Me and have been sacrificing to other gods, making Me angry by everything they're doing, and My fury blazes against this place and will not be put out.' ²⁶But tell the king of Judah who sent you to ask the LORD that the LORD, the God of Israel, says regarding what you have just heard: ²⁷'Because your mind was open and you humbled yourself before God when you heard the threats against this place and its people; because you humbled yourself before Me and tore your clothes and wept before Me, I too have heard you,' says the LORD. ²⁸'I will bring you to your fathers, and you will be buried peacefully in your grave and your eyes will not see all the disaster I'm going to bring on this place and its people.' " And they reported this to the king.

²⁹Then the king called for all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.

³⁰And he and everyone in Judah and the people in Jerusalem, the priests, the Levites, and all the people, old and young, went up to the LORD's temple. And while they were listening, he read everything that was written in the book of the covenant found in the LORD's temple. ³¹The king stood in his place and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD, to obey with all his heart and soul what He ordered, regulated, and decreed, and to do what the covenant written in this book required. ³²And he made all those found in Jerusalem and Benjamin stand with him. Then the people of Jerusalem lived according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.

³³Josiah got rid of all the abominations in all the territories of the people of Israel and made all those found in Israel serve the LORD their God. As long as he lived, they didn't fail to follow the LORD, the God of their fathers.

The Passover

35 Josiah celebrated the LORD's Passover in Jerusalem. The Passover lamb was killed on the 14th day of the first month. ²He assigned the priests to their duties and encouraged them to serve in the LORD's temple. ³He told the Levites, the LORD's holy ones, who taught all Israel: "Put the holy ark in the temple that Solomon, David's son and king of Israel, built. Now you don't have to carry it as a burden on your shoulders. Serve the LORD your God and His people Israel. ⁴Get ready according to your clans as they were divided in the writings of David king of Israel and his son Solomon. ⁵And stand in the holy court as those representing

the divisions of the families of your lay fellow Israelites. Let the Levites be considered a part of each family. ⁶Kill the Passover lamb, sanctify yourselves, and get it ready for your fellow Israelites by doing as the LORD directed through Moses."

⁷Josiah gave the people 33,000 lambs and kids to be sacrificed for the Passover by all who were present, and also 3,000 head of large cattle taken from the king's property. ⁸His officials also gave willingly to the people, the priests, and the Levites. Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, the men in charge of God's temple, gave the priests for the Passover 2,600 small cattle and 300 head of large cattle. ⁹Also Conaniah and his brothers Shemaiah and Nethanel, and Hashabiah, Jeiel, and Jozabad, the leaders of the Levites, gave for the Levites 5,000 small cattle and 500 head of large cattle.

¹⁰So the service was prepared, the priests took their places, and the Levites according to their divisions, as the king had ordered. ¹¹They killed the Passover lambs, and the priests sprinkled the blood with their hands while the Levites skinned them. ¹²They took away the parts for the burnt offerings to give them to the lay people according to the divisions of their families so they could present them to the LORD as it was prescribed in the book of Moses. They did the same with the cattle. ¹³They roasted the Passover lambs in fire according to the directions and boiled the holy offerings in pots, kettles, and pans and carried them quickly to all the people. ¹⁴Later they prepared for themselves and for the priests because the priests, Aaron's descendants, were busy till night

bringing the burnt offerings and the fat pieces. So the Levites prepared for themselves and for the priests, Aaron's descendants. ¹⁵The singers, Asaph's descendants, were in their places as ordered by David, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun the king's seer. The gatemen remained at every gate. They didn't need to leave their work, because the Levites prepared for them.

¹⁶So the whole service of the LORD was prepared that day, the celebration of the Passover and the burnt offerings on the LORD's altar as ordered by King Josiah. ¹⁷The Israelites who were present celebrated the Passover at that time and the Festival of Bread without Yeast for seven days. ¹⁸Never had such a Passover been celebrated in Israel from the time of the prophet Samuel. No other king of Israel celebrated such a Passover as Josiah celebrated with the priests, the Levites, all Judah, the people of Israel who were present, and the people of Jerusalem. ¹⁹This Passover was celebrated in the 18th year of Josiah's rule.

Josiah Killed by Neco

²⁰After all this, when Josiah had restored the temple, Neco king of Egypt came up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out against him. ²¹But he sent messengers to him. "Leave me alone, king of Judah," he said, "I'm not attacking you now but have come to fight a dynasty that is at war with me. God told me to hurry. Don't interfere with God, who is with me, or He will destroy you."

²²But Josiah was determined to

oppose him and disguised himself to fight against him. He wouldn't listen to Neco speaking for God and went to fight in the valley of Megiddo.

²³The archers shot King Josiah. "Take me away," the king told his men. "I'm badly wounded."

²⁴His men took him out of the chariot and had him ride in another chariot and brought him to Jerusalem. He died and was buried in the tombs of his fathers, and all Judah and Jerusalem mourned over Josiah. ²⁵Jeremiah sang a funeral song about Josiah. And all the singing men and women mention Josiah in their lamentations to this day, making it a standing custom in Israel. You will find them written in the Lamentations.⁸

²⁶The rest of Josiah's acts, including the good things he did that are in keeping with what is written in the LORD's law, ²⁷his acts, first and last, you will find them written in the Scroll of the Kings of Israel and Judah.

Jehoahaz

36 Then the people of the country took Jehoahaz, Josiah's son, and made him king in Jerusalem to succeed his father. ²Jehoahaz was 23 years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for three months. ³The king of Egypt put him out of office in Jerusalem and fined the country a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold. ⁴The king of Egypt made his brother Eliakim king of Judah and Jerusalem, changing his name to Jehoiaquim. Neco took Jehoahaz and brought him to Egypt.

⁸These are not the Lamentations that follow Jeremiah's book.

Jehoiakim

⁷Jehoiakim was 25 years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for 11 years. ⁸Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against him and bound him with chains to take him to Babylon. ⁹Nebuchadnezzar also brought some of the utensils of the LORD's temple to Babylon and put them in his palace in Babylon.

¹⁰The rest of Jehoiakim's history, the abominable things he did and all that was found against him, you will find written in the Scroll of the Kings of Israel and Judah, and his son Jehoiachin succeeded him as king.

Jehoiachin

¹Jehoiachin was eight years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem three months and 10 days. He did wrong before the LORD.

²When spring came around, King Nebuchadnezzar sent men who brought him to Babylon, along with the most precious utensils of the LORD's temple, and made his uncle Zedekiah king of Judah and Jerusalem.

Zedekiah

¹Zedekiah was 21 years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for 11 years. ²He did wrong before the LORD his God and didn't humble himself before the prophet Jeremiah, who spoke for the LORD. ³He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear a solemn oath of allegiance. He got stubborn and was determined not to turn back to the LORD, the God of Israel. ⁴All the leaders, the priests, and also the

people increased their unfaithfulness and indulged in all the abominable practices of the heathen. They polluted the LORD's temple that He had sanctified in Jerusalem. ⁵And the LORD, the God of their fathers, repeatedly sent messages by His messengers because He wanted to spare His people and His house. ⁶But they mocked God's messengers, despised what He said, and made fun of His prophets till the LORD's fury rose against His people, till there was no way to help them.

⁷So He brought against them the king of the Chaldeans, who with the sword killed their young men in their holy temple and didn't spare young men or girls, the old or the infirm. God put them all in his hands. ⁸And all the utensils of God's temple, large and small, and the treasures of the LORD's temple, and the treasures of the king and of his officials—he brought them all to Babylon. ⁹They burned God's temple, tore down the wall in Jerusalem, burned down all its palaces, and destroyed all their precious articles. ¹⁰Those who escaped the sword he took as prisoners to Babylon to be his slaves and the slaves of his sons till Persia began to rule. ¹¹This is how the LORD's threat spoken by Jeremiah was carried out and the country made good the neglected sabbaths. While it lay in ruins, the land had a sabbath rest till the 70 years were over.

Going Home

¹In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, to carry out the LORD's promise spoken by Jeremiah, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, and he made an

announcement in his whole kingdom and also put it in writing: "Cyrus king of Persia says: 'The LORD, the God of heaven, gave me all the kingdoms of the world, and He

appointed me to build Him a temple in Jerusalem in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people—the LORD his God be with him—he should go up.' "

EZRA

1 In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia the LORD's promise stated by Jeremiah was to come true, and so the LORD moved Cyrus king of Persia to send this announcement, in writing, through his whole kingdom:

The Letter of Cyrus

¹Cyrus king of Persia says: "The LORD, the God of the heavens, gave me all the kingdoms in the world, and He ordered me to build Him a temple in Jerusalem in Judah. ²Any of His people who are among you—his God be with him—should go up to Jerusalem in Judah and build a temple for the LORD, the God of Israel. He is the God who is in Jerusalem. ³And if anyone is left behind, wherever he is staying, his neighbors should support him with silver, gold, goods, and animals, and with freewill gifts for God's temple in Jerusalem."

⁴Then the leaders of the clans of Judah and Benjamin, the priests and Levites, all whom God had moved, got ready to go up and build the LORD's temple in Jerusalem. ⁵And all their neighbors supported them with silver articles, gold, goods, animals, and precious things besides everything that was given voluntarily. ⁶King Cyrus brought out the utensils of the LORD's temple that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from Jerusalem and put in the temple of his god. ⁷Cyrus king of Persia put Mithredath the treasurer in charge of bringing them out, and he made a list of them for Sheshbazzar the leader of Judah. ⁸And this is how

much there was: 30 golden and 1,000 silver bowls, 29 knives, ⁹30 golden and 410 silver bowls of another kind, and 1,000 other articles. ¹⁰All the articles of gold and silver totaled 5,400. Sheshbazzar took all these along when the exiles went from Babylon up to Jerusalem.

The People Who Came Back

2 These are the people of the province who left the place where the exiles were taken as captives when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took them away to Babylon. Now they came back to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his own town. ²They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah.

The number of the men of the people of Israel:

³ Parosh's family	2,172
⁴ Shephatiah's family	372
⁵ Arah's family	775
⁶ Pahath—Moab's family, that is, Jeshua and Joab's	2,812
⁷ Elam's family	1,254
⁸ Zattu's family	945
⁹ Zaccai's family	760
¹⁰ Bani's family	642
¹¹ Bebai's family	623
¹² Azgad's family	1,222
¹³ Adonikam's family	666
¹⁴ Bigvai's family	2,056
¹⁵ Adin's family	454
¹⁶ Ater's family, that is, Hezekiah's	98
¹⁷ Bezai's family	323
¹⁸ Jorah's family	112
¹⁹ Hashum's family	223

²⁰ The people of Gibbar	95
²¹ The people of Bethlehem	123
²² The men of Netophah	56
²³ The men of Anatroth	128
²⁴ The people of Azmaveth	42
²⁵ The people of Kiriath-jearim, Chephirah, and Beeroth	743
²⁶ The people of Ramah and Geba	621
²⁷ The men of Michmas	122
²⁸ The men of Bethel and Ai	223
²⁹ The people of Nebo	52
³⁰ Magbish's family	156
³¹ The other Elam's family	1,254
³² Harim's family	320
³³ The people of Lod, Hadid, and Ono	725
³⁴ The people of Jericho	345
³⁵ Senaah's family	3,630

Religious Workers

³⁶The priests: Jedaiah's family, Jeshua's line, 973; ³⁷Immer's family, 1,052; ³⁸Pashur's family, 1,247; ³⁹Harim's family, 1,017.

⁴⁰The Levites: The families of Jeshua and Kadmiel, Hodaviah's descendants, 74.

⁴¹The singers: Asaph's family, 128.

⁴²The gatekeepers: The families of Shallum, Ater, Talmon, Akkub, Hatita, and Shobai, 139.

⁴³The temple servants: The families of Ziha, Hasupha, Tabbaoth, ⁴⁴Keros, Siaha, Padon, ⁴⁵Lebanah, Hagabah, Akkub, ⁴⁶Hagab, Shamlai, Hanan, ⁴⁷Giddel, Gahar, Reaiah, ⁴⁸Rezin, Nekoda, Gazzam, ⁴⁹Uzza, Paseah, Besai, ⁵⁰Asnah, the Meunites, the Nephisites, ⁵¹Bakbuk, Hakupha, Harhur, ⁵²Bazluth, Mehida, Harsha, ⁵³Barkos, Sisera, Temah, ⁵⁴Neziah, and Hatipha.

⁵⁵The descendants of Solomon's slaves: The families of Sotai, Has-sophereth, ⁵⁶Jaalah, Darkon, Gid-

del, ⁵⁷Shephatiah, Hattil, Pochereth-hazzelbaim, and Ami.

⁵⁸All the temple servants and the descendants of Solomon's slaves, 392.

Doubtful Ancestry

⁵⁹These came up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addan, and Immer, but couldn't tell from which clan they were or from whom they were descended—whether they were Israelites: ⁶⁰The families of Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda.

⁶¹Of the priests: The families of Habaiah, Hakkoz, and Barzillai—a man who had married one of the daughters of Barzillai from Gilead and took their name. ⁶²These tried to find their names on the lists, but they couldn't be found; so they were barred as unfit to be priests. ⁶³The governor told them not to eat of the most holy food till a priest would come to ask God by means of the Urim and Thummim.

Totals

⁶⁴When the whole assembly was counted, there were 42,360, ⁶⁵plus 7,337 male and female servants and 200 men and women who sang. ⁶⁶They had 735 horses, 245 mules, ⁶⁷435 camels, and 6,720 donkeys.

Gifts for the Temple

⁶⁸When some of the leaders of the clans came to the LORD's temple in Jerusalem, they gave willingly for God's temple, to rebuild it in its place. ⁶⁹As they were able, they put into the storehouse for the work 61,000 drachmas of gold, 5,000 minas of silver, and 100 priests' garments.

⁷⁰And so the priests, the Levites, and some of the people settled in

Jerusalem,* and the singers, the gatekeepers, and the temple servants lived in their towns, and all the other Israelites in their towns.

Worship Begins Again in Jerusalem

3 When the seventh month came, the Israelites being in their towns, the people got together as one man in Jerusalem. ²Then Jeshua, Jozadak's son, and his relatives the priests, and Zerubbabel, Shealtiel's son, and his relatives built an altar for the God of Israel, to bring burnt offerings on it as they are prescribed in the Law of Moses, the man of God. ³So they rebuilt the altar on its base—though they were afraid of the people in the neighboring countries—and they sacrificed burnt offerings in the morning and in the evening.

⁴They celebrated the festival of booths as it is written, and each day they sacrificed the right number of burnt offerings as prescribed for each day, ⁵and after that the regular burnt offerings, those on the first of the months, those at all the LORD's holy festivals, and all offerings voluntarily brought to the LORD. ⁶They started to bring such burnt offerings to the LORD on the first day of the seventh month.

The Work on the Temple Begins

But the foundation of the LORD's temple had not yet been laid. ⁷So they gave money to the stonemasons and the carpenters, and food, drink, and olive oil to the men of Sidon and Tyre to bring cedar wood by sea to Joppa, just as Cyrus king of Persia had authorized them to do.

⁸In the second month of the second

year following their coming to the site of God's temple in Jerusalem Zerubbabel, Shealtiel's son, and Jeshua, Jozadak's son, and the rest of their fellow Jews, the priests, the Levites, and all others who had come from the exile to Jerusalem made a beginning by appointing the Levites, 20 years old and older, to direct the work on the LORD's temple. ⁹Then Jeshua with his sons and relatives, Kadmiel with his sons, descendants of Judah, together with Henadad's family and their sons and relatives, the Levites, got ready as one man to direct those working on God's temple.

¹⁰When the builders had laid the foundation of the LORD's temple, the priests in their garments took their places with trumpets, and also the Levites who were Asaph's descendants, with cymbals, to praise the LORD, as David, Israel's king, had directed. ¹¹They sang, praising and thanking the LORD, saying, "He is good because His love to Israel is everlasting." And all the people shouted aloud, praising the LORD, because the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid.

¹²But many of the priests, Levites, and leaders of clans who were old enough to have personally seen the first temple broke into loud crying when they saw the foundation of this temple laid. But many others shouted out for joy, ¹³so that you couldn't distinguish between the happy shouting and the weeping of the people—the people were shouting very loudly, and the noise was heard far away.

*1 Esdras 5:46. Heb omits in Jerusalem

The Samaritans Oppose

4 When the enemies of Judah and Benjamin heard that the people who came back from the exile were building a temple for the LORD the God of Israel, ²they came to Zerubbabel and the leaders of the clans. "We'll help you build," they told them; "just like you, we seek your God, and we have been sacrificing to Him since the time of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here."

³But Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the rest of the leaders of Israel's clans told them, "We can't let you help us build a temple for our God, because we alone must build it for the LORD, the God of Israel, as King Cyrus king of Persia ordered us to do."

⁴Then the people of the country discouraged the people of Judah and made them afraid to go on building, ⁵and they bribed the king's agents to keep the people from carrying out their plans all the time Cyrus was king of Persia till Darius was king of Persia.

Opposition Explained

^a[When Xerxes started to rule the kingdom, they wrote a letter accusing the people living in Judah and Jerusalem. ⁷And also in the time of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their group wrote to Artaxerxes the king, and the letter was written with Aramaic script in the Aramaic language.^b

⁸Rehum the governor and Shimshai the secretary wrote a letter against Jerusalem to King Artaxerxes as follows.

⁹At that time Rehum the governor

and Shimshai the scribe were with others of their group—the people of Denya, Partakka, Tarpel, Persia, Erech, Susa, that is, those of Elam, ¹⁰and the rest of the people whom the great and famous Assurbanipal deported and settled in the cities of Samaria and the rest of the countries west of the Euphrates River. ¹¹This now is a copy of the letter they sent to him:

To King Artaxerxes, from your servants, the men west of the Euphrates:

¹²The king now should know that the Jews who came from you to us went to Jerusalem and are building that rebellious and wicked city. They are working to rebuild the walls, and the foundations are already in place.

¹³Now the king should know, if this city is rebuilt and its walls are finished, the levy including taxes on goods and for roads will not be paid, and finally it will bring harm to the kingdom. ¹⁴Now since the king pays us as his people, it isn't right for us to see anything shameful happen to the king. So we send this to inform the king ¹⁵that the annals of your fathers may be searched. In those records you will find this city is rebellious and damages kings and provinces; there was rebellion here long ago. That's why this city was destroyed. ¹⁶We are telling the king, if this city is built and its walls are finished, the result will be that soon you will have nothing west of the Euphrates.

¹⁷Then the king sent this answer:

To Rehum the governor, Shimshai the secretary, and the rest of their group living in Samaria, and to others west of the Euphrates, greetings!

^b4:8-6:18 in Aramaic

¹⁸The letter you sent us has been clearly read now before me. ¹⁹I gave an order, and a search was made, and it was found that this city from far back has been opposing kings, and those in it have rebelled and resisted authority. ²⁰There have been powerful kings in Jerusalem who have ruled over everything west of the Euphrates, and taxes were paid to them, including taxes on goods and for roads. ²¹Now order these men to stop. Keep this city from being rebuilt till I give the order. ²²Be careful not to neglect this. Why should there be greater loss to the kingdom?

²³After a copy of King Artaxerxes' letter was read before Rehum the governor, Shimshai the secretary, and their group, they hurried to Jerusalem to the Jews and used force to stop them.]

²⁴Then the work on God's temple in Jerusalem was stopped, and no more was done till the second year of the rule of Darius king of Persia.

"What Right Have You to Build the Temple?"

5 Then the prophets Haggai and Zechariah grandson of Iddo spoke God's Word to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them. ²So Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak got ready and started to build God's temple in Jerusalem. And God's prophets were with them and supported them.

³At that time Tattenai, the governor west of the Euphrates, and Shethar-bozenai and their group came to them and asked them, "Who ordered you to build this temple and

finish its walls?" "They also asked them for the names of the men who were doing the building.

⁴But the eye of their God was on the elders of the Jews, and they couldn't be stopped until the matter went before Darius and he sent back an answer by a return letter.

⁵Here is a copy of the letter Tattenai, the governor west of the Euphrates, and Shethar-bozenai and his group, the Persians west of that river, sent to King Darius. ⁷The letter they sent him had this written in it:

To King Darius, peace in every way.

⁸The king should know we went to the province of Judah, to the temple of the great God that is being built of large stones and with beams laid in the walls. They are doing a good job and succeeding in what they're doing. ⁹We asked those elders as follows: "Who gave you permission to build this temple and finish this wall?" ¹⁰We also asked them for their names so that we might write down the names of their leaders to inform you.

¹¹This is what they answered: "We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth and are building the temple that once was built many years ago when a great king of Israel built and finished it. ¹²Our fathers made the God of heaven angry. That is why He put them into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, the Chaldean, king of Babylon, who destroyed this temple and took its people away to Babylon. ¹³But in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, King Cyrus ordered this temple of God to be rebuilt.

"And also the gold and silver utensils that Nebuchadnezzar took out of God's temple in Jerusalem and brought into the temple in Babylon, King Cyrus has taken out of the temple in Babylon and given to a man called Sheshbazzar, whom he made governor. ¹⁵"Take these utensils," he told him, "go, put them in the temple in Jerusalem and build God's temple where it once was." ¹⁶Then this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundations of God's temple in Jerusalem, and from that time till now men have been building it, but it isn't finished."

"So now if the king thinks it right, someone should search in the king's archives there in Babylon to see whether King Cyrus did order this temple of God to be rebuilt in Jerusalem. Then the king should tell us in a letter what he wants to do about this .

Darius Searches the Archives

6 King Darius gave the order and a search was made in the library where the archives were stored in Babylon. ²Then in the palace of Ecbatana, in the province of Media, a scroll was found in which there was the following record:

³In the first year of King Cyrus, Cyrus gave an order regarding God's temple in Jerusalem. The temple should be rebuilt as a place to offer sacrifices with its foundations laid: 60 cubits high and 60 cubits wide, "with three courses of big stones and a course of wood, and the king's palace will pay for it. ⁴Also the gold and silver utensils of God's temple

that Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon should be given back and taken to the temple in Jerusalem; each utensil should be restored in God's temple.

Darius Answers

⁶"Now Tattenai, the governor west of the Euphrates, Shetharbozenai, and those of your group, the Persians west of the river, stay away from there. ⁷Let the work on this temple of God alone. The governors of the Jews and the elders of Judah should build this temple of God on its foundation. ⁸And I issue this order about how you should assist the elders of the Jews to build this temple of God: From the king's money, from the taxes west of the Euphrates, a payment should promptly be made to these men so that there is no delay. ⁹Also anything the priests in Jerusalem say they need for burnt offerings to the God of heaven—young bulls, rams, lambs, wheat, salt, wine, and olive oil—should be given for each day so that nothing is neglected. ¹⁰Then they can offer sacrifices that please the God of heaven and pray for the life of the king and his sons. ¹¹I am also ordering that anyone who violates this should be impaled on a beam torn from his own house and for his action his home should be turned into a pile of ruins. ¹²May God who made His name live there overthrow every king and any people who try to change this order and destroy this temple of God in Jerusalem. I, Darius, require it to be done exactly as ordered.

¹³Then Tattenai, the governor

west of the river, Shethar-bozenai, and his group carried out King Darius' order to the letter. ¹⁴And the elders of the Jews continued to build successfully under the preaching of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah the grandson of Iddo. They finished building as the God of Israel had ordered and as Cyrus and Darius^c kings of Persia had ordered. ¹⁵So this temple was finished on the 23rd day of the month of Adar in the sixth year of the rule of King Darius.

¹⁶Then the people of Israel, the priests, the Levites, and the others who had come back from the exile, happily celebrated the dedication of the temple of God. ¹⁷To dedicate this temple of God, they sacrificed 100 bulls, 200 rams, 400 lambs, and 12 he-goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel, to take away the sin of all Israel.

¹⁸The priests were arranged in their divisions and the Levites in their groups to work for God in Jerusalem as it was prescribed in the Scroll of Moses.

¹⁹Those who had come back from exile celebrated the Passover on the 14th of the first month. ²⁰Since the priests and Levites had all cleansed themselves and were ritually clean, they killed the Passover lamb for all the people who had returned, for their relatives the priests, and for themselves. ²¹It was eaten by the Israelites who had come back from exile and by all who had separated from the uncleanness of the non-Jews in the country to seek the LORD, the God of Israel. ²²So for seven days they happily celebrated the Festival of Bread without Yeast, because the LORD had made them happy by changing the mind of the

king of Assyria so that he helped them in the working of the temple of God, the God of Israel.

Ezra Brings Exiles to Jerusalem

7 Later, when Artaxerxes was ruling as king of Persia, Ezra came up from Babylon; he was a descendant of Seraiah, son of Azariah, son of Hilkiah, ²son of Shalum, son of Zadok, grandson of Ahitub, ³son of Amariah, son of Azariah, a descendant of Meraioth, ⁴son of Zerariah, son of Uzzi, son of Bukki, ⁵son of Abishua, son of Phinehas, son of Eleazer, son of Aaron the first priest. ⁶He was a skillful scholar of the Law of Moses, which the LORD God, the God of Israel, had given. The king gave him everything he asked since the hand of the LORD His God was on him. ⁷And some Israelites, including priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers, and temple servants, came up to Jerusalem in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes. ⁸Ezra arrived in Jerusalem in the fifth month of the king's seventh year. ⁹On the first day of the first month he left Babylon, and on the first day of the fifth month he arrived in Jerusalem, since his God was good to him. ¹⁰Ezra was determined to study the law of the LORD, live by it, and teach its rules and regulations in Israel.

¹¹This is a copy of the letter King Artaxerxes gave Ezra the priest, a scholar of what the LORD had ordered and prescribed for Israel:

¹²Artaxerxes, king of kings, to Ezra the priest, a scholar of the law of the God of heaven, complete peace!

¹³I'm ordering that anyone of

^cAramic adds and Artaxerxes

the people of Israel, or its priests and Levites, who want to go with you to Jerusalem may go. ¹⁴The king and his seven advisers send you to investigate Judah and Jerusalem according to the law of your God that you hold in your hands. ¹⁵You are to take the silver and gold the king and his advisers volunteered to give to the God of Israel who lives in Jerusalem. ¹⁶Also take any silver and gold you can find anywhere in the province of Babylon along with the gifts volunteered by the people and the priests, given for the temple of their God in Jerusalem. ¹⁷With this money you must then be sure to buy only bulls, rams, lambs, together with food and drink offerings to go with them; then offer them on the altar of the temple of your God in Jerusalem. ¹⁸With the rest of the silver and gold do whatever you and your relatives think is good, as your God wants you to do. ¹⁹The utensils given to you to serve in the temple of your God you must present before the God of Jerusalem. ²⁰And anything else that is needed in the temple of your God which you must provide, pay for it from the king's treasury.

²¹I, King Artaxerxes, order all the treasurers west of the Euphrates to do promptly anything Ezra the priest, a scholar of the law of the God of heaven, asks you, ²²up to 100 talents of silver, 100 measures of wheat, 100 baths of wine, 100 baths of olive oil, and as much salt as he needs. ²³Anything the God of heaven orders must be done diligently for the temple of the God of heaven. Why should God be angry with the realm of

the king and his sons? ²⁴And we inform you that you are forbidden to make any priest, Levite, singer, gatekeeper, servant, or worker in the temple of this God pay any levy or tax for goods or for roads.

²⁵And you, Ezra, according to the wisdom of your God that you hold in your hands, appoint lawyers and judges to judge all the people west of the Euphrates, that is, all who know the laws of your God; and anyone who doesn't know them you are to teach.

²⁶Anyone who will not do what your God orders and what the king orders should be promptly sentenced either to die, be exiled, have his goods taken away, or be imprisoned.

Ezra Praises the LORD

¹Praise the LORD, the God of our fathers, who put this into the king's mind, to make the LORD's temple in Jerusalem beautiful, ²who made the king and his advisers and all the king's powerful officials kind to me.

So I took courage, because the hand of the LORD my God was on me; and I gathered leaders in Israel to go up with me.

The Leaders with Ezra

8 These are the leaders of the clans and the listing according to family of those going up with me from Babylon when Artaxerxes was ruling as king: ¹of the family of Phinehas, Gershom; of the family of Ithamar, Daniel; of the family of David, Hattush ²son of Shecaniah; of the family of Parosh, Zechariah, with 150 men of his clan; ³of the family of Pahath-moab, Eliehoenai son of Zerariah, with 200 men; ⁴of

the family of Zattu,^d Shecaniah son of Jahaziel, with 300 men; ⁶of the family of Adin, Ebed son of Jonathan, with 50 men; ⁷of the family of Elam, Jeshaiah son of Athaliah, with 70 men; ⁸of the family of Shephatiah, Zebediah son of Michael, with 80 men; ⁹of the family of Joab, Obadiah son of Jehiel, with 210 men; ¹⁰of the family of Bani,^e Shelomith son of Josiphiah, with 160 men; ¹¹of the family of Bebai, Zechariah son of Bebai, with 38 men; ¹²of the family of Azgad, Johanan son of Hakkatan, with 110 men; ¹³of the family of Adonikam, those who came later: Eliphelet, Jeuel, and Shemaiah, with 60 men; ¹⁴of the family of Bigvai, Uthai and Zabbud, with 70 men.

Preparing to Leave

¹⁵I gathered them at the river flowing to Ahava, and there we camped three days. I inspected the lay people and the priests but didn't find any Levites there. ¹⁶Then I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, who were leading men, and for Joiarib and Elnathan, who were men of understanding. ¹⁷And I sent them to Iddo, the head man at Casiphia, telling them to tell Iddo and his relatives, the temple workers in Casiphia, to bring us serving men to work in the temple of our God. ¹⁸And as God was good to us, they brought us a man of discretion, a descendant of Mahli son of Levi, son of Israel, and Sherebiah with his 18 sons and relatives; ¹⁹also Hashabiah, and with him Jeshaiah, a descendant of Merari, and 20 of

his relatives and their sons, ²⁰and also 220 temple workers, descended from the temple servants whom David and his officials appointed to work for the Levites. These were all listed by name.

²¹Then I announced a fast there at the river Ahava in order to humble ourselves before our God to ask from Him a safe journey for us, our little ones, and all our goods. ²²I was ashamed to ask the king for troops and horsemen to help us against any enemy on the road, because we had told the king, "The hand of our God is on all who seek Him, taking care of them, but His power and His anger oppose all who forsake Him." ²³So we fasted and asked our God for safety, and He heard us.

²⁴Then I selected 12 leaders of the priests—Sherebiah, Hashabiah, and 10 of their relatives— ²⁵and I weighed out to them the silver, the gold, and the utensils used for offerings in the temple of our God that had been given by the king, his advisers, his officials, and all the Israelites who were there. ²⁶I weighed into their hands 650 talents of silver, 100 silver utensils weighing 2 talents, 100 talents of gold, ²⁷20 golden bowls weighing 1,000 drachmas, and two utensils of fine bright bronze, precious as gold. ²⁸I told them, "You are the LORD's holy ones, and the utensils are holy; the silver and gold are voluntary gifts to the LORD, the God of your fathers. ²⁹Watch and guard them till you weigh them in the presence of the leaders of the priests and Levites and the leaders of the clans of Israel in Jerusalem, in the storerooms of the LORD's

^dHeb omits Zattu, but compare 1 Esdras 8:32

^eHeb omits Bani, but compare 1 Esdras 8:36

temple." ³⁰So the priests and the Levites received the silver and the gold and the utensils weighed out to them to bring them to the temple of our God in Jerusalem.

Coming to Jerusalem

³¹Then we left the river Ahava on the 12th day of the first month to go to Jerusalem, and God was with us and protected us from our enemies and from ambush on the way. ³²When we came to Jerusalem, we rested three days. ³³On the fourth day we weighed out the silver, the gold, and the utensils in the temple of our God, putting them under the supervision of Meremoth, son of the priest Uriah. With him was Eleazar, Phinehas' son. With them were the Levites Jozabad, Jeshua's son, and Noadiah, Binnui's son. ³⁴It was all counted and weighed, and all the weight was recorded at that time.

³⁵The exiles who had come back from captivity offered burnt offerings to the God of Israel, 12 bulls for all Israel, 96 rams, 77 lambs and 12 male goats to take away sin; all were whole burnt offerings for the LORD.

³⁶And they delivered the king's order to the king's satraps and governors west of the Euphrates, who then helped the people and the temple of God.

Ezra: We Have Sinned

9 When these things were done, the leaders came to me and said, "The people of Israel, including priests and Levites, have failed to separate from the people of foreign countries, from the idolatrous ways of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians, and Amorites. ²They and their

sons have married their daughters and mixed our holy race with the people of those countries, and the leaders and officials have led them in such disloyalty."

³When I heard this, I tore my tunic and my robe, pulled out hair from my head and my beard, and sat down dazed. ⁴Then there gathered to me all who trembled at the words of the God of Israel against this great disloyalty of the returned exiles, and I sat dazed till the evening sacrifice. ⁵At the evening sacrifice I got up from humbling myself, and with my tunic and robe torn I knelt, spreading out my hands to the LORD my God.

"My God," I said, "I feel ashamed and blush to look up to You, my God; our sins are so many they overwhelm us, and our guilt is so great it reaches heaven. ⁷From the days of our fathers till now we have been very guilty. For our sins we, our kings, and our priests have been handed over to foreign rulers to suffer by sword, captivity, plunder, and disgrace, as it still is today. ⁸And now, for just a moment, the LORD our God has been kind enough to leave us a remnant of survivors and to give us a stake in His holy place, that He might give light to our eyes and a little life in our slavery. ⁹We are slaves, but our God hasn't forsaken us in our slavery but has made the kings of Persia kind to us to let us live to rebuild the temple of our God and restore its ruins, and to give us a wall protecting Judah and Jerusalem.

¹⁰"And now, our God, what can we say after that? We have forsaken Your commandments "that You ordered by the prophets who served You, saying, "The country you are

going to take is polluted due to its polluted people, whose idolatrous practices have filled it from one end to another with uncleanness. ¹²And now, don't let your daughters marry their sons or your sons marry their daughters, and don't seek their peace and prosperity; then you will be strong and eat the good things the land produces, and this land will be an inheritance for you and your descendants forever.' ¹³After all that has happened to us for the wicked things we did and for our great guilt—seeing that You, our God, have punished us less than we deserve and have now given us some survivors— ¹⁴if we should again break Your commandments and intermarry with these idolatrous people, won't You be even more angry with us till You have consumed us and there are no survivors left? ¹⁵LORD, God of Israel, because You are just we are a remnant of survivors today. See, here we are before You in our guilt, realizing that none of us can stand before You because of this."

The People Confess

10 While Ezra prayed and confessed, weeping and bowing down before God's temple, a great assembly of men, women, and children of Israel gathered to him, and the people wept bitterly. ²Then Shecaniah, son of Jehiel and descendant of Elam, spoke up and said to Ezra: "We have been disloyal to our God and have taken foreign wives into our homes from the people of this country; but now there is some hope for Israel in this matter. ³So let us now make a covenant with our God to put away all such women and the children born of them, as my lord advises and

as those advise who fear when our God gives an order. We should do just as the Law tells us. 'So get up; you should do something about this, and we are with you. Be strong and act.'"

⁵Then Ezra got up and had the leaders, priests, Levites, and all the rest of Israel swear to do what they had said. So they took an oath. ⁶Then Ezra left God's temple and went into the room of Jehohanan, Eliashib's grandson, and when he got there, he didn't eat any food or drink any water, because he mourned over the disloyalty of the exiles who had come back.

⁷Then he sent an announcement through Judah and Jerusalem to all the returned exiles to meet in Jerusalem, ⁸and anyone who wouldn't come in three days as the leaders and the elders advised would lose all his property and be excluded from the community of the returned exiles. ⁹Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin gathered in three days in Jerusalem. This was on the 20th day of the 9th month, and all the people sat in the open space before God's temple, trembling on account of this matter and shivering in the heavy rains.

¹⁰Ezra the priest got up and said, "You have been disloyal and brought foreign wives into your homes and so added to Israel's guilt. ¹¹And now, confess to the LORD, the God of your fathers, and do what He wants; separate from the people of this country and from the foreign wives."

¹²Then the whole assembly promised loudly, "So be it. We must do as you say. ¹³But there are so many people, and it is the rainy season; we can't do it outside. Besides, this can't be done in a day

or two, because we have done much wrong in this thing. "Let our leaders represent the whole community, and let all who in our towns have taken home foreign wives come, each at a time appointed for him, and with them let the elders and judges of each town come, till the blazing anger of our God is turned away from us in this matter."

¹⁰Only Jonathan, Asahel's son, and Jahzeiah, Tikvah's son, opposed this. And Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite supported them.

¹⁶The returned exiles did this; and the priest Ezra chose^f clan leaders from each household, all by name. They sat down on the first day of the 10th month to investigate the matter, ¹⁷and by the first day of the first month they finished dealing with all the men who had married foreign wives.

The List of Men with Foreign Wives

¹⁸Among the descendants of the priests the following were found to have taken home foreign wives: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah of the sons of Jeshua, Jozadak's son, and his brothers. ¹⁹They promised^g to put away their wives, and being guilty, gave a ram of the flock as an offering for their guilt. ²⁰Of the sons of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah. ²¹Of the descendants of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uziah. ²²Of the descendants of Pashur: Elioenai, Maaseiah,

Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasah.

²³The Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (that is, Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer. ²⁴Of the singers: Eliashib. Of the gatekeepers: Shallum, Telem, and Uri.

²⁵The lay Israelites: Remiah, Izziah, Malchiah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malchiah, and Benaiah of Parosh's sons. ²⁶Of Elam's sons: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Elijah. ²⁷Of Zattu's sons: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza. ²⁸Of Bebai's sons: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai. ²⁹Of Bani's sons: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Jeremoth. ³⁰Of Pahath-moab's sons: Adna, Chelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh. ³¹Of Harim's sons: Eliezer, Isshiah, Malchiah, Shemaiah, Shimeon. ³²Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah. ³³Of Hashum's sons: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei. ³⁴Of Bani's sons: Maadai, Amram, Uel. ³⁵Benaiah, Bedeiah, Cheluhai. ³⁶Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib. ³⁷Mattaniah, Mattenai, Jaasau. ³⁸Of Binnui's sons:^h Shimei. ³⁹Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah. ⁴⁰Machnadebai, Shashai, Sharai. ⁴¹Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah. ⁴²Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph. ⁴³Of Nebo's sons: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah.

"All these had married foreign women, and some of them had wives who had children.

^fGk; Heb men were separated ^gHeb gave their hands

^hSee 1 Esdras 9:34 Heb Bani, Binnui

THE BOOK OF
NEHEMIAH

1 This is the writing of Nehemiah, Hachaliah's son.

It happened in the month of Chislew, in the 20th year of Artaxerxes. I was in the capital at Susa. One of my brothers, Hanani, came with some others from Judah, and I asked them about the remnant of Jews who escaped from captivity, and about Jerusalem. They told me, "Those who escaped from captivity and are there in the province are very troubled and are scorned. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates destroyed by fire."

"When I heard that, I sat down and wept and mourned for days, fasting and praying to the God of heaven. I said, "O LORD God of heaven, O great and awesome God, keeping a covenant and being kind to those who love You and do what You order, let Your eyes see and Your ears listen to what Your servant is praying. I pray to You now day and night for Your servants the Israelites, while I confess our sins that we have sinned against You. Yes, I and my father's family have sinned. We have done You a great wrong. We didn't do what You said or keep the rules and regulations You commanded Your servant Moses. Please remember what You told Your servant Moses to say: 'If you are disloyal, I will scatter you among the peoples.' But if you return to Me, live according to My commandments and do them, though you may be driven to the most distant part of the world, I will come and get you from

there and bring you to the place where I chose to put My name.' "These now are Your servants and Your people whom You saved by Your great power and Your strong arm. "Lord, please listen to the praying of Your servant and the praying of all Your servants who delight to worship in Your name. And please give success to Your servant today and make this man show kindness to me." I was cupbearer to the king.

Nehemiah Goes to Jerusalem

2 In the month of Nisan, in the 20th year of King Artaxerxes, wine was brought before him. I took up the wine and gave it to the king. I had never before been sad in his presence.

"Why do you look so sad?" the king asked me. "You aren't sick? You must be troubled about something." I was really afraid.

"The king live forever!" I told the king. "Why shouldn't I look sad when the city, the place where my fathers are buried, is in ruins and its gates are burned down?"

"What do you want?" the king asked me. I kept praying to the God of heaven.

"If it pleases the king," I said, "and if you want to be kind to your servant, let me go to Judah, to the city where my fathers are buried, so I can rebuild it."

The queen was sitting beside the king when he asked me, "How long will you be gone, and when will you be back?" I gave him a definite date, and the king approved of my

going. ⁷I also told the king, "If it pleases you, O king, let me have letters to the governors of the province west of the Euphrates to let me pass through to Judah; ⁸and also a letter to Asaph, the supervisor of the king's forest, to give me timber for the gates of the citadel near the temple, for the wall of the city, and for the house I'll move into." The king let me have them, since the good hand of my God was with me.

⁹And so I came to the governors of the province west of the Euphrates and gave them the king's letters. The king had sent with me some army officers and horsemen. ¹⁰But when Sanballat from Beth-horon and Tobiah the Ammonite servant heard this, they didn't like it at all that anybody should come to promote the welfare of the people of Israel.

Nehemiah: "Let's Build"

¹¹So I came to Jerusalem and was there three days.

¹²I went out in the night with a few men, without telling anybody what my God had put into my mind to do for Jerusalem. I had no animal with me except the one I was riding. ¹³I went out of the Valley Gate at night toward the Dragon Spring and the Dung Gate, examining the places where the walls of Jerusalem were broken down and its gates were burned. ¹⁴Passing through the Gate by the Spring, I came to the King's Pool, but here there was no way for the animal I was riding to pass through. ¹⁵I went up the valley at night, inspecting the wall. Then I turned back, entered the Valley Gate, and so returned.

¹⁶The officials didn't know where I had gone or what I was doing. I hadn't yet told the Jews, the priests,

the leaders, the other officials, or any of the rest who would be doing the work. ¹⁷Then I told them, "You see the trouble we're in, how Jerusalem is in ruins and her gates are burned down. Come, let's build the wall of Jerusalem, and we won't be insulted any longer." ¹⁸And I told them how well my God had led me, and of course what the king had told me.

"Let's start and build," they told me. So they encouraged one another for the good purpose.

¹⁹But when Sanballat from Beth-horon, Tobiah the Ammonite servant, and the Arab Geshem heard of it, they made fun of us, and in contempt for us they asked, "What are you doing? Are you going to rebel against the king?"

²⁰"The God of heaven will give us success," I answered them. "We, His servants, are going to rebuild. But you have no property or right or memorial in Jerusalem."

Building the North Wall

3 The high priest Eliashib and his relatives, the priests, started by building the Sheep Gate. They dedicated it and set up its doors. They dedicated it as far as the Tower of the Hundred and as far as the Tower of Hananel. ²Next to him the men from Jericho built; and next to them Zaccur, Imri's son. ³The sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate; they laid its beams and set up its doors with their locks and bars. ⁴Next to them Meremoth son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz, repaired it. Next to them Meshullam son of Berechiah, son of Meshezabel, repaired it. Next to them Zadok, Baana's son, repaired it. ⁵Next to them the men from Tekoa repaired it; but their nobles wouldn't humble

themselves to work for their superiors.

The West Wall

⁹Joiada, Paseah's son, and Meshullam, Besodeiah's son, repaired the gate of the Old City, laying its beams and setting up its doors with their locks and bars. ⁷Next to them Melatiah from Gibeon and Jadon from Meronoth, with men from Gibeon and Mizpah, repaired the wall to the seat of the governor from the district west of the Euphrates. ⁸Next to them Uzziel son of Harhaiah, the goldsmith, repaired it. Next to him Hananiah the ointment-mixer repaired it. They renovated Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall. ⁹Next to them Rephaiah, Hur's son, an official in charge of half a district of Jerusalem, repaired it. ¹⁰Next to them Jedaiah, Harumaph's son, repaired it opposite his own home. Next to them Hattush, Hashabneiah's son, repaired it. ¹¹Malchiah, Harim's son, and Hasshub, Pahath-moab's son, repaired another part, including the Tower of the Ovens. ¹²Next to them Shallum, Hallohesh's son, an official in charge of half a district of Jerusalem, repaired it with the help of his daughters.

The South Wall

¹³Hanun and the people living in Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate; they rebuilt it and set up its doors with their locks and bars, and repaired 1,000 cubits of the wall, as far as the Dung Gate. ¹⁴The Dung Gate itself was repaired by Malchiah, Rechab's son, the official in charge of the district of Beth-

hakerem; he rebuilt it and set up its doors with their locks and bars.

The Southeast Wall

¹⁵Shallun son of Col-hozeh, the official in charge of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Spring Gate; he rebuilt it, put a roof on it, and set up its doors with their locks and bars, and the wall by the pool of Shelah at the king's garden as far as the stairs going down from David's city. ¹⁶After him Nehemiah, Azbuk's son, the official in charge of half the district of Beth-zur, repaired it till you come to the tombs of David and the artificial pool and the soldiers' barracks. ¹⁷After him the Levites repaired it, including Rehum, Bani's son. Next to him Hashabiah, the official in charge of half the district of Keilah, repaired it for his district. ¹⁸After him their relatives repaired it: Binnui, Henadad's son, the official in charge of half the district of Keilah. ¹⁹Next to him Ezer, Jeshua's son, the official in charge of Mizpah, repaired another part, where you go up to the armory at the corner. ²⁰After him Baruch, Zabbai's son, repaired another part, from the corner to the door of the house of the high priest Eliashib. ²¹After him Meremoth son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz, repaired another part, from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of Eliashib's house. ²²After him the priests who lived in that area repaired it. ²³After them Benjamin and Hasshub repaired it opposite their own home. After them Azariah son of Maaseiah, son of Ananiah, repaired it by his home. ²⁴After him Binnui, Henadad's son, repaired another part, from Azariah's home to the bend

and the corner of the wall. ²⁸Palal, Uzai's son, repaired it opposite the bend and the upper tower that projects from the king's palace to the prison court. After him Pedaiah son of Parosh ²⁹(the temple servants were living in Ophel) repaired the wall as far as a point opposite the Water Gate toward the east, and the projecting tower. ³⁰After him the men from Tekoa repaired another part from opposite the big projecting tower as far as the Wall of Ophel.

The Northeast Wall

³¹Above the Horse Gate the priests repaired it, each opposite his own home. ³²After them Zadok, Immer's son, repaired it opposite his own home. After him Shemaiah, Shecaniah's son, keeper of the East Gate, repaired it. ³³After him Hananiah, Shelemiah's son, and Hanun, Zalaph's sixth son, repaired another part. After him Meshullam, Berechiah's son, repaired it opposite his room. ³⁴After him Malchiah, one of the goldsmiths, repaired it as far as the building that housed the temple servants and businessmen, opposite the Gate of Mustering and as far as the upper room at the corner. ³⁵The goldsmiths and businessmen repaired it between the upper room at the corner and the Sheep Gate.

Sanballat Opposes

4 When Sanballat heard we were rebuilding the wall, he got very angry and irritated, and made fun of the Jews. ²Before his relatives and the soldiers of Samaria he said: "What are these feeble Jews doing? Can they rebuild by themselves? Are they planning to sacrifice? Can they finish it in a

day? Will they get the stones out of the rubbish heaps, burned as they are, and give them new strength?"

³Tobiah the Ammonite was near him. "What they are building," he said, "if a fox would walk up on it, he'd break down their stone wall."

Nehemiah Prays

"Our God, listen because we are despised, and bring their insults back on their heads and let them be plundered in a country where they are taken as captives. ²Don't cover their wrongs or blot out their sins before You, because they have stirred up Your anger before these builders."

³So we built the wall, and the whole wall was made continuous and built to half its height. The people had a mind to work.

⁴When Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the people from Ashdod heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being put in good shape again and the broken places were being filled in, they got furious; ⁵and all of them conspired to come and fight against Jerusalem and cause confusion.

⁶But we prayed to our God and set guards to watch day and night to protect ourselves from them.

⁷Then the people of Judah said, "The strength of the laborers is wearing down, and there is too much rubble; we can't go on building the wall."

⁸And our enemies were saying, "They won't know or see a thing before we come among them, kill them, and stop the work." ⁹Ten times the Jews who were living near our enemies came and warned us that from all directions they would come against us.

¹⁰So I put people by families

behind the wall where it was lowest and most exposed, with their swords, spears, and bows. ¹⁴I looked them over and proceeded to tell the nobles, the leaders, and the rest of the people. "Don't be afraid of them. Remember how great and awesome the Lord is. Fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes."

¹⁵When our enemies heard that we knew about their plans and that God had made them fail, we all went back to the wall, each to his job. ¹⁶From then on half of my men worked and the other half held the spears, shields, bows, and body-armor. And the officers stood behind all the people of Judah ¹⁷who built the wall. The laborers who were carrying the loads did the work with one hand and with the other held their weapon. ¹⁸and each builder had his sword fastened to his side. The man who blew the trumpet was with me. ¹⁹I told the nobles, the leaders, and the rest of the people, "There's so much work to be done in different places that we are separated far from one another on the wall. ²⁰Wherever you hear the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us."

²¹So we were doing our work, half of us holding spears from early dawn till the stars came out. ²²At that time I told the people, "Every man and his servant should stay overnight in Jerusalem so we can set a guard at night and work during the day." ²³We didn't take off our clothes, I or my brothers, my servants, or the men of the guard who followed us. We each kept our weapon at hand.^a

Nehemiah Helps the Poor

5 Then some of the people, men and women, loudly complained about their Jewish relatives. ²Some said, "We, our sons, and our daughters are many. We must have grain to eat to keep alive." ³Others said, "We have to borrow money on our fields, our vineyards, and our homes in order to get grain when we're hungry." ⁴Others said, "We have to borrow money to pay the king's tax on our fields and vineyards. ⁵Now, our bodies are the same as those of our relatives; our children are just like theirs. But look, we have to make slaves of our sons and daughters. Some of our daughters are already enslaved. But there's nothing else we can do when others have our fields and vineyards."

⁶When I heard their complaint and what they said, I was furious. ⁷After thinking it over, I accused the nobles and the leaders, telling them, "You are taking interest from one another." And I arranged for a large meeting to deal with them. ⁸Then I told them, "As we were able, we brought back our fellow Jews who had been sold to other people. And now you are selling your fellow Jews so that we have to buy them back!" They were silent and couldn't find anything to say. ⁹"What you're doing isn't good," I added. "Shouldn't you live in the fear of our God to keep the people who are our enemies from ridiculing us?" ¹⁰I too, my relatives, and my servants are lending them money and grain. But let's give up this taking of interest. ¹¹Today give their fields back to them, their vineyards, their olive orchards, and

^aHeb each his weapon the water

their homes, and let them keep the interest on the money, fresh grain, wine, and oil you're collecting from them."

"We'll give it back," they said, "and not try to get it from them. We'll do as you say." Then I called the priests and made them swear to do what they promised. ¹³Then I shook out the bosom of my garment and said, "Like this may God shake out from his home and work everyone who won't keep this promise; like this may he be shaken off and gotten rid of." Then the whole congregation said, "So be it," and praised the LORD. And the people did what they promised.

¹⁴Let me add: From the day the king appointed me governor of Judah, from the 20th to the 32nd year of Artaxerxes—that is, for 12 years—I and my relatives didn't eat the food allowed a governor. ¹⁵The governors before me had made it hard for the people by taking from them food and wine in addition to 40 shekels of silver. Even their servants lorded it over the people. But I didn't do that, because I feared God. ¹⁶I also took charge of the work on this wall, but we bought no land. And all my men gathered there for the work.

¹⁷There were at my table 150 leaders plus other Jews and those who came to us from the people around us. ¹⁸It was necessary every day to prepare one ox and six select sheep; fowl also were prepared for me, and once every 10 days a supply of every kind of wine. But for all this I didn't demand the governor's food allowance, because these people were carrying a heavy load.

¹⁹Remember to prosper me, my

God, for all I've done for these people.

The Plot Against Nehemiah

6 When Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies heard I had built the wall, and there was no gap left in it—although at that time I had not yet hung the doors in the gates—²Sanballat and Geshem sent me a message, "Come, let's meet in Hakkephirim in the valley of Ono." They were planning to harm me.

³I sent messengers to tell them, "I'm doing an important job and can't come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?" ⁴They sent such a message to me four times, and I answered them the same way. ⁵When Sanballat sent me such a message a fifth time, his man held an open letter in his hand. ⁶In it was written, "The nations have heard and Geshem^b had said that you and the Jews are planning to rebel. That's why you're building the wall. You want to be their king. ⁷You've also appointed prophets to announce for you in Jerusalem, 'There's a king in Judah!' Now the king will hear about such things. So then come, let's talk this over."

⁸Then I sent someone to tell him, "No such thing as you say has been done. You've made it up in your own mind."

⁹They were all trying to frighten us, thinking we would give up the work and not finish it.

But now my hands were strengthened.

¹⁰When I went to the home of Shemaiah son of Delaiah, son of

^bProbable reading. Heb has Gashmu

Mehetabel, who was shut in, he said, "Let's meet at God's house, in the temple, and close the temple doors. They're coming to kill you; they're coming at night to kill you."

"But I asked, "Should a man like me run away? Should anyone like me go into the temple to save his life? I won't go."

"Then I realized God hadn't sent him but Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him to predict this would happen to me. "He was hired to frighten me into doing this so I would sin and give them a way to discredit me.

"My God, punish Tobiah and Sanballat for what they are doing and also the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who have been trying to frighten me.

"So the wall was finished in 52 days, on the 25th day of the month of Elul. "When all our enemies heard of it, all the nations around us saw it^c and were very impressed, realizing we had done this work with the help of our God.

"In those days the nobles of Judah and Tobiah were sending many letters back and forth. "Many in Judah had promised by oath to support him, because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah, Arah's son, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam, Berechiah's son. "They were also telling me about his good points and reporting to him what I said. But Tobiah kept sending letters to frighten me.

Guarding Jerusalem

7 When the wall had been rebuilt and I had hung the doors, and the gatekeepers, the

singers, and the Levites had been appointed, "I put my brother Hanani in charge of Jerusalem; and with him Hananiah, the commander of the citadel, because he was so faithful and feared God more than many others. "I told them, "The gates of Jerusalem shouldn't be opened till the sun is hot, and while the guards are still standing there, they should shut the doors. Bar them and have men of Jerusalem appointed to stand guard, some at their stations and others next to their homes." "Now the city was wide and large, but there were few people in it, and no houses were being built.

The First Exiles to Return

"Then my God put into my heart to gather the nobles, leaders, and people to list them according to their ancestors. And I found the list of those who came up the first time. I found the following written there:

"These are the people of the province, the exiles who came back, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had taken away captive. They came back to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his own town. "They came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, and Baanah.

The number of the men of the people of Israel:

"Parosh's family	2,172
"Shephatiah's family	372
"Arah's family	652
"Pahath-moab's family, that is, the families of Jeshua and Joab's	2,818
"Elam's family	1,254

^cOr were afraid

¹³ Zattu's family	845	⁴⁸ Lebanah, Hagaba, Shalmal
¹⁴ Zaccai's family	760	⁴⁹ Hanan, Giddel, Gahar, ⁵⁰ Reaiah,
¹⁵ Binnui's family	648	Rezin, Nekoda, ⁵¹ Gazzam, Uzza,
¹⁶ Bebai's family	628	Paseah, ⁵² Besai, Meunim, Nephush-
¹⁷ Azgad's family	2,322	eshim, ⁵³ Bakbuk, Hakupha, Harhur,
¹⁸ Adonikam's family	667	⁵⁴ Bazlith, Mehida, Harsha,
¹⁹ Bigvai's family	2,067	⁵⁵ Barkos, Sisera, Temah, ⁵⁶ Neziah,
²⁰ Adin's family	655	and Hatipha.
²¹ Ater's family, that is, Hezekiah's	98	⁵⁷ The descendants of Solomon's
²² Hashum's family	328	slaves: The families of Sotai,
²³ Bezai's family	324	Sophereth, Perida, ⁵⁸ Jaala, Darkon,
²⁴ Hariph's family	112	Giddel, ⁵⁹ Shephathiah, Hattil,
²⁵ Gibeon's family	95	Pochereth-hazzebaim, and Amon.
²⁶ The men of Bethlehem and Netophah	188	⁶⁰ All the temple servants and the
²⁷ The men of Anathoth	128	descendants of Solomon's slaves
²⁸ The men of Beth- azmaveth	42	numbered 392.
²⁹ The men of Kiriath- jearim, Chephirah, and Bee- roth	743	Doubtful ancestry: ⁶¹ These came up
³⁰ The men of Ramah and Geba	621	from Telmelah, Tel-harsha, Cherub,
³¹ The men of Michmas	122	Addon, and Immer, but couldn't tell
³² The men of Bethel and Ai	123	what their clan was or their ancestry;
³³ The men of the other Nebo	52	whether they were Israelites:
³⁴ The other Elam's family	1,254	⁶² The families of Delaiah, Tobiah,
³⁵ Harim's family	320	and Nekoda, 642.
³⁶ The people of Jericho	345	⁶³ Of the priests: The families of
³⁷ The people of Lod, Hadid, and Ono	721	Hobaiah, Hakkoz, and Barzillai—a
³⁸ Senaah's family	3,930	man who married one of the
³⁹ The priests: Jedaiah's family, Jeshua's line, 973; ⁴⁰ Immer's fam- ily, 1,052; ⁴¹ Pashur's family, 1,247;		daughters of Barzillai from Gilead
⁴² Harim's family, 1,017.		and took their name. ⁶⁴ These tried
⁴³ The Levites: The families of Jeshua and Kadmiel, Hodeiah's descendants, 74.		to find their list of ancestors but
⁴⁴ The singers: Asaph's family, 148.		didn't find it; so they were barred as
⁴⁵ The gatekeepers: The families of Shallum, Ater, Talmon, Akkub, Hatite, and Shobai, 138.		unfit to serve as priests. ⁶⁵ The
⁴⁶ The temple servants: The families of Ziha, Hasupha, Tabbaath, ⁴⁷ Keros, Sia, Padon,		governor told them not to eat of the
		most holy food till a priest would
		come to ask God by means of the
		Urim and Thummim.
		⁶⁶ The whole assembly totaled
		42,360, ⁶⁷ in addition to male and
		female servants who numbered
		7,337. They also had 245 men and
		women who sang. ⁶⁸ They had
		horses numbering 736, and 245
		mules. ⁶⁹ They had 435 camels and
		6,720 donkeys.
		<i>Gifts for the Temple</i>
		⁷⁰ Some leaders of the clans gave
		offerings for the work. The governor
		put into the treasury 1,000

drachmas of gold, 50 bowls, and 530 garments for the priests. ⁷The leaders of the clans put into the treasury for the work 20,000 drachmas of gold and 2,200 minas of silver. ⁸The rest of the people gave 20,000 drachmas of gold, 2,000 minas of silver, and 67 garments for the priests.

⁹So the priests, Levites, and some of the people settled^d in Jerusalem, and the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple workers, and the rest of Israel lived in their towns.

Hearing God's Word

8 When the seventh month came, all the people gathered like one man in the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra the scholar to bring the scroll of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had ordered for Israel. ²Then Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, including only men and women who could understand what they heard. It was on the first day of the seventh month. ³And he read from it before the Water Gate from early morning till noon, to the men and the women who could understand. And all the people listened to the scroll of the Law.

⁴Ezra the scholar stood on a raised wooden platform made for this purpose, and with him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah at his right, and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchiah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam at his left. ⁵Ezra, standing higher than all the other people, unrolled the scroll before all the people, and as he opened it, all the people stood up. ⁶Ezra praised the LORD, the great God, and all the

people answered, "So be it, so be it," as they raised their hands and then bowed with their faces to the ground and worshiped the LORD. ⁷Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, and Pelaiah, who were Levites, were explaining the Law to the people while they were still standing. ⁸And so they read the scroll of God's law clearly, giving the meaning, and the people understood what was read.

⁹Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scholar, and the Levites who taught the people told them, "This is a holy day of the LORD your God; don't mourn or cry"—for all the people were crying as they listened to the reading of the Law. ¹⁰Then he told them, "Go, eat fat meat, drink sweet drinks, and send portions of food to those for whom none is prepared, because this is the Lord's holy day; don't feel sad. The joy you have in the LORD is your fortress." ¹¹So the Levites calmed all the people, saying, "Be quiet. This day is holy; don't feel sad."

¹²Then all the people went to eat and drink and to send portions of food and enjoy a big celebration, because they understood the words that were explained to them.

The Festival of Booths

¹On the second day the leaders of the clans of all the people, including the priests and the Levites, met with Ezra the scholar to learn what the Law said. ²They found written in the law which the LORD had ordered through Moses that the people of Israel should live in booths

^{d1} Esdras 5:46. Heb omits in Jerusalem

during a festival in the seventh month, ¹³and that they should announce it and send this message to all their towns and throughout Jerusalem: "Go to the hills and get branches—olive and wild olive, myrtle, palm and other thick-leaved branches, to make booths as prescribed."

¹⁴So the people went out and got them and made themselves booths, some on their own roofs, others in their courts, in the courts of God's temple, in the square by the Water Gate, or in the square at the Ephraim Gate.

¹⁵And so the whole assembly that had come back from the exile made booths and lived in them. The people of Israel had not done this from the time of Joshua, Nun's son, to that day; there was such very great joy. ¹⁶Every day of the feast, from the first to the last, Ezra continued to read the scroll of God's law. They celebrated the festival seven days, and on the eighth day they had a closing festival assembly as prescribed.

Israel Prays

9 On the 24th day of this month the Israelites assembled; they fasted, clothed in sackcloth, with dirt on their heads. ²Those who were descendants of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners; they stood up and confessed their sins as well as the wrongs done by their fathers. ³They stood in their places, and for a fourth of the day the book of the law of the LORD their God was read, and for another fourth they confessed and worshiped the LORD their God.

⁴Then Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani,

and Chanani, stood on the platform of the Levites and called aloud to the LORD their God. ⁵And the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said: "Stand up and bless the LORD your God. From everlasting to everlasting Your wonderful name is blessed and lifted up above all blessing and praise.

⁶"You are the LORD, You alone. You made heaven, the highest heaven, with all its army, the earth and everything on it, the seas and everything in them. You give life to all, and the army of heaven is worshipping You.

⁷"You are the LORD, the God who chose Abram, who took him out of Ur of the Chaldees and gave him the name Abraham. ⁸You found his heart faithful to You and made a covenant with him to give his descendants the country of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Jebusites, and Girgashites; and You kept Your promise, for You are righteous. ⁹You saw what our fathers suffered in Egypt and heard them crying by the Red Sea. ¹⁰You did miracles and wonders to Pharaoh and all his men and all the people of his country because You knew they were treating them arrogantly. And You won a reputation for Yourself which You still have today. ¹¹You divided the sea before them so that they went through the middle of the sea on dry ground, and You threw those who pursued them into the deep waters like a stone into the torrents. ¹²By a pillar of cloud You led them during the day and by a pillar of fire during the night to light up the way in which they should go. ¹³You came down on Mount

⁹
6 Acts 4:24;
Rev 10:6;
14:7

Sinai and talked to them from heaven and gave them right rules, true laws, good regulations and commandments. ¹⁴You taught them Your holy Sabbath and through Your servant Moses prescribed for them commandments, regulations, and laws. ¹⁵You gave them bread from heaven for their hunger and made water flow from a rock for their thirst and told them to go in and take the country that with a raised hand You swore to give them.

¹⁶“But they, our fathers, behaved proudly, acted stubbornly, and didn’t listen to Your commandments. ¹⁷They refused to listen, forgetting the miracles You did for them. They became stubborn and tried to appoint a leader to go back to their slavery in Egypt. But You are a God who forgives, who is kind, merciful, patient, and very loving, and so You didn’t forsake them. ¹⁸They even made a calf of cast metal for themselves and said, ‘This is your God who took you out of Egypt.’ and so they committed great blasphemies. ¹⁹But Your mercies being great, You didn’t forsake them in the wilderness. The pillar of cloud didn’t leave them during the day, but led them on their way; nor did the pillar of fire leave during the night, but lit up the way on which they should go. ²⁰You gave Your good Spirit to teach them; You didn’t refuse to let them have Your manna to eat, and You gave them water for their thirst. ²¹For 40 years You fed them in the wilderness, and they had everything they needed. Their clothes didn’t wear out, and their feet didn’t blister.

²²“You gave them kingdoms and nations and assigned to them frontier lands so that they took the country of Sihon, the country of the

king of Heshbon, and the country of Og king of Bashan. ²³You gave them many children, like the stars in the sky, and brought them into the country You told their fathers to enter and take. ²⁴Their children went in and took the country, and You subdued before them the people living in the country, the Canaanites, and put them in their hands with their kings and the people of the country, to do with them as they liked. ²⁵They took fortified cities and a rich land, occupied houses full of everything good, hewn-out cisterns, vineyards, olive trees, and plenty of fruit trees. So they ate and were filled and got fat and enjoyed the grand store of good things You gave them.

28 2 Gal 3:12

²⁶“But they stubbornly opposed You and rebelled against You and tossed Your commandments behind their backs and killed Your prophets who warned them to turn back to You, and so they committed great blasphemies. ²⁷Then You put them in the hands of their enemies, who made them suffer; and when they were suffering, they cried to You. And in heaven You heard them, and as Your mercies are great, You gave them saviors to save them from their enemies. ²⁸When they got some relief, they again did wrong before You, and You abandoned them to their enemies, who trampled on them; again they cried to You, and many times You heard from heaven and saved them because You are merciful. ²⁹You warned them to return to Your law, but they became too proud to listen to Your commandments; they sinned against Your regulations—if anyone keeps them, he will find life in them. But they turned a rebellious shoulder and stiffened their necks and didn’t

listen. ³⁰For many years You continued to be kind to them, warning them by Your Spirit through Your prophets, but they didn't listen; and You put them into the hands of the people of the country. ³¹But Your mercies are great, and You didn't put an end to them or forsake them, because You are a kind and merciful God.

³²"And now, our God, the God who is great, mighty, and terrible, who keeps His covenant and is kind, don't think lightly of all the trouble that has come to us, to our kings, our leaders, our priests, our prophets, our fathers, and all Your people from the time of the kings of Assyria till now. ³³But You are right in everything that has happened to us, because You have acted faithfully and we have done wrong. ³⁴Nor have our kings, our leaders, our priests, and our fathers done what Your law demands. They didn't listen to Your commandments or Your warnings when You warned them. ³⁵When they had their kingdom and You gave them many good things and they were in the large and rich country You laid before them, they refused to serve You or turn back from their wicked works. ³⁶Look now, we are slaves in this country You gave our fathers to eat its products and its good things; here we are slaves. ³⁷And its many products go to the kings You put over us because we sinned, and they manage our bodies and our animals as they please. And so we are in great trouble.

³⁸"Because of all this we are making a firm agreement, and on the document our leaders, our Levites, and our priests are putting their seal."

Names on the Agreement

10 Those who sealed the agreement were: Nehemiah the governor, son of Hacaliah, Zedekiah, ²Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah, ³Pashhur, Amariah, Malchiah, ⁴Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch, ⁵Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah, ⁶Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch, ⁷Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin, ⁸Maaziah, Bilgai, and Shemaiah; these were the priests.

⁹The Levites were: Jeshua son of Azaniah, Binnui, of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel, ¹⁰and their brothers Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan, ¹¹Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah, ¹²Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah, ¹³Hodiah, Bani, and Beninu.

¹⁴The leaders of the people were: Parosh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani, ¹⁵Bunni, Azgad, Bebai, ¹⁶Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin, ¹⁷Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur, ¹⁸Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai, ¹⁹Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai, ²⁰Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir, ²¹Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua, ²²Pelathiah, Hanan, Ananiah, ²³Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub, ²⁴Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek, ²⁵Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah, ²⁶Ahiah, Hanan, Anan, ²⁷Malluch, Harim, and Baanah.

Keeping Holy

²⁸The rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple workers, all who had separated themselves from the heathen for the sake of God's law, they, their wives, sons, and daughters, all who knew and understood, ²⁹joined their brothers, the leaders, in binding themselves by a curse and an oath to obey God's law given by Moses, God's servant, to keep and do all the commandments,

rules, and regulations of the LORD our Lord. ³⁰We will not have our daughters marry the people of the country or have their daughters marry our sons. ³¹And if the people of the country bring goods or any grain on a Sabbath to sell, we'll not buy it from them on a Sabbath or any other holy day, and in the seventh year we'll let the land lie idle and not collect on any debt.

Giving for the Temple

³²We also bind ourselves by a rule to give yearly a third of a shekel of silver for the service in the temple of our God: ³³for setting up the bread and for the regular grain offerings and whole burnt offerings on the Sabbaths and on the first day of the month and at the festivals, for the consecrated foods and sin offerings that atone for Israel, and for any other service in the temple of our God.

³⁴And we, the priests, Levites, and lay people, cast lots to decide the order in which our clans should at appointed times every year bring wood to the temple of our God to burn on the altar of the LORD our God as prescribed in the Law; ³⁵and to decide when we are to bring the firstfruits of our ground, the firstfruits of every kind of tree each year to the LORD's temple; ³⁶and when to bring the firstborn of our sons and our cattle and flocks, as the Law prescribes, to the temple of our God; to the priests serving in the temple of our God; ³⁷and when to bring to the priests, into the side rooms, the best of our coarse flour and of our gifts, of the fruit of every tree, of the new wine and olive oil, and the tenth of our land for the Levites, the Levites taking a tenth from all our farm towns. ³⁸A

priest, one of Aaron's descendants, should be with the Levites when they collect the tenth, and the Levites should bring up a tenth of the tenths to the temple of our God, into the side rooms of the temple where things are stored. ³⁹The Israelites, especially the Levites, should bring into the storerooms the offerings of new grain, wine, and olive oil—the utensils of the holy place are there, and so are the priests who serve, and the gatekeepers and the singers. We'll not forsake the temple of our God.

The People Living in Jerusalem

11 The leaders of the people settled in Jerusalem. The rest of the people cast lots to have one in 10 come and live in Jerusalem, the holy city, leaving the other nine in the other towns. ²The people blessed all the men who volunteered to live in Jerusalem.

³These were the leaders of the region who settled in Jerusalem, while in the other towns of Judah everyone lived on his own property in their towns: the lay Israelites, the priests, the Levites, the temple servants, and the descendants of Solomon's slaves.

⁴Some of the descendants of Judah and of Benjamin settled in Jerusalem. The descendants of Judah are: Athaiah son of Uzziah, son of Zechariah, son of Amariah, son of Shephatiah, son of Mahalalel, a descendant of Perez; ⁵and Maaseiah son of Baruch, son of Colhozeh, son of Hazaiah, son of Adaiiah, son of Joiarib, son of Zechariah, a descendant of Shelah. ⁶All the descendants of Perez living in Jerusalem were 468 worthy men.

⁷These are the descendants of

Benjamin: Sallu son of Meshullam, son of Joed, son of Pedaiah, son of Kolaiah, son of Maaseiah, son of Ithiel, son of Jeshaiiah, ^aand after him ^emany others,^g totaling 928. ^hTheir leader was Joel son of Zichri, with Judah son of Senuah being the second in command over the city.

¹⁰The priests are: Jedaiah son of Joiarib, ^fson of ¹¹Seraiah, son of Hilkiah, son of Meshullam, son of Zadok, son of Meraioth, son of Ahitub, the supervisor of God's temple, ¹²and his relatives, who did the work of the temple, 822; also Adaiah son of Jeroham, son of Pelaliah, son of Amzi, son of Zechariah, son of Pashhur, son of Malchiah, ¹³and his relatives, heads of families, 242; and Amashsai son of Azarel, son of Ahzai, son of Meshillemoth, son of Immer, ¹⁴and his relatives, who were worthy people, 128. Their leader was Zabdiel son of Haggadol.

¹⁵The Levites were: Shemaiah son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son of Hashabiah, son of Bunni; ¹⁶Shabbethai and Jozabad, officials among the Levites, who were in charge of the work outside God's temple; ¹⁷Mattaniah son of Mica, son of Zabdi, son of Asaph, the official who led in the prayer of thanksgiving; Bakbukiah, the second in rank among his relatives; and Abda son of Shammua, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun. ¹⁸All the Levites in the holy city were 284.

¹⁹The gatekeepers, Akkub, Talmon, and their relatives, who guarded the gates, were 172.

²⁰The rest of the people of Israel,

and of the priests and Levites, were in all the towns of Judah, everyone on his inherited property. ²¹But the temple servants lived on Ophel, with Ziha and Gishpa in charge of them.

²²The supervisor of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi son of Bani, son of Hashabiah, son of Mattaniah, son of Mica, from the descendants of Asaph who were the singers; he was in charge of the work in God's temple. ²³The king had given an order about the singers that required them to sing day by day.^g ²⁴And Pethahiah son of Meshezabel, a descendant of Zerah, Judah's son, was the king's adviser on domestic matters.

In Other Towns

²⁵As for the towns out in the country, some people of Judah lived in Kiriath-arba and its villages, in Dibon and its villages, in Jekabzeel and its villages, ²⁶in Jeshua, Moladah, and Beth-pelet, ²⁷in Hazar-shual, in Beersheba and its villages, ²⁸in Ziklag, and in Meconah and its villages, ²⁹in Enrimmon, Zorah, Jarmuth, ³⁰Zanoah, and Adullam and their villages, in Lachish and its villages, and in Azekah and its villages. So they settled down in the country from Beersheba to the Valley of Hinnom.

³¹Benjamin's descendants live in the area of Geba, in Michmash, Aija, Bethel and its villages, ³²in Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah, ³³Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim, ³⁴Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat, ³⁵Lod, Ono, and in the Valley of the Craftsmen. ³⁶And

^{e-e}Heb uncertain ^{f-f}Heb has Jachin

^gOr making a dependable arrangement for them to get what they needed day by day. Neh. 12:47

some divisions of Levites in Judah were assigned to Benjamin.

Leading Priests and Levites

12 These are the priests and Levites who came back with Zerubbabel, Shealtiel's son, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, ¹Amariah, Malluch, Hattush, ²Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth, ³Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah, ⁴Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah, ⁵Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah, ⁶Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, and Jedaiah. These were the leaders of the priests and of their relatives in the time of Jeshua.

⁷The Levites were: Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah, who with his relatives was in charge of the thanksgiving hymns. ⁸also Bakbukiah and Unno, their relatives, who stood opposite them in their places of service.

⁹Jeshua was the father of Joiakim; Joiakim was the father of Eliashib; Eliashib was the father of Joiada; ¹⁰Joiada was the father of Jonathan; and Jonathan was the father of Jaddua.

¹²At the time of Joiakim the priests who were the leaders of their families were: Of Seraiah,^b Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah; ¹³of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan; ¹⁴of Malluchi, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph; ¹⁵of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai; ¹⁶of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam; ¹⁷of Abiah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai; ¹⁸of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan; ¹⁹of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi; ²⁰of Sallai, Kallai;

of Amok, Eber; ²¹of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethanel.

²²A record of the leaders of the Levitical clans was kept at the time of Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua; and also of the priests to the reign of Darius the Persian. ²³But only till the time of Johanan grandson of Eliashib were the leaders of the Levitical clans recorded in the annals.ⁱ ²⁴The heads of the Levites were: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, Jeshua, Binnui,^j Kadmiel, who with their relatives stood in groups opposite one another to sing hymns of praise and thanksgiving as David, the man of God, had ordered. ²⁵Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub were gatekeepers standing guard at the storehouses by the gates. ²⁶These lived in the days of Joiakim son of Jeshua, son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and of Ezra the priest and scholar.

The Wall Is Dedicated

²⁷When the wall of Jerusalem was to be dedicated, they sought out the Levites in all their settlements, to have them come to Jerusalem to dedicate with joy and praise, with song and cymbals, with lutes and lyres. ²⁸So the groups of singers came together from the country around Jerusalem, especially from the villages of Netopha; ²⁹also from Beth-gilgal and from the region of Geba and Azmaveth; for the singers had built villages for themselves around Jerusalem. ³⁰The priests and the Levites cleansed themselves;

^bIn these pairs the first name gives the head of the priestly family at the time of Jeshua, the second in the time of Jeshua's son Joiakim.

ⁱThe Book of Chronicles

^jProbable reading. Heb omits Binnui

then they cleansed the people, the gates, and the wall.

¹¹Then I had the leaders of Judah come up on the wall, and I arranged two large choirs to give thanks and march in procession. One choir went to the right on the wall to the Dung Gate. ¹²Behind them went Hoshaiah and half the leaders of Judah, ¹³and Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, ¹⁴Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, and Jeremiah, ¹⁵and some of the priests with trumpets: Zechariah son of Jonathan, son of Shemaiah, son of Mattaniah, son of Micaiah, son of Zaccur, son of Asaph, ¹⁶and his relatives Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani with the musical instruments of David, the man of God. And Ezra the scholar led them. ¹⁷At the Spring Gate they went straight ahead up the stairs of David's city, where the wall rises by David's palace, and came to the Water Gate in the east.

¹⁸The other choir went to the left. I followed them with the other half of the people, on the wall, past the Tower of the Ovens, as far as the Broad Wall; ¹⁹then by the Ephraim Gate, over the Gate of the Old City and the Fish Gate, and by the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Sheep Gate; and they came to a stop at the Prison Gate. ²⁰So both choirs stood at God's temple, I too and half of the leaders with me; ²¹also the priests Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah with trumpets, ²²and Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchiah, Elam, and Ezer. And the singers sang out with Jezrahiah as their leader.

²³That day they offered great sacrifices and were happy, because

God had given them reason to rejoice; the women and children were happy too. The joy of Jerusalem could be heard far away.

²⁴On that day men were put in charge of the storerooms for the gifts, firstfruits, and tenths, to gather into them the gifts assigned by the Law to the priests and Levites from the fields around the towns. The people of Judah were happy with the service of the priests and Levites. ²⁵They were doing what their God required, what needed to be done for cleansing; and so did the singers and the gatekeepers, as David and his son Solomon had ordered it. ²⁶Long ago in the time of David, Asaph was the leader of the singers and of singing praise and thanks to God. ²⁷And in the time of Zerubbabel and in the time of Nehemiah all the Israelites were giving gifts for the singers and the gatekeepers, whatever was needed each day. They set aside holy gifts for the Levites, and the Levites set aside holy gifts for the descendants of Aaron.

Exclude Foreigners

13 On that day the book of Moses was read while the people were listening, and there it was found to be written that nobody from Ammon or Moab should ever get into God's congregation, ²because they didn't come to the Israelites with food and water but hired Balaam against them to curse them. But our God turned the curse into a blessing. ³When the people heard the Law, they put away from Israel everyone of mixed race.

⁴Even before this, Eliashib the priest, who had been put in charge of the rooms of the temple of our God—being related to Tobiah—

had prepared for him a large room where before this were stored the food offerings, incense, utensils, tenths of grain, new wine, and olive oil belonging by law to the Levites, singers, and gatekeepers; also stored there were the contributions to the priests.

"During all this time I wasn't in Jerusalem, for in the 32d year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had gone back to the king; but after a year I asked the king for permission to return. "I came to Jerusalem and saw the wrong thing Eliashib had done for Tobiah by preparing a room for him in God's temple. "It hurt me very much, and I threw all of Tobiah's household goods out of the room. "Then they cleansed the rooms, as I told them to, and I put back there the utensils of God's temple, the offerings, and the incense.

Support for the Levites

"Then I learned that the Levites' portions had not been given to them, and each of the Levites and the singers doing their work had fled to his field. "I argued with the officials. "Why is God's temple forsaken?" I asked. So I got them together and put them back in their places of service. "And all Judah brought the tenths of grain, new wine, and olive oil to the storerooms. "As managers in charge of the storerooms I appointed Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scholar, and Pedaiah a Levite—and to help them, Hanan son of Zaccur, son of Mattaniah—since they were considered loyal. They had the job of distributing things to their fellow Jews.

"Remember me for this, my God, and don't wipe out the devout things

I did in God's temple and in getting its work done.

"In those days I saw people in Judah tramping grapes in the winepresses on the Sabbath. I saw them bringing in loads of wine, grapes, and figs, and every other kind of burden, piling them on donkeys, and bringing them into Jerusalem on the Sabbath. And I protested to them at the time about selling food. "People from Tyre who lived in Jerusalem were bringing in fish and all kinds of goods and selling them on the Sabbath to the people of Judah. "I argued with the noblemen of Judah and asked them, "What is this wicked thing you're doing? How dare you treat the Sabbath day as unholy? "Isn't this what your fathers did, so that our God brought on us and on this city all this calamity? Now you're making Him even more angry with Israel by profaning the Sabbath."

"Just before the Sabbath, when the gates of Jerusalem were cleared of traffic, I ordered the doors to be shut and not to be reopened till after the Sabbath. I stationed some of my men on the gates so that no burden would be brought in on the Sabbath. "Once or twice traders and sellers of all kinds of goods spent the night just outside Jerusalem. "I warned them. "Why are you staying in front of the wall?" I asked them. "If you do it again, I'll arrest you." After that they didn't come on the Sabbath. "Then I told the Levites to cleanse themselves, come and guard the gates, and keep the Sabbath holy.

Remember me also for this, my God, and spare me, since You are very kind.

Mixed Marriages

²³In those days I also saw the Jews who had married women from Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. ²⁴Half their children spoke the language of Ashdod; they couldn't understand Hebrew well enough to speak it, but spoke the languages of each people.

²⁵So I argued with them, cursing them, striking some of them, pulling out their hair; and I made them swear by God: "We won't give our daughters in marriage to their sons, and we won't take their daughters for our sons or ourselves." ²⁶I said, "Didn't Solomon king of Israel sin in this way? Among many nations there wasn't a king like him. God loved him, and God made him king of all Israel. But those foreign women

were the reason for his sin. ²⁷Must we hear the same about you, that you too do all this great wrong and turn disloyal to our God by taking foreign wives into your homes?"

²⁸Even one of the sons of Joiada son of the high priest Eliashib was a son-in-law of Sanballat from Beth-horon. I chased him away from me. ²⁹Remember them, my God, because they have polluted the priesthood and the covenant of the priests and Levites.

³⁰So I cleansed them from everything foreign, and set up the duties of the priests and Levites, each one in the work he should do, ³¹and I arranged for bringing in the wood at regular times and the firstfruits.

Remember me, my God, for good.

THE BOOK OF ESTHER

Xerxes Gives a Banquet

1 It happened at the time of Xerxes. This is the Xerxes who ruled over 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia. ²In those days, when Xerxes sat on his royal throne in the fortress city of Susa, ³in the third year of his rule, he gave a banquet for all his officers and the men of his court, the military men of the Persians and Medes, the leaders and governors of the provinces being before him, ⁴and he showed them the riches of his wonderful kingdom and the costly splendor of its majesty for many days, that is, 80 days. ⁵When those days were over, the king gave a banquet lasting 70 days, in the enclosed park of the king's palace, for all the people, high and low, who were in the fortress city of Susa.

⁶White and violet cotton cloth was fastened by purple cords of fine linen and silver rings to marble pillars. Gold and silver couches were on a mosaic pavement of purple rock, marble, mother-of-pearl, and dark stones. ⁷Wine was served in golden bowls, and each bowl was different. There was plenty of royal wine given by the king. ⁸The drinking was according to the rule: Nobody has to drink. The king had ordered all the waiters in his palace to let everybody do just as he liked.

⁹Vashti the queen also gave a banquet for the women at the royal palace of King Xerxes.

Queen Vashti Disobeys

¹⁰On the seventh day, when wine made the king feel good, he told Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven eunuchs waiting on King Xerxes, ¹¹to bring Queen Vashti to the king, wearing her royal crown, to show the people and the officers her beauty; for she was beautiful. ¹²But Queen Vashti refused to come when the king sent the eunuchs to tell her. At this, the king got very angry and his fury burned within him.

¹³Then the king spoke to the wise men who knew the times—you see, the king used to lay his matters before all who knew laws and religion, ¹⁴those close to him being Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven governors of the Persians and Medes who saw the king face to face and had the first place in the kingdom. ¹⁵He asked them: "According to the law, what must be done to Queen Vashti because she didn't do what the king sent the eunuchs to tell her?"

¹⁶Then Memucan told the king and the governors: "Vashti hasn't done wrong only to the king but also to all the officers and all the people who are in all the provinces of King Xerxes. ¹⁷The news of what the queen has done will go out to all the women to make them despise their husbands. They will say, 'King Xerxes told men to bring Queen Vashti before him, but she wouldn't come.' ¹⁸Today the ladies of Persia

and Media who have heard what the queen did will say the same to all the king's officers, and there will be plenty of contempt and bad temper. ¹⁹If it pleases the king, let him make a royal declaration, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and Medes and never changed, that Vashti should no more come before King Xerxes; and let the king make another, a better woman, his queen. ²⁰When the decree the king will make is heard in his whole kingdom, vast as it is, all the wives will give honor to their husbands, high and low alike."

²¹The king and his officers thought well of this and did as Memucan told him. ²²He sent letters into all the king's provinces, to each province in its own writing and to every kind of people in their own language: "Every husband should be the master in his own home and control all his own womenfolk."^a

Who Shall Be Queen?

2 After this, when King Xerxes was over his anger, he thought of Vashti, what she had done, and what was decided against her.

²Then the king's servants who attended him said, "A search should be made for young beautiful virgins for the king. ³And the king should appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom and gather all the beautiful virgin girls and bring them to the fortified city of Susa, to the women's quarters, under the supervision of Hegai, the king's eunuch, the overseer of the women, and give them their cosmetic ointments. ⁴And the girl the king likes best

should be queen instead of Vashti."

The king liked the idea and did so.

⁵There was a Jew in the fortress city of Susa whose name was Mordecai, son of Jair, son of Shimei son of Kish, a descendant of Benjamin, ⁶who had been taken from Jerusalem as a captive with the others who had gone into exile with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away. ⁷He had raised Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter, because she had no father and mother. The girl had a fine figure and was beautiful. When her father and mother died, Mordecai took her as his daughter.

⁸When people heard the king's announcement and decree, many girls were gathered and brought to the fortress city of Susa and put under the supervision of Hegai. Then Esther too was taken to the king's palace and put under the supervision of Hegai, the overseer of the women. ⁹He liked the girl and was kind to her and hurried to give her her ointments, her allowance of food, and seven picked maids from the king's palace. And he moved her and her girls to the best place in the women's quarters.

¹⁰Esther didn't tell who her people or her relatives were, because Mordecai had ordered her not to tell. ¹¹Every day Mordecai used to walk before the court of the women's palace to find out how Esther was and what was happening to her.

¹²Each girl had her turn to go to King Xerxes after she had undergone the prescribed treatment for women for 12 months. This is how the time for beautifying was

^aProbable reading. *Heb talk the language of his own people*

spent: 6 months with oil of myrrh and 6 months with perfumes and other ointments for women. ¹³Such a girl was given anything she wanted to take with her from the women's quarters to the king's palace. ¹⁴She went in the evening and came back in the morning to the second quarters for women, under the supervision of the king's eunuch Shaashgaz, the overseer of the concubines. She didn't go to the king again unless the king liked her and called her by name.

Esther Becomes Queen

¹⁵When Esther's turn came—she was the daughter of Abihail, the uncle of Mordecai, who had adopted her as his daughter—to go to the king, she didn't ask for anything but what the king's eunuch Hegai, the overseer of the women, prescribed. And all who saw Esther liked her. ¹⁶In the month Tebeth, the 10th month, in the seventh year of King Xerxes' rule, Esther was taken to the king in his royal palace. ¹⁷And the king loved Esther more than all the other women, and he was much kinder to her than to all the other virgins. He put the royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti. ¹⁸The king gave a great banquet in honor of Esther for all his officers and servants, and made it a holiday in the provinces and gave gifts with royal generosity.

Mordecai Saves the King

¹⁹When the girls were gathered a second time, Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate. ²⁰Esther didn't tell anyone who her relatives and people were, as Mordecai had ordered her; for Esther did what Mordecai told her just as when she was brought up by him.

²¹In those days, while Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs who guarded the door, got angry and plotted to kill King Xerxes. ²²But Mordecai found out about it and told Queen Esther, and Esther told the king for Mordecai. ²³The thing was investigated, and when it was found to be so, they were both hanged on a gallows. This was recorded in the king's presence in the book of the chronicles.

Mordecai Offends Haman

3 After this, King Xerxes made a great man of Haman son of Hammedatha, descendant of Agag. He promoted him and gave him a seat higher than all the other officers who were with him. ²And all the king's men who were at the king's gate were bowing down and worshipping Haman because the king ordered this to be done. But Mordecai didn't bow down and worship him.

³Then the king's men who were at the king's gate asked Mordecai, "Why do you disobey the king's order?" ⁴They asked him this day after day and he didn't listen to them, and so they told Haman, to see if Mordecai's excuse would count; he had told them he was a Jew.

Haman's Revenge: Destroy the Jews

⁵When Haman saw Mordecai didn't bow down and worship him, Haman got very angry. ⁶But he thought it beneath him to get only Mordecai when he was told who Mordecai's people were. And so Haman tried to destroy Mordecai's people, all the Jews in the whole kingdom of Xerxes. ⁷In the 12th

year of King Xerxes, Pur, that is, the lot was cast before Haman for every day and every month from Nisan, the first month, till Adar, the 12th month.

⁹Haman told King Xerxes, "There is a certain people, scattered and spread out among the people in all your royal provinces, whose laws are different from those of all other people. They don't do what the king orders, and it isn't good for the king to tolerate them. ¹⁰If the king approves, let an order be written to destroy them, and I will pay 10,000 talents of silver to those who do the king's business, to be put in the king's treasuries."

¹⁰The king took his ring from his hand and gave it to Haman, Hammedatha's son and Agag's descendant, the enemy of the Jews. ¹¹And the king told Haman, "The silver is given to you and the people too; do with them what you like."

¹²The king's secretaries were called on the 13th day of the first month, and as Haman ordered they wrote to the king's satraps, the governors of every province, and the officers of every people, to each province in its own writing and to each people in their own language. It was written in King Xerxes' name and sealed with the king's ring. ¹³Messengers were sent with letters to all the king's provinces to wipe out, kill, and destroy all the Jews, young and old, children and women, on one day, the 13th day of the 12th month, the month Adar, and to take away their goods. ¹⁴A copy of the writing was to be made public as a decree in every province for all people to be ready on that day.

¹⁵The messengers hurried out as the king told them, and the decree

was given out at the capital in Susa. Then the king and Haman sat down to drink. But the city of Susa was upset.

Esther Must Help

4 When Mordecai found out about everything that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, walked out into the middle of the city, and cried loud and bitterly. ²He even came to the king's gate, but nobody could go through it in sackcloth.

³And in every province where the king's message and decree came the Jews went into great mourning, fasting, weeping, and wailing, and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

⁴Esther's maids and eunuchs came and told her. Deeply shocked, the queen sent clothes for Mordecai to put on, meaning to take his sackcloth away from him, but he refused to take them. ⁵Then Esther called for Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs appointed to serve her, and she ordered him to go to Mordecai and find out what it meant and why he was doing this. ⁶Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city that was in front of the king's gate.

⁷Mordecai told him everything that had happened to him, stating the exact sum of money Haman promised to pay into the king's treasury to destroy the Jews. ⁸He handed him a copy of the written decree given out in Susa to destroy them, to show it to Esther, to tell her the news, and to order her to go to the king to ask him for mercy and get him to help her people. ⁹So Hathach went and told Esther what Mordecai said.

¹⁰Esther talked to Hathach and sent him with a message to

Mordecai: "All the king's men and the people in the king's provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king in the inner court without being called, there is only one verdict for him—death—unless the king holds out to him the golden scepter to let him live; and I haven't been called to come to the king for 30 days now." ¹²They told Mordecai what Esther said.

¹³Mordecai told them to answer Esther: "Don't think that you of all the Jews will escape in the king's palace. ¹⁴If you are silent now, relief and rescue will come to the Jews from somewhere else, but you and your father's family will perish. Who knows, perhaps you became queen for such a time as this."

¹⁵Esther told them to answer Mordecai: ¹⁶"Go, bring all the Jews in Susa together. Fast for me, and don't eat or drink for three days, night and day. I and my maids will fast too. In this way I will go to the king, even if it is against the law. If I perish, I perish."

¹⁷Mordecai went away and did just as Esther told him.

Esther Invites the King and Haman

5 Two days later Esther put on her royal dress and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, facing the king's hall. The king was sitting on his royal throne inside his palace, opposite the entrance.

²When the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, he was kind to her. The king held out to Esther the golden scepter in his hand. Esther went up to him and touched the top of the scepter.

³"What's on your mind, Queen Esther?" the king asked her. "What

do you want? *Even if it is half of the kingdom, it will be given to you.*"

"If it pleases the king," Esther answered, "will the king and Haman come today to the dinner I've prepared for him?"

⁵"Have Haman hurry," the king said, "and do what Esther asks." So the king and Haman came to the dinner Esther prepared.

⁶As they were drinking wine, the king asked Esther, "What do you want? *It will be given you. And what do you ask for? Even if it is half of the kingdom, it will be done.*"

⁷Esther answered, "As to what I want and ask for— ⁸if the king is kind to me and it pleases him to give me what I want and to do what I ask for, will the king and Haman come again to a dinner I will prepare for them? Tomorrow I will answer the king."

Gallows for Mordecai

⁹When Haman left that day, he was happy and feeling good. But when Haman saw Mordecai at the king's gate, not getting up or trembling before him, Haman was furious with Mordecai. ¹⁰But Haman controlled himself, went home, and sent for his friends and his wife Zeresh.

¹¹Haman told them how very rich he was, how many sons he had, and all about the king making him a great man and raising him above the king's other officers and men. ¹²Haman added: "Yes, Queen Esther didn't have anyone come to be with the king at the dinner she made except me, and also tomorrow she invites me to be with the king. ¹³But all this can't satisfy me when I'm always seeing the Jew Mordecai sitting at the king's gate."

¹⁴Then his wife Zeresh and all his

⁵
2:6 Mt 14:7
Mk 6:23

friends said, "Have a gallows built 75 feet high. In the morning ask the king to have Mordecai hanged on it. Then go happily with the king to the dinner."

Haman liked the idea, and he built the gallows.

Haman Must Honor Mordecai

6 That night the king couldn't sleep. He told somebody to bring the historical records, and they were read to the king. The records showed how Mordecai had told about Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's eunuchs guarding the door, who had plotted to kill King Xerxes.

"What was done to honor Mordecai and make him great for this?" the king asked.

"Not a thing was done for him," the king's young men serving him answered.

"Is there anyone in the court?" the king asked. Just then Haman had come into the outer court of the king's palace to ask the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows he had prepared for him.

"There's Haman standing in the court," the king's men answered him.

"He should come in," the king said.

"Haman came in. The king asked him, "What should be done for the man the king wants to honor?"

Haman thought, "Whom would the king want to honor but me?" So Haman told the king, "For the man the king wants to honor—men should bring a royal robe the king has worn and a horse the king has ridden, that has a royal crown on its head. The robe and the horse should be given to one of the king's noble officers, who should

put the robe on the man the king wants to honor and have him ride on the horse through the open square of the city and shout before him. 'This is what is done for the man the king wants to honor.'"

"Hurry," the king told Haman. "Take the robe and the horse as you said, and do this for Mordecai the Jew who sits in the king's gate. Don't omit anything you said."

Haman took the robe and the horse, put the robe on Mordecai, and had him ride through the open square of the city and shouted ahead of him. "This is done for the man the king wants to honor."

Mordecai went back to the king's gate. But Haman hurried home grieving and with his head covered. Haman told his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened to him. Then his wise men and his wife Zeresh told him, "You have started to fall before Mordecai; if he is of the Jewish people, you're helpless against him. You will certainly go down before him."

While they were still talking to him, the king's eunuchs came and hurriedly took Haman to the dinner Esther had prepared.

Esther Denounces Haman

7 So the king and Haman came to have dinner with Queen Esther. And again on the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king asked Esther, "What do you want, Queen Esther? It will be given you. And what do you ask for? Up to half of the kingdom, it will be done."

Then Queen Esther answered, "If you are kind to me, King, and if it pleases you: Give me my life—that's what I ask for; and my people—that's what I want. 'I and

ny people have been sold to be destroyed, killed, and wiped out. If our men and women had only been sold to be slaves, I would have kept silent because such a distress would not be enough to trouble the king about it."

"Then King Xerxes asked Queen Esther: "Who is he? Where's the one who decided to do this?"

"The oppressor and enemy," Esther said. "Is this wicked Haman!" Haman was terrified as he faced the king and the queen.

"Angrily the king got up from drinking wine and went into the palace garden. But Haman stayed to beg Queen Esther for his life, seeing the king had made up his mind to punish him. "When the king came back from the palace garden into the palace where they'd been drinking wine, Haman was lying on the couch where Esther was. "Is he even going to rape the queen in my presence, here in the palace?" the king asked. Then the king gave sentence, and they covered Haman's face.

"Harbona, one of the eunuchs waiting on the king, said, "You know, the gallows Haman made for Mordecai, who spoke up to help the king, is standing at Haman's home, 75 feet high."

"Hang him on it," the king said. "So they hanged Haman on the gallows he made for Mordecai. And the king got over his anger.

B That day King Xerxes gave Queen Esther the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews, and Mordecai came before the king, because Esther told him what Mordecai was to her. "The king took off his ring he had taken from Haman and gave it to Mordecai.

And Esther put Mordecai in charge of Haman's house.

Jews Permitted to Defend Themselves

"Esther spoke again to the king and, bowing down at his feet, begged him with tears to prevent the ruin planned by Haman, Agag's descendant, and what he had plotted against the Jews. "The king held out his golden scepter to Esther, and Esther got up and stood before the king. "If it pleases the king," she said, "and he is kind to me and thinks it right and I please him, have someone write to cancel the messages planned by Haman, Hammedatha's son and Agag's descendant, who wrote to destroy the Jews in all the king's provinces. "How can I see disaster strike my people, and how can I watch my relatives perish?"

"King Xerxes told Queen Esther and Mordecai the Jew, "Look, I have given Haman's house to Esther, and Haman was hanged on the gallows because he tried to kill the Jews. "Also write as you like about the Jews in the king's name and seal it with the king's ring, because what is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's ring can't be canceled."

"At that time, on the 23d day of Sivan, the third month, the king's secretaries were called, and just as Mordecai ordered, it was written to the Jews, the satraps, governors, and officers of the 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia, to each province in its own writing and to each people in their own language, and to the Jews in their writing and their language. "They wrote in King Xerxes' name, sealed the messages with the king's ring, and

sent them by mounted messengers riding the king's fast horses, specially bred. ¹¹saying, "The king has given the Jews in every city permission to get together and make a stand for their lives, to ruin, kill, and destroy every armed force of the people and province attacking them, even children and women, and to take their goods. ¹²on one day in all the provinces of King Xerxes, on the 13th day of Adar, the 12th month." ¹³The written copy was made public law for all the people in every province; the Jews were to be ready on that day to avenge themselves on their enemies.

¹⁴So the messengers, riding the king's fast horses, went out speedily in keeping with the king's command; and the decree was issued also in the fortress city of Susa.

¹⁵Mordecai went out from the king wearing royal robes of violet and white, a large gold crown, and an outer mantle of linen and purple. And the city of Susa cheered with delight and was happy.

¹⁶So the Jews had light—joy, delight, and honor. ¹⁷And in every province and every city where the king's message and decree came, the Jews were delighted and glad, feasting and having a happy day. Then many people of the land said they were Jews, because they were afraid of the Jews.

The Jews Kill Their Enemies

9 On the 13th day of Adar, the 12th month, the time came for the king's message and decree to be carried out. It was the day when the Jews' enemies hoped to become their masters; but the thing was turned around: the Jews got control of those who hated them.

¹The Jews got together in their

cities in all the provinces of King Xerxes to strike at those who were trying to ruin them. And nobody could oppose them, all the people now being afraid of them. ³All the officers of the provinces, the satraps, the governors, and others who worked for the king, helped the Jews because they were afraid of Mordecai. ⁴Mordecai was a great man in the king's palace and was getting more and more powerful, and so his reputation spread to all the provinces.

⁵The Jews defeated all their enemies, killing and destroying them with the sword and doing as they pleased with those who hated them. ⁶In the fortified city of Susa the Jews killed and destroyed 500 men. ⁷They killed Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, ⁸Poratha, Adalin, Aridatha, ⁹Parmashta, Arisai, Ardai, and Vaizatha, ¹⁰the 10 sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the enemy of the Jews. But they didn't take any of their goods.

¹¹That day the number of those killed in the fortress city of Susa was reported to the king. ¹²The king said to Queen Esther, "In the fortress city of Susa the Jews have killed and destroyed 500 men and Haman's 10 sons. What have they done in the rest of the king's provinces? What you want will be given you, and what you ask for will be done."

¹³"If it pleases the king," Esther said, "allow the Jews in Susa tomorrow also to do what was decreed for today and hang Haman's 10 sons on the gallows."

¹⁴The king told men to do this, issuing a decree in Susa, and they hanged Haman's 10 sons.

¹⁵The Jews in Susa also got together on the 14th day of the

⁹
12 MI 14.7
MK 6.23

month and killed 300 men in Susa but didn't take any of their goods. ¹⁶The other Jews who were in the king's provinces also gathered to defend their lives and get relief from their enemies, and they killed 75,000 of those who hated them; but they didn't take any of their goods. ¹⁷This was on the 13th day of the month Adar, and on the 14th they rested and made it a day when they celebrated and were happy. ¹⁸But the Jews in Susa got together on the 13th and the 14th and rested on the 15th and made it a day of celebrating and being happy. ¹⁹And so the Jews in the villages, living in the unwallied towns, make the 14th day of the month Adar one when they are happy, feast, have a holiday, and send one another gifts of food.

The Feast of Purim Instituted

²⁰Mordecai wrote down these things and sent letters to all the Jews in all the provinces of King Xerxes near and far, ²¹to order them to keep the 14th and 15th day of the month Adar every year ²²as the days when the Jews got relief from their enemies and the month when their grief turned to gladness and mourning to a happy time, that they should make them days when they feast and are happy and send one another gifts of food and send gifts to the poor. ²³So the Jews continued to do as they had started and as Mordecai had written them, ²⁴because Haman, Hammedatha's son and Agag's descendant, enemy of all the Jews, plotted against the Jews to destroy them and cast Pur, that is, the lot, to crush and destroy them. ²⁵But when this came before the king, he declared in letters that the wicked

thing Haman had plotted against the Jews should turn back on his own head and he and his sons should hang on the gallows.

²⁶From the word Pur they called these days Purim. Because of everything said in this letter and what they experienced in this matter and what happened to them, ²⁷the Jews set up and adopted a custom for themselves and their descendants and any who would join them, never to fail to keep these two days as Mordecai described them and appointed them to be kept every year: ²⁸Everybody in the coming ages, every family, province, and city, should remember and keep these days; and these days of Purim should never be overlooked among the Jews but always be remembered by their descendants.

²⁹Queen Esther, Abihail's daughter, and Mordecai the Jew wrote this down with full authority to confirm this second letter of Purim. ³⁰And letters were sent to all the Jews in the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Xerxes with a message of sincere friendship ³¹to confirm these days of Purim at the time appointed, as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther ordered and as they laid down the rules for themselves and their descendants with regard to fasting and weeping. ³²Esther's declaration confirmed this matter of Purim, and it was written down in a book.

10 King Xerxes made the country and the lands by the sea provide slave labor. ²All he did, his power and might, and the whole story of Mordecai's greatness, whom the king made great—aren't they written in the history of the kings of the Medes and Persians?

¹ Mordecai the Jew was next to King Xerxes and well liked by the mass of his fellow Jews as he provided for

the welfare of his people and brought happiness to his whole race.

JOB

1 There was in the land of Uz, a man by the name of Job and that man was blameless: He lived right, feared God, and kept away from evil. ²He had seven sons and three daughters ³and owned 7,000 sheep and goats, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and many servants. He was the greatest among all the people in the east.

⁴His sons used to go to one another's homes where each on a certain day gave a banquet. They would send someone and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them.

⁵When they finished a round of banquets, Job would send someone and sanctify them. He would get up early in the morning and offer sacrifices for each of them. Job thought, "My children may have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Job was always doing this.

Job Loses Everything

⁶There was a day when the sons of God came to stand before the LORD, and Satan also came and was among them.

⁷"Where do you come from?" the LORD asked Satan.

"From going through the world," Satan answered the LORD, "and traveling back and forth in it."

⁸"Have you thought of my servant Job," the LORD asked Satan, "there's nobody in the world like him—a blameless man: He lives right, fears God, and keeps away from evil?"

⁹"Does Job fear God for nothing?"

Satan asked the LORD. ¹⁰"Haven't you protected him by putting a fence around him, his home, and everything he has? You have blessed everything he does; his flocks and herds have spread out over the land. ¹¹But stretch out your hand and destroy everything he has—he'll certainly curse You to Your face."

¹²"You may do what you like with anything he has," the LORD told Satan. "But don't touch the man himself."

Then Satan left the LORD's presence.

¹³One day when Job's sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in the home of their oldest brother, ¹⁴a messenger came to Job. "The oxen were plowing," he said, "and the donkeys were feeding near them, ¹⁵when men from Sheba attacked them, took them away, and killed the servants with their swords. I alone escaped to tell you."

¹⁶While he was still talking, another came. "God's fire fell from the sky," he said, "burned up your flocks and servants. They are dead and I alone escaped to tell you."

¹⁷While he was still talking, another came. "The Chaldeans formed three companies," he said, "made a raid on the camels, took them, and killed the servants with their swords. I alone have escaped to tell you."

¹⁸While he was still talking, another man came. "Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine," he said, "at the

1:17-22
1:17-22

home of their oldest brother, "when a great storm swept over the desert, struck the four corners of the house so that it fell on the young people, and they are dead. I alone escaped to tell you."

²⁰Job got up, tore his garment, and cut off his hair. Then he fell to the ground, worshiped, ²¹and said:

"Naked came I from my mother's womb,

And naked will I return.

The LORD gave and the LORD took away—

The LORD's name be praised!"

²²In all this, Job didn't sin or accuse God of doing anything wrong.

Job Suffers

2 There was another day when God's sons came to stand before the LORD, and among them Satan also came before the LORD.

¹"Where do you come from?" the LORD asked Satan.

"From going through the world," Satan answered the LORD, "and traveling back and forth in it."

³"Have you thought of my servant Job?" the LORD asked Satan. There's nobody in the world like him—a blameless man: He lives right, fears God, and keeps away from evil. He still lives blamelessly, and you're trying to stir Me up against him to ruin him without a reason."

"Skin for skin," Satan answered the LORD, "a man will give everything he has for his life. ⁵But stretch out your hand and strike his bones and his flesh, and he'll certainly curse You to Your face."

"You may do what you like with him," the LORD told Satan. "Only spare his life."

⁷Satan went away from the LORD

and struck Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the top of his head. ⁸Job took a piece of a broken pottery to scrape himself as he sat in the ashes.

⁹"Do you still insist on living blamelessly?" his wife asked him. "Curse God and die."

¹⁰"You talk like one of the foolish women" he said to her. "We receive prosperity from God, shouldn't we receive trouble too?"

In all this Job didn't say anything sinful.

¹¹Job's three friends heard about all the misery that had come to him. Each of them came to him from his home, Eliphaz from Teman, Bildad from Shuah, Zophar from Naama; they had agreed to go together to Job to sympathize with him, and comfort him.

¹²Looking at him from a distance, they didn't recognize him. They cried out loud and wept, and each of them tore his garment. They threw dust on their heads, into the air. ¹³Then they sat down with him on the ground for seven days and nights. No one said anything to him because they saw he was suffering so much.

Job: "Perish the Day I Was Born"

3 Finally Job spoke and cursed the day of his birth. ¹Job said:

¹Perish the day I was born,
and the night that said, "A boy
is conceived!"

²May that day be dark,
may God above not look for it.
May light not shine on it;

³may the darkness and a deep
shadow claim it,
and a cloud settle on it.
May an eclipse terrify it;

²
³ 1 Th. 5:22

- 6that night—may blackness
 take it away,
 may it not be joined to^a the
 days of the year
 or be numbered among the
 months.
- 7May that night produce nothing
 and no happy shouting come
 into it.
- 8May those who curse the Sea,
 curse it
 even those who stir up
 Leviathan.
- 9When its morning dawns,
 may its stars turn dark.
 May it look for light and get none
 and not see the rays of
 dawn—
- 10because it didn't shut the doors
 of the womb I came from
 or hide trouble from my eyes.
- 11Why didn't I die right after I was
 born
 and perish when I came out of
 the womb?
- 12Why were there knees to
 welcome me
 and breasts to let me nurse?
- 13I would now be lying down in
 peace:
 I would be asleep and resting.
- 14I would be with kings and coun-
 selors of the world,
 who built for themselves what
 are now ruins.
- 15I would be with princes who had
 gold
 and filled their homes with
 silver.
- 16Or I would be like a baby still-
 born and buried, and not
 exist,
 like children who never saw
 the light.
- 17There the wicked stop their
 raging,
 and there the weary rest.
- 18There the captives are together
 without a worry;
 they don't hear anymore the
 yelling of the slave-
 driver.
- 19The small and the great are
 there,
 and the slave is free from his
 master.
- 20Why give light to one in misery
 and life to those who feel
 bitter,
- 21who long for death and it doesn't
 come,
 and dig for it more than for
 buried treasures,
- 22who are extremely glad—
 delighted to find a grave.
- 23Why give life to a man for whom
 the way is hidden
 whom God has fenced in?
- 24Instead of eating I sigh,
 I pour out my groaning like
 water.
- 25Those things that make me
 tremble in fear now
 overtake me,
 what I dread most happens to
 me.
- 26I have no ease or quiet or rest,
 only trouble keeps coming.

Eliphaz: The Wicked Suffer

- 4** Then Eliphaz from Teman
 spoke:
- 1If someone tries to talk to you,
 will you get impatient?
 But who can keep from talking?
- 2Look, you have instructed many
 and strengthened those whose
 hands hang helplessly.
- 3When one was falling, you lifted
 him with your words,

^aVersions: Heb "be happy among"

- when knees were tottering,
you gave them strength.
- ⁸But now something happens to you,
and you're discouraged,
it touches you, and you panic.
- ⁹Doesn't fearing God make you
feel confident
and living blamelessly give you hope?
- ¹⁰Try to think—do innocent people
perish?
Where are the good people
that are destroyed?
- ¹¹When I saw men plowing
wickedness and sowing misery,
they reaped what they sowed.
- ¹²God destroys them with His
breath
and cuts them off with a blast
of His anger.
- ¹³There's the roar and growling of
the lion—
but young lions have their
teeth knocked out,
- ¹⁴Old lions perish without prey,
and the cubs of the lionesses
are scattered.
- ¹⁵I was told something secretly,
and my ear got a whisper of
it.
- ¹⁶Visions in the night were giving
me troubled thoughts,
when deep sleep falls on
people.
- ¹⁷Fear and trembling came over
me
and made all my bones quake.
- ¹⁸A spirit passed before me;
it made the hair on my flesh
stand on end.
- ¹⁹Something stood there;
I couldn't tell what it looked
like.
- A form was before my eyes;
I heard a soft voice:

- ¹⁷"Can a human being be
righteous before God?
Can a man be pure before his
Maker?"
- ¹⁸You see, God doesn't trust His
own servants
and notices mistakes in His
angels.
- ¹⁹How much more those who live
in clay houses,
who have their foundation in
the dust;
these may be crushed quicker
than a moth!
- ²⁰Between morning and evening
they are shattered.
With nobody paying any
attention
they perish forever.
- ²¹Isn't their tent-cord torn away?
Don't they die senselessly?

*Eliphaz: Submit to God, and
You'll Be Happy*

- 5** Call out now—is there any-
one to answer you?
To which of the holy ones will
you turn?
- ²Surely, resentment kills a fool,
and a grudge slays a silly
person.
- ³I have seen a fool take root,
and his house suddenly
cursed.
- ⁴His children, far from help, are
crushed in the gate,
and with nobody to rescue
them.
- ⁵What he reaps the hungry eat,
taking it even from among the
thorns;
And thirsty men pant after his
wealth.
- ⁶Surely sorrow doesn't come out
of the soil
nor trouble sprout from the
ground,

- ⁷But a man is born for trouble
as sparks fly up.
- ⁸But I would go to God for help
and lay my case before Him.
- ⁹He does great things that can't
be known by searching
and wonders that can't be
counted.
- ¹⁰He gives rain that falls on the
ground
and sends water on the fields.
- ¹¹He sets up the lowly on high:
those who mourn he lifts to
safety.
- ¹²He keeps shrewd men from
carrying out their plans
so that their hands can't do
anything wise.
- ¹³He catches the wise in their own
tricks:
the plans of cunning men
prove to be hasty.
- ¹⁴During the day they run into
darkness
and grope at noon as at night.
- ¹⁵But He saves the desolate from
their jaws
and from the hands of the
mighty.
- ¹⁶Then the poor have hope
while wickedness shuts its
mouth.
- ¹⁷Happy is the man whom God
corrects:
he shouldn't despise being cor-
rected by the Almighty.
- ¹⁸He wounds and bandages the
wounds.
He strikes, and His hands
heal.
- ¹⁹He will save you from six
troubles,
and in seven no harm will
touch you.
- ²⁰In famine He will save you from
death
and in war from the sword.
- ²¹When the tongue lashes, you
will be safe.
and be unafraid when
destruction comes.
- ²²You will laugh at destruction
and famine
and not be afraid of the beasts
on the earth.
- ²³You will have a covenant with
the stones in the field,
and the wild animals will be
your friends.
- ²⁴You will experience happiness
in your home,
and inspect your house and
find nothing missing.
- ²⁵You will find your children are
many
and your offspring are like the
grass on the ground.
- ²⁶You will come to your grave in a
ripe old age,
like a stack of hay in the right
season.
- ²⁷This is what we've searched
out—it is true.
Listen to it and learn it for
your own good.

Job: I'm Suffering Too Much

- 6** Then Job answered:
- ¹I wish my grief were weighed
and laid with my calamity on
the scales!
- ²Then it would be heavier than
the sand of the seas.
That's why I've been talking
rashly.
- ³The arrows of the Almighty are
in me,
my spirit is drinking their
poison.
God's terrors line up in battle
against me.
- ⁴Does a wild donkey bray when
he's on the grass,
or an ox low over mixed
fodder?

5
11 Lk 1:52
13 1 Co 3:18
17 Heb 12:5

- ^aIs tasteless food eaten without salt,
or is there any flavor in the white of an egg?^b
- ⁷My appetite refuses to touch such things;
but they are my food in my sickness.^c
- ⁸I wish what I ask would happen,
that God would give me what I'm hoping for.
- ⁹I wish God would make up His mind to crush me,
let His hand act and cut me off.
- ¹⁰Then I would still have comfort;
I would jump with delight in pain that doesn't let up,
because I have not denied what the Holy One said.
- ¹¹What strength have I to wait?
What is the purpose of prolonging my life?
- ¹²Do I have the strength of rocks,
or is my body made of bronze?
- ¹³Am I not completely helpless?
Isn't the wisdom I need to get over this, driven out of me?

Job: You're Bad Friends

- ¹⁴A friend should treat a despairing man kindly
even if the man gives up fearing the Almighty.
- ¹⁵My brothers have been as unreliable as a brook;
like seasonal streams that flow away.
- ¹⁶They are like waters that are darker than ice,
where the melting snow hides itself.
- ¹⁷During a scorching summer the waters vanish;

- in the heat their beds dry up.
- ¹⁸Caravans turn off their road,
go up into a desert area and perish.
- ¹⁹Caravans from Tema look for the streams,
those from Sheba look forward to them.
- ²⁰They're discouraged, though they had been confident;
coming there, they're disappointed.
- ²¹Now you are useless:
You see something terrifying and you're afraid.
- ²²Did I ever say, "Give me a gift,
or pay me a bribe from your wealth"?
- ²³Did I ever say, "Deliver me from an enemy,
or ransom me from the tyrant"?
- ²⁴Teach me, and I'll be still,
make me understand how I've been wrong.
- ²⁵How forceful is honest talk!
But what does your arguing prove?
- ²⁶Do you think my words need correction,
and consider what a desperate man says to be vindicated?
- ²⁷Oh yes, you would even throw lots for an orphan
and bargain over your friend.
- ²⁸But now, look at me—
I will not lie to your faces.
- ²⁹Please change your mind and let there be no injustice.
Change your mind—I am still right in this.
- ³⁰Is there wrong in what I say,
or can't my mouth form the right words?

^bThe exact kind of insipid food meant is uncertain.

^cHeb "Like sickness"

Job: We're Slaves Without Hope

7 Doesn't a man experience hard service on earth,

isn't his life like that of a hired servant?

²Isn't he like a slave panting for shade,

like a hired man looking for his pay?

³I'm given empty months and allotted miserable nights.

⁴When I lie down, I ask, "When will I get up?"

But the evening is long, and I'm tired of tossing around till dawn.

⁵My body is covered with worms and dust;

my skin forms scars, then festers again.

⁶My days go swifter than a weaver's shuttle and are spent without hope.

⁷Remember, my life is a breath, and I will not be happy again.

⁸You see me now but will not see me anymore, you watch me now but I'll soon be gone.

⁹As a cloud dissolves and goes away, so we go down into the grave and don't come up again.

¹⁰We don't come back home again, and our house doesn't know us anymore.

¹¹So I'm not going to keep silent; but talk with anguish in my spirit, and complain with bitterness in my soul.

¹²Am I the Sea or the Sea-monster that You have set a guard over me?

¹³When I think my couch may comfort me,

my bed may help me bear my pain,

¹⁴Then You scare me with dreams and terrify me with visions.

¹⁵I would rather be strangled, and would prefer death to these sufferings of mine.

¹⁶I am wasting away, I will not live forever.

Let me alone—my days are just a breath.

¹⁷What is man that You should make much of him, that You should be concerned about him?

¹⁸What is he that You should inspect him every morning, and test him every moment?

¹⁹How long will it be till You look away from me and let me alone long enough to swallow my spit?

²⁰If I sin, what can I do to You, O Keeper of men?

Why do You make me the one You attack?

I am a burden even to myself.

²¹Why don't You forgive my wrong and take away my sin?

Soon I'll lie down in the dust, then You will search for me, but I'll be gone!

Bildad: God Is Just

8 Then Bildad from Shuah answered:

¹How long will you say such things?

Your words are only a big wind?

²Does God pervert the right or the Almighty pervert justice?

³Your children sinned against Him,

so He let their wrongs destroy them.

- ⁵If you will earnestly turn to God
and ask the Almighty for
mercy,
⁶if you are pure and upright,
then He will get busy for you
and restore your house so you
can live righteously.
⁷Then what you had before will
seem small,
compared with the great pros-
perity you will have.
⁸Just ask the people of earlier
ages;
consider what the fathers
have learned.
⁹We have been around for so
short a time, we know
nothing;
our days on earth are a
shadow.
¹⁰Will they not teach you and tell
you,
and talk from their
understanding?
¹¹Will papyrus grow up where
there is no swamp
or rushes get tall without
water?
¹²Even if they were fresh and not
cut,
they would wither quicker
than grass.
¹³That is how it goes with all who
forget God;
the hope of the godless
perishes.
¹⁴His confidence is a thread;
his trust a spider's web.
¹⁵If one leans on his house, it
won't stand;
if one clings to it, it will give
way.
¹⁶He is like a plant full of mois-
ture, in the sunshine,
whose shoots spread over his
garden.
¹⁷Its tendrils are intertwined on a
pile of stones;

- they cling to a stone house.
¹⁸But when it is destroyed from its
place;
the place denies ever having
seen it.
¹⁹It wastes away on the roadside,
and others grow up from the
ground.
²⁰You know, God doesn't reject a
blameless man
or does He help wicked
people.
²¹He will still fill your mouth with
laughter
and your lips with happy
shouting.
²²Those who hate you will be
covered with shame,
and the tent of the wicked will
be no more.

*Job: I Can't Defend My Inno-
cence Against God*

- 9** Then Job answered;
¹Surely I know that this is
so.
But how can a man be vin-
dicated before God?
²If he should want to argue with
Him,
he couldn't answer one ques-
tion in a thousand.
³One may be intelligent and
strong,
but he couldn't defy Him
without getting hurt.
⁴He moves mountains without
their knowing it
and in His anger overthrows
them.
⁵He shakes the earth from its
place,
and its pillars tremble.
⁶He commands the sun and it
doesn't shine;
He locks up the stars.

- ⁸He alone stretched out the heavens
and walks on the high waves
of the sea.
- ⁹He made the Big Bear, Orion,
the Pleiades,
the inner rooms for the stars
of the south.
- ¹⁰He does things so great they
can't be known by
searching,
and too many wonders to be
counted.
- ¹¹He passes by me and I don't see
Him;
He goes by and I don't
perceive Him.
- ¹²When He takes anything away,
who will stop Him
or ask Him, "What are You
doing?"
- ¹³God doesn't stop being angry;
the helpers of Rahab the Sea-
monster bow under Him.
- ¹⁴How much less can I answer
Him
and choose the right thing to
tell Him.
- ¹⁵Even though I'm right, I couldn't
answer,
I would ask my Judge for
mercy.
- ¹⁶If I called and He answered,
I don't believe He would listen
to me.
- ¹⁷He would crush me in a storm
and give me many wounds
without a reason.
- ¹⁸He doesn't let me get my breath
but fills me with bitterness.
- ¹⁹If it is about strength, He is
mighty;
if about going to court, who
dare summon Him?
- ²⁰Even if I'm righteous, my own
mouth would condemn me;
if I'm blameless, it would de-
clare me crooked.
- ²¹I am blameless; I'm not con-
cerned about myself,
for I hate my life.
- ²²It's all the same. That's why I
say,
"He destroys the innocent as
well as the wicked."
- ²³When disaster suddenly kills
people,
He mocks at the despair of the
innocent.
- ²⁴The country is turned over to the
wicked,
He covers the faces of its
judges.
If He doesn't do it, who does?
- ²⁵My days hurry along faster than
a runner,
they flee away and see no
happiness.
- ²⁶They slip by like papyrus boats,
like an eagle swooping down
on his food.
- ²⁷If I say I'll forget my grief,
give up looking as I do and
smile,
- ²⁸I dread all my pains;
I know You will not declare
me innocent;
- ²⁹I'm already guilty—
why should I wear myself out
for nothing?
- ³⁰If I wash myself in snow
and clean my hands with lye,
- ³¹Then You would plunge me into
a mudhole,
and my own clothes would
abhor me.
- ³²You're not a man like me whom I
could answer
and with whom I could go to
court.
- ³³There's no umpire between us,
laying his hand on both of us.
- ³⁴God should take His rod away
from me
and not terrify me.

⁹Then I would speak without
fearing Him.
But that's not the way it is
between us.

*Job: God, You're Looking for Sin
in Me*

10 I am disgusted with my
life,
so I will unburden myself and
complain.

I will talk with bitterness of soul.

²I will say to God, "Don't
condemn me.

Let me know why You quarrel
with me.

³What can You gain by violent-
ly mistreating me,
by rejecting what You made
with the labor of Your
hands,
while You beam on the plans
of the wicked?

⁴Do You have human eyes or see
like a man?

Do You see as a man sees?

⁵Are Your days like the days of a
man?

Are Your years like the years
of a man,

⁶that You look for wrong in me
and search for sin in me?

⁷You know I'm not guilty.

But there's nobody to rescue
me from Your hands.

⁸Your hands formed me and
made me,
then turned to destroy me.

⁹Remember You shaped me out of
clay

and now You turn me to dust
again.

¹⁰Didn't You pour me out like milk,
curdle me like cheese?

¹¹Didn't You dress me in skin and
flesh,

knit me together with bones
and sinews?

¹²You gave me life and love;
Your care has preserved my
spirit.

¹³But in Your heart You hid these
things

I know this is what you did.

¹⁴If I sin, You watch me
and will not free me from my
guilt.

¹⁵If I'm guilty, woe to me!
Even if I'm righteous, I can't
lift up my head,

I am full of shame
and drenched with misery.

¹⁶Bold like a lion You hunt me
down;

You repeat Your marvels
against me:

¹⁷You renew Your attacks on me,
and increase Your anger
against me,
constantly bringing fresh
troops against me.

¹⁸Why did You take me out of the
womb?

I should have died before any
eye had seen me.

¹⁹I would be as though I had never
existed,
carried from the womb to the
tomb."

²⁰Aren't my days few?
He should stop and let me
alone,
then I would smile a little

²¹before I go away and
never return
to a land of darkness and deep
shadows;

²²before I go to a dark and gloomy
land with shadows and con-
fusion
where the light is the same as
the darkness.

Zophar: Get Rid of Sin, and You'll Be Happy

11 Then Zophar from Naama answered:

¹Shouldn't this overflow of words be answered,

or does a man's ability to talk acquit him?

²Should your empty talk silence men

so that you can mock without anyone rebuking you?

³You say, "My teaching is pure, and as You see, I'm clean."

⁴I wish God would speak, open his mouth to you,

⁵I wish He would tell you the secrets of wisdom, how wisdom is twofold.

Then you would know that God forgets some of your guilt.

⁶Can you discover God's secrets or completely discern what the Almighty is?

⁷He is higher than heaven—what can you do?
deeper than the grave—what can you know?

⁸He is longer than the earth and wider than the sea.

⁹When He comes along, arrests anyone, and calls a court session, who can stop Him?

¹⁰He knows the worthlessness of men.

He can discern sin without pondering.

¹¹But an empty-headed man will have sense

when a wild donkey is born tame.^d

¹²If you want to set your heart right

then stretch out your hands to Him—

¹³If there's wrong in your hand, put it far away— and don't let evil live in your tent.

¹⁴Then you could lift up your face without a blemish; and stand firm and not have to be afraid.

¹⁵You will surely forget your misery and think of it only like water that has flowed past.

¹⁶Then your life will be brighter than the noonday; darkness will become like morning.

¹⁷You will feel confident because there's hope, look around and rest securely.

¹⁸You will lie down with no one to frighten you, and many will ask you to be kind to them.

¹⁹The eyes of the wicked will pine away, for they have lost their chance to escape.

Their hope is just a dying breath.

Job: God Upsets Our Life

12 Then Job answered:

¹You surely are the people and wisdom will die with you!

²I have understanding as well as you and am not inferior to you.

Who doesn't know such things?

³The man is a joke to his neighbor, who calls on God and expects him to answer.

^dOr "gives birth to a man"

The righteous man as well as the innocent is a joke.

⁵A man who lives at ease thinks with contempt of misfortune.

He thinks it is planned for those whose feet slip.

⁶Robbers' tents are undisturbed, and those who make God angry are secure;

They take God into their hands.

⁷Ask the animals, they will teach you,
the birds in the air, they will tell you.

⁸Or talk to the earth, it will teach you;
even the fish in the sea will tell you.

⁹Which of these doesn't know the LORD's hand made them?

¹⁰In His hand is the life of every living thing
and the spirit in every human body.

¹²
¹⁰ Mt 13:41
¹⁰ Lk 1:32

¹¹Doesn't the ear test words
and the palate taste food?

¹²Aged people are wise,
and those who live long understand.

¹³But God has both wisdom and power,
counsel and intelligence.

¹⁴What He tears down
can't be built again.
When He puts a man in prison
it can't be opened.

¹⁵When He keeps back the waters
everything dries up.
When He sends the waters out
they engulf the earth.

¹⁶God has strength and victory.
He owns the *wrong doer*
as well as *him who leads*
others to do wrong.

¹⁷He leads counselors away
stripped

and makes judges fools.

¹⁸He takes the belt off kings
and ties a loincloth around
their hips.

¹⁹He leads priests away stripped
bare
and overthrows those who are
well established.

²⁰He takes away the speech of
trusted men
and the good judgment of
elders.

²¹He pours contempt on noblemen
and unties the belt of the
mighty.

²²He uncovers mysteries in the
dark
and brings gloomy things to
the light.

²³He makes nations great
and destroys them,
He spreads out nations
and leads them away.

²⁴He takes away the intelligence
of the leaders of a country's
people
and makes them wander in a
pathless wilderness.

²⁵They grope in the dark without a
light;
He makes them stagger like a
drunkard.

Job: I Want to Talk to God

13 My eye has seen all this;
my ear has heard and
understood it.

¹I know it as well as you do;
I'm not inferior to you.

²But now I want to talk to the
Almighty,
and prove my case to God.

³But you are whitewashing with
lies;
you are all quack healers.

⁴I wish you would keep silent,
then you would be wise.

8Hear now my proof,
 and listen to my pleading.
 9Do you talk wickedly for God's
 sake
 or speak dishonestly for Him?
 10Do you need to show Him special
 favor
 or contend for God?
 11Will all go well when He
 examines you?
 Can you fool Him as men are
 fooled?
 12He will surely correct you
 if secretly you show special
 favors.
 13Doesn't His majesty terrify you
 and awe of Him fall on you?
 14Your wise sayings are proverbs
 of ashes;
 your arguments are made of
 clay.
 15Be silent before me and I'll
 speak,
 whatever may happen to me.
 16I carry my flesh in my teeth
 and take my life in my hand.
 17Though God may kill me, I will be
 patient,^e
 and prove my ways to His
 face.
 18This will also serve to save me
 that no ungodly person would
 dare face Him.
 19Hear what I say;
 I will tell it while you listen.
 20You see I have prepared my
 case;
 I know I'll come out righteous.
 21Can anyone accuse me of
 anything?
 If so, I'll be silent and die.

Job to God: Why Scare a Leaf?

22If only You won't do two things
 to me,
 I'll not hide from You:

23Take Your hand away from me;
 don't let Your terror suddenly
 overwhelm me.
 24Then call and I'll answer,
 or I'll speak and You answer.
 25How much have I done wrong
 and sinned?
 Show me my wickedness and
 my sin.
 26Why do You hide Your face and
 think of me as Your enemy?
 27Will You scare away a fluttering
 leaf
 or chase dry stubble,
 28that You write down bitter
 things against me
 and bring on me the sins of my
 youth?
 29You put my feet in stocks;
 You keep watch on all my
 paths
 by engraving a mark on the
 soles of feet.
 30It's like being something rotten
 withering away,
 like a garment eaten by
 moths.

14 Man, born of a woman,
 lives a few days and is
 full of trouble.

2He comes up like a flower and is
 cut down.
 Like a fleeting shadow he
 doesn't stay.
 3Yet You look at such a person
 and bring him to trial with
 Yourself.
 4I wish a clean thing could come
 from the unclean;
 but there isn't one.
 5The number of his days is
 determined,
 and You control the number of
 his months,

^eOr "Though He may . . . I will not wait; I will prove . . ."

- and set a limit beyond which
he can't go.
- ⁶Look away from him and let him
go
till he, like a hired man, enjoys
his day.
- ⁷There is hope for a tree when it
is cut down.
It will sprout again and will
not be without tender
branches.
- ⁸Its roots will grow old in the
ground
and its stump die in the soil;
⁹but a scent of water will make it
sprout
and grow branches like a
young plant.
- ¹⁰But a man dies and lies there
helpless;
a man breathes his last, and
where is he?
- ¹¹Water leaves a lake and a
stream dries up completely;
- ¹²so a man lies down and never
rises;
till the heavens are no more they
do not wake;
they are not roused from their
sleep.
- ¹³I wish You would hide me in the
grave
and keep me there till You
aren't angry anymore,
and set a definite time for me,
and then remember me.
- ¹⁴Once a man dies, can he live
again?
All the days of my service I will
wait
till my relief comes.
- ¹⁵You would call, and I would
answer,
and You would care for him
whom Your hands have
made.
- ¹⁶Now You count my steps

- but then You will not watch
over my sin.
- ¹⁷My wrongs would be sealed in a
bag,
and You would cover my sins.
- ¹⁸But a mountain falls and
crumbles away,
and rocks move from their
place.
- ¹⁹Water wears away stone,
its torrents wash away a
country's soil,
and so You destroy man's
hope.
- ²⁰You overpower him forever, and
he passes away;
You change his looks and
dismiss him.
- ²¹His sons are honored, and he
doesn't know it;
or dishonored, and he never
knows it.
- ²²He suffers only in his own body,
and mourns only for himself.

*Eliphaz: Wise Men Know the
Wicked Are Destroyed*

- 15** Then Eliphaz from Teman
answered:
- ¹Should a wise man answer with
windy knowledge
and fill his belly with the east
wind?
- ²Should he argue with words that
don't help,
with talk that can't do any
good?
- ³Yes, you destroy religion
and make light of devotion
before God.
- ⁴Your sin is teaching you what to
say;
you choose to talk with a
clever tongue.
- ⁵Your mouth condemns you, not I;
your lips testify against you.
- ⁶Are you the first man that was
born?

- Were you born before the hills?
 "Did you listen in on the divine council,
 and there get a monopoly on wisdom?
 "What do you know that we don't know?
 What do you understand that we don't?
 "Among us too there are men who are gray and aged,
 older than your father.
 "Are God's comforts too little for you
 when He speaks gently with you?
 "What has taken from you your mind?
 and why do your eyes flash
 "when you rage against God
 and express such things?
 "What is man that he should be innocent,
 or one born of a woman that he should be righteous?
 "God doesn't trust His holy ones,
 and the heavens aren't pure in His sight.
 "How much less one who is loathsome and corrupt,
 one who drinks wickedness like water!
 "I will tell you, listen to me!
 What I've seen I'll declare.
 "I'll tell you what wise men have declared,
 and what was not concealed from their fathers.
 " (To them alone the land was given,
 and no stranger lived among them.)
 "The wicked man is tormented all his days,
 and only a few years are allotted to the oppressor.
 "Terror sounds in his ears,
 while he prospers somebody comes to rob him.
 "He doesn't believe he'll come back out of the dark;
 men watch for him—he faces their sword.
 "He wanders around as food for the vulture.
 He knows that ruin is at hand.
 "The day of darkness troubles him,
 distress and anguish terrifies him,
 like a king ready to attack.
 "He stretched out his hand against God
 and came like a warrior against the Almighty.
 "He ran stubbornly against Him
 with the thick bosses of his shields.
 "His face was bloated with fat
 and he had gotten fat around the waist.
 "He had settled down in ruined cities,
 in houses where nobody lived
 which were doomed to be heaps of ruins.
 "He won't get rich
 and his property won't endure.
 His possessions will not reach the grave.
 "He will not get out of the dark.
 A flame will shrivel his sprouts,
 and a breath from God's mouth will make him vanish.
 "He should not trust in vanity and deceive himself,
 because he will get nothing in return.
 "He will get it before his time has come,
 and his branch will not be green.

- ³He will shake off, like a vine, his unripe grapes,
and will throw off his blossoms like an olive tree.
- ⁴You see, the company of the ungodly can produce nothing,
and fire consumes the tents of the briber.
- ⁵They conceive trouble and give birth to wrong,
their womb nurtures deception.

Job: God Is Crushing Me

- 16** Then Job answered:
¹I have heard all such things before.
You are all troublesome comforters.
- ²Will those windy words never come to an end?
Why are you so irritated when you answer?
- ³I too could talk like you.
If you were in my place,
I could make a fine speech against you
and shake my head at you.
- ⁴I could encourage you with my mouth
and relieve you with my quivering lips.
- ⁵When I talk, my suffering isn't relieved,
and when I stop talking, it doesn't leave.
- ⁶Surely now, God has worn me out:
You have ravaged all my people;
- ⁷You forced me to be a witness;
My leanness rises against me,
accusing me to my face.
- ⁸In His anger He tears me and hunts me down;
He grinds His teeth at me;
My Enemy looks daggers at me.

- ⁹Some people gape at me with wide-open mouths,
in scorn they strike my cheeks,
everybody is joined together against me.
- ¹⁰God delivers me to unjust men
and throws me into the hands of the wicked.
- ¹¹I was at ease and He shattered me,
He grabbed me by the neck
and smashed me.
He set me up as His target,
- ¹²and His archers surrounded me,
He pierced my vitals without mercy
and poured out my guts on the ground.
- ¹³Wound after wound He inflicted on me,
like a warrior He ran and attacked me.
- ¹⁴I have sewed sackcloth on my skin
and laid my pride in the dust,
- ¹⁵My face is red with weeping,
and a black shadow is under my eyelids
- ¹⁶even though my hands aren't guilty of crime
and my prayer is pure.
- ¹⁷O ground, don't cover my blood;
let my cry find no place to rest.
- ¹⁸Even now my Witness is in heaven,
He who testifies for me is above;
- ¹⁹even the Interpreter of my thoughts.
My eyes drip with tears to God,
- ²⁰but He will plead for a man with God
as one human being pleads for another.

²²My few years pass,
I go the way of no return.

17 My spirit is broken;
my days are snuffed out;
the cemetery is waiting for
me.

¹I certainly have with me those
who mock;
my eye must linger on their
opposition.

³Pledge to be my surety with
Yourself
for who else will shake my
hand on that?

⁴You have kept them in
ignorance,
that is why You will not exalt
them.

⁵Anyone who conquers friends to
get their property,
his children's eyes should fail.

⁶He has made me a byword
among people,
one in whose face they spit.

⁷My eyes are dim with grief;
all my limbs are like a
shadow.

⁸This shocks people who are
upright;
then the innocent will get
stirred up against the
ungodly.

⁹Still the righteous man clings to
his way,
and he who has clean hands
gets stronger.

¹⁰But come on, all of you come
again;
I'll not find a wise one among
you.

¹¹My days are passing,
my cherished plans are
shattered.

¹²They turn night into day;
light draws nearer because it
is so dark.

¹³If I look for the grave as my
home
and spread my couch in the
dark,

¹⁴if I say to the grave, "You are my
father,"
and to the worm, "You are my
mother and sister"—

¹⁵then where, O where is my
hope?
Can anyone see any hope for
me?

¹⁶Will my hope go down to the
grave with me?
Will we rest together in the
dust?

Bildad: The Wicked Perish

18 Then Bildad from Shuah
answered:

¹How long will you hunt for
words?

Think clearly, and then we'll
talk.

²Why do you think of us as cattle
and look on us as stupid?

⁴Why do you rend your soul in
anger?

Shall the earth lose its popula-
tion for your sake
or a mountain be removed
from its place?

⁵It is the wicked whose light is
put out;
it is the light of his fire that
stops shining.

⁶In his tent the light goes out;
above him his lamp flickers.

⁷He walks vigorously—into
trouble,
and his own planning trips
him.

⁸His own feet get him into a net
as he walks over its webbing.

⁹A trap catches his heel;
a snare holds him.

¹⁰A noose is hidden on the ground
for him;

a trap is on his path to catch him.

¹¹Terrors suddenly pounce on him from every side and chase him every step he takes.

¹²Hunger undermines his strength; calamity is ready, at his side.

¹³His skin is eaten by disease; it will devour the limbs of his body.

¹⁴He is dragged from the safety of his house and marched off to the King of Terrors.

¹⁵Fire is set to his home, and burning sulfur is scattered over the place where he lived.

¹⁶His roots dry up under him; his branches are cut off over him.

¹⁷He will be forgotten in his country; his name will not be known beyond it.

¹⁸He will be driven from the light into darkness, and chased out of the world.

¹⁹He will have neither child or descendant among his people nor any survivor where he used to stay.

²⁰What happens to him shocks the people in the west and horrifies those in the east.

²¹Yes, that's how it is where the wicked man lives; where people don't know God.

Job: God Has Wronged Me

19 Then Job answered:
¹How long will you grieve me and crush me with words?

²Ten times you have now insulted me—

you don't feel ashamed of mistreating me.

³Even if it were true that I've done wrong, my wrong would rest with me.

⁴If you proudly look down at me and try to prove I've done something shameful,

⁵then you should know God has mistreated me and caught me in his net.

⁶I cry, "I'm wronged!" and get no answer; I call for help, but there's no justice.

⁷He has walled up my way so that I can't go on and spreads darkness on my paths.

⁸He has robbed me of my honor and taken the crown off my head.

⁹He beats me down on every side, and I'm gone; He uproots my hope like a tree.

¹⁰He gets very angry at me and treats me as His enemy.

¹¹His troops mass against me and heap up ramparts; they camp around my tent.

¹²My brothers have left me; my friends are complete strangers to me.

¹³My relatives and closest friends have stopped coming; the guests in my home have forgotten me.

¹⁴My slave girls take me for a stranger; they look at me as a foreigner.

¹⁵I call my slave, and he doesn't answer; I have to beg him humbly.

¹⁶My wife loathes my breath; I stink to my own family.

¹⁸Even young children despise me;
when I leave, they talk against
me.

¹⁹All my intimate friends are
disgusted with me;
those I love have turned
against me.

²⁰My skin and flesh cling to my
bones;
I escape with the skin of my
teeth.

²¹Have pity on me, my friends,
have pity on me
because God's hand has
struck me.

²²Why do you pursue me like God
and never tire of slandering
me?

²³Oh I wish my words were
written.
I wish they were inscribed on
a scroll:

²⁴Or engraved on rock
or on lead with an iron stylus.

²⁵I know my Redeemer lives
and will at last stand on the
dust.

²⁶Afterward my skin will sur-
round this body,
and in my flesh I will see God.

²⁷Whom I myself will see,
my eyes will see one who is
not a stranger.

My heart faints within me

²⁸when you say:
"How we will persecute him!
The root of the trouble is
found in him."

²⁹Beware of the sword,
because the sword will
destroy iniquity,
in order that you might know
the Almighty.^f

*Zophar: The Happiness of the
Wicked Is Short*

20 Then Zophar from Naama
answered:

¹My distress of mind and my
inward pain
forces me to answer.

²I have heard arguments that
make me ashamed,
but a spirit beyond my under-
standing will give me
answers.

³Do you know that ever since man
was placed on the earth
⁴the triumph of the wicked has
been short
and the joy of the ungodly
lasts only a moment?

⁵Even if his pride reaches to the
skies,
and his head touches the
clouds,
⁶he perishes forever like his
own dung.

Those who have seen him ask,
"Where is he?"

⁷Like a dream he flies away
and can't be found
and is chased away like a
vision at night.

⁸Eyes that saw him will see him
no more;
his home will not look at him
again.

⁹His children will ask the poor to
be kind to them;
his own hands will give back
his wealth.

¹⁰His bones once full of youthful
vigor
will lie down with him in the
dust.

¹¹Though evil is sweet in his mouth
and he hides it under his
tongue,

^fOr "know there is a judgment"

- ¹³though he saves it and won't let it go but holds it in his mouth,
¹⁴the food in his belly is turned into venom.
¹⁵The riches he swallowed he vomits up;
 God drives them out of his belly.
¹⁶He sucks the poison of asps;
 the viper's fang kills him.
¹⁷He won't drink from the running streams,
 from the rivers of honey and curds.
¹⁸What he worked for he will give back and won't consume;
 he will not enjoy the wealth he amassed.
¹⁹For he has struck down the poor and let them lie;
 he has violently taken a house he didn't build.
²⁰Inwardly he knows no quietness,
 he doesn't let anything he delights in get away.
²¹Nothing is left for him to eat,
 so his prosperity doesn't last.
²²With all his wealth
 the full force of misery comes on him.
²³While filling his belly,
 the LORD sends on him the fury of his anger
 and makes his flame drop on him.
²⁴If he flees from an iron weapon,
 a bronze bow will pierce him through.
²⁵When drawn out, it comes out of his back,
 the glittering point out of his gall-bladder.
 Terrors come quickly on him.
²⁶Utter darkness is in store for him.^g

A fire nobody fans will consume him
 and bring evil on everything left in his tent.

- ²⁷Heaven uncovers his wrong;
 the earth rises up against him.
²⁸A flood will carry his house away,
 and sweep it away on the day of God's anger.
²⁹This is the fate God assigns to the wicked,
 the heritage He has appointed for him.

Job: The Wicked Are Happy

- 21** Then Job answered:
¹Listen carefully to what I say,
 and let this be the way you comfort.
²Bear with me while I speak,
 then after I've spoken you may go on mocking.
³Am I complaining about men?
 Why shouldn't I be impatient?
⁴Look at me and be amazed,
 and lay your hand over your mouth.
⁵When I think of it, I'm terrified,
 and my body shudders.
⁶Why do the wicked go on living,
 grow old, and even get powerful?
⁷They see their children firmly established with them
 and look at their descendants.
⁸Their homes are safe with nothing to fear,
 and God doesn't use his rod on them.
⁹Their bulls breed and don't fail,
 their cows have calves and don't miscarry.
¹⁰They let their little ones run around like a flock;

^gGk: Heb adds "his treasures"

- their children jump around.
¹²They sing with tambourine and lyre
 and delight in the music of the flute.
¹³They spend their days in happiness
 and peacefully go down to the grave.
¹⁴But they say to God, "Leave us.
 We don't want to know Your ways.
¹⁵What is the Almighty that we should serve Him,
 and what do we get if we pray to Him?"
¹⁶(But their happiness is not in their hands;
 The way the wicked think is far from me.)
¹⁷How often does the lamp of the wicked go out,
 or the disaster they deserve come on them,
 or does God assign pains to them?
¹⁸How often are they like straw before the wind
 or like chaff the storm sweeps away?
¹⁹You say, "God saves the punishment of a man's wrong for his children."
 He should pay it back to the man himself so he would know it.
²⁰His eyes should see his own ruin;
 he should drink from the anger of the Almighty.
²¹How can he be interested in his home after he's gone,
 when the number of his months is cut off?
²²Can anyone teach God knowledge,
 or judge the Most High?
²³One man dies when at his best,
 feeling altogether happy and contented.
²⁴His thighs are full of fat,
 and the marrow of his bones is fresh.
²⁵Another dies in grief,
 never having tasted any happiness.
²⁶But both lie down alike in the dust,
 and worms cover them.
²⁷You see, I know what you're thinking
 and the wrong you plot against me.
²⁸You ask, "Where is the house of the noble person?
 And where is the home the wicked live in?"
²⁹Haven't you asked travelers?
 You can't deny the remarkable things they tell:
³⁰On the day of disaster the wicked is preserved,
 on the day of wrath they are delivered.
³¹Who will tell him to his face how he lived
 and pay him back for what he did?
³²He is carried to the cemetery,
 and watch is kept over his mound.
³³The clods of the valley are sweet to him.
 Everybody follows him,
 and countless others were before him.
³⁴How, then, can you comfort me with nothing,
 when your answers are still so wrong?

Eliphaz: You Are Wicked

22 Then Eliphaz from Teman answered:
¹Can a man benefit God?

- Can even a wise man benefit Him?
 1Does the Almighty take pleasure in your being vindicated, or does He gain anything from your living blamelessly?
 2Is it because of your piety that He corrects you and enters into judgment with you?
 3Aren't you really very wicked; don't you endlessly do wrong?
 4You take your brothers' goods as security for a debt they don't owe, stripping the naked of their clothes.
 5You don't even give a drink to one famishing with thirst and refuse to give food to the hungry.
 6You are a man of power owning the land; a man with a reputation, living on the land;
 7Yet you send widows away emptyhanded, and the arms of orphans are broken.
 8That's why you're caught in snares, and terror suddenly grips you.
 9That's why you're in darkness so you can't see and a flood of water covers you.
 10Isn't God as high as the heavens? See how high the highest stars are!
 11You ask, "What does God know? Can He judge looking out through a dark cloud?"
 12Thick clouds cover Him so that He can't see, He walks around the circle of the sky."
 13Are you following the dark way that wicked men have taken?
 14Those men are snatched away before their time, their foundation washed away by a river.
 15They told God, "Leave us! What can the Almighty do for us?"
 16Yet He filled their homes with good things. (But the way the wicked think is far from me.)
 17The righteous saw it and were glad, and the innocent laughed at them:
 18"Surely their substance is wiped out, and a fire has consumed their surplus."
 19Be friendly with God and happy, in that way you will enjoy prosperity.
 20Let Him teach you, and what He says treasure in your mind.
 21If you return to the Almighty, you will be restored. If you put wrong away from your tent,
 22and lay your gold down in the dust; if you put your gold from Ophir with the pebbles in the streams,
 23then the Almighty will be to you like gold and piles of silver.
 24Then you will delight in the Almighty and look up to God.
 25You will pray to Him and He will hear you, and you will fulfill your vows.
 26When you decide to do something, you will succeed, and light will shine on your path.
 27When people are humbled, you will say, "Cheer up!"

And God will save the humble person.

¹⁰He will even rescue one who isn't innocent,
who will be rescued by the cleanness of your hands.

Job: If I Could Find God, I Would Defend Myself

23 Then Job answered:
¹Today also my complaint is defiant.

I try hard to hold down my sighing.

²I wish I knew where I could find Him;

I would go to His place.

³I would lay my case before Him and have a mouthful of arguments.

⁴I want to know what He would say to answer me;
I want to understand what He would tell me.

⁵Would He use a powerful subordinate in contending with me?

No, but He Himself would pay attention to me.

⁶Then the upright could argue with Him
and I would escape forever from His judgment.

⁷But if I go east, He isn't there,
or west, I don't see Him.

⁸If I seek Him in the north, I don't see Him,
or turn south, I still can't spy Him.

⁹But He knows the way I go.
When He tests me, I'll come out like gold.

¹⁰My feet have followed closely in His footsteps;

I have kept His way without turning aside.

¹¹I haven't neglected the commandments He speaks.

In my heart I have treasured what He says.

¹²But He decides^a and who can make Him change His mind?
He does what He wants to do.

¹³Yes, He will carry out what is planned for me.

He has many such things in mind.

¹⁴That is why He terrifies me;
when I think of it, I'm afraid of Him.

¹⁵God has broken down my courage;
the Almighty has terrified me.

¹⁶But the darkness has not silenced me,
nor has the thick darkness that hides Him from me.

Job: God Doesn't Punish Those Who Mistreat the Poor

24 Why doesn't the Almighty set aside times to punish;
why don't His friends ever see His days?ⁱ

¹The wicked remove boundaries;
they steal flocks and their shepherds.

²They drive away the orphan's donkey
and hold the widow's cow till she pays her debt.

³They push the needy off the road;
the poor people of the country go into hiding.

⁴Like wild donkeys in the wilderness.

^aHeb reads "He is in one . . ."
ⁱ"the day of the LORD" is a day of punishment

- the poor go out to their task of
looking for food,
the wilderness furnishes them
food for their children.
- ⁶They cut the wicked man's
fodder in his field
and glean his vineyard.
- ⁷All night they lie naked, without
clothes,
without a covering against the
cold.
- ⁸They are drenched by the rain-
storms in the mountains;
they hug the rocks because
they can't find shelter.
- ⁹But the wicked snatch the
orphan from the breast
and hold a poor one's baby till
she pays her debt.
- ¹⁰So the poor go around naked
without clothes;
while hungry they carry
sheaves.
- ¹¹Between rows of olives they
press out oil,
and even while they tread
grapes in vats they are
thirsty.
- ¹²Groans come from those dying in
the city;
the wounded cry for help,
but God pays no attention to
their praying.
- ¹³They are among those who rebel
against the light
and don't know its ways or
stay in its paths.
- ¹⁴At dawn a murderer rises to kill
the poor and helpless;
at night he turns into a thief.
- ¹⁵The adulterer's eye watches for
the twilight.
He says, "No eye will see me,"
as he puts a covering over his
face.
- ¹⁶In the dark men break into
houses;
by day they lock themselves
up,
and never see the light.
- ¹⁷To them morning and darkness
are the same,
because they know well its
terrors.
- ¹⁸Such a person is like a foam
on the surface of the water.
His property is cursed in the
land;
people do not travel the road
that goes to his
vineyards.
- ¹⁹Just as dry ground and heat cut
off snow water,
so the grave cuts off the man
who sins.
- ²⁰Friends forget him;
worms feast on him.
Nobody remembers him
anymore.
So wickedness is snapped like
a stick.
- ²¹The man who does evil to a
childless barren woman,
and the man who doesn't help
a widow,
- ²²the Mighty One will pull down
by his power.
Such a one may rise
but he will despair of living;
- ²³God may let him live confidently
and well supported,
but His eyes are on his ways.
- ²⁴Such people may rise high, but
after a little while they're
gone.
They go down and like every-
thing else pass away,
cut off like a head of grain.
- ²⁵If it is not so, who can prove I'm
lying
and show what I say is
nothing.

*Bildad: Man Can't Be Righteous
with God*

25 Then Bildad from Shuah answered:

- ¹God rules and terrifies.
In the places where He dwells
on high
He establishes peace.
²Is there any way of counting His
armies?
Is there anyone on whom His
light doesn't rise?
³How then, can a man be just
before God?
How can anyone born of a
woman be clean?
⁴You see, even the moon isn't
bright,
and the stars aren't clean in
His sight.
⁵How much less man who is a
maggot
and the son of man who is a
worm?

Job: How Little We Know of God

26 Then Job answered:
¹How you have helped the
weak

- and saved the arm that isn't
strong!
²How you have advised the one
who has no wisdom,
and offered so much insight!
³With whose help have you
spoken these words,
and whose spirit speaks
through you?
⁴The spirits of the dead tremble
beneath the waters,
as do the creatures living
there.
⁵Before Him the grave lies bare;

and its destruction is
uncovered.

- ⁶God stretches out the northⁱ over
empty space
and hangs the earth on
nothing.
⁷He binds the waters in His thick
clouds,
and the clouds don't tear
under its weight.
⁸He covers the face of the moon
by spreading His cloud over it.
⁹He inscribes a circle on the sur-
face of the water
at the outer line where light
meets the darkness.
¹⁰The pillars of the sky^k tremble
and are dazed when He
rebukes them.

¹¹By His power He stirs up the
sea;
by His skill He strikes down
the Sea monster,

¹²and by His wind He puts the
sea in a bag.^l
And His hand strikes down the
fleeing Sea-serpent.

- ¹³But this is only a glimpse of
His power.
What a whisper we hear of Him!
Who could understand the full
thunder of His mighty
acts?

Job: The Wicked Perish

27 Job continued to speak
thoughtfully:

- ¹As God lives who has taken
away my rights,
as lives the Almighty who has
made my life bitter,
²and as long as I live,
and God's breath is in my
nostrils,

ⁱA Canaanism used here to mean "heaven"; compare 37:22

^kmountains ^lOr "He clears the sky"

1 "my lips won't say anything
 wrong
 or my tongue say anything
 deceitful.
 2 Far be it from me to say you're
 right;
 till I die I'll not give up my
 innocence.
 3 I cling to my integrity and won't
 let go,
 my conscience doesn't accuse
 me even for one day.
 4 My enemy should get what the
 wicked deserves,
 and anyone who attacks me
 the same as the
 unrighteous.
 5 What can the ungodly hope for
 when he is cut off,
 when God takes away his life?
 6 Will God hear him cry
 when he gets into trouble?
 7 Can he delight in the Almighty
 and call on God any time?
 8 I will teach you about God's
 power
 and not hide what the
 Almighty has in mind.
 9 You can all see it.
 Why, then, do you talk such
 nonsense?
 10 This is what the wicked has to
 expect from God,
 the heritage tyrants get from
 the Almighty:
 11 If he has many children, the
 sword takes them,
 and his descendants won't
 have enough food.
 12 Those who survive him will be
 buried by pestilence,
 and their widows won't weep.
 13 Though he heaps up silver like
 dust
 and lays up piles of clothing,
 14 What he laid up the righteous
 will wear,

and the innocent will divide
 the silver among
 themselves.
 15 He builds his home like a moth,
 like a booth a watchman
 makes.
 16 He may at one time lie down
 rich, but never again,
 for he opens his eyes and it is
 gone.
 17 Terrors overtake him like a
 flood,
 at night a storm sweeps him
 away.
 18 The east wind carries him away
 and he's gone:
 it sweeps him from his place.
 19 It hurls itself at him without
 mercy.
 He flees headlong from its
 power.
 20 It claps its hands over him
 and from the east it whistles
 against him.

Job: Where Is Wisdom?

28 There's a place where
 silver is mined
 and a place where gold is
 refined
 1 Iron is taken out of the ground,
 and copper is smelted out of
 ore.
 2 Man probes into the darkness
 searching as far as possible
 through dark and gloomy
 rock.
 3 He opens up a shaft in forsaken
 places,
 forgotten by the foot of man.
 Here men dangle
 and swing back and forth.
 4 Food grows out of the ground,
 but underneath it is turned
 over as by fire.
 5 Its rocks produce lapis lazuli,
 its dust contains gold.

- ¹No bird of prey knows
the way to it;
no hawk's eye has ever
seen it.
- ²No proud beast has ever walked
on it;
nor a lion^m passed over it.
- ³But man lays his hand on the
flinty rocks
and overturns hills at their
roots.
- ⁴He cuts out channels in the
rocks;
his eye sees every precious
thing.
- ⁵He explores the sources of the
rivers;
he brings to light hidden
treasures.
- ⁶But where can wisdom be found,
and where is the source of
understanding?
- ⁷Nobody knows where it is;ⁿ
it can't be found in the land of
the living.
- ⁸The deep ocean says, "It isn't in
me";
the sea says, "It isn't with
me."
- ⁹You can't get it for fine gold
or buy it for any weight of
silver.
- ¹⁰It can't be obtained with the
gold of Ophir,
or with precious onyx or lapis
lazuli;
- ¹¹Neither gold or glass can equal
it,
nor can golden ornaments be
exchanged for it,
¹²not to mention corals or
crystals.
Wisdom is more valuable than
rubies.
- ¹⁹You can't match it with the
topaz from Ethiopia
or buy it with any weight of
pure gold.
- ²⁰Where does wisdom come from;
where is the source of
understanding?
- ²¹It is hidden from the eyes of
every living being,
hidden even from the birds in
the sky.
- ²²Destruction and death say, "We
heard a rumor of it."
- ²³Only God knows the way to it;
He knows where it is.
- ²⁴He sees to the ends of the earth
and looks at everything under
heaven.
- ²⁵When He gave the wind its
weight
and decided how much water
there should be,
- ²⁶when He regulated the rain
and made paths for the
thunderclouds,
- ²⁷then He saw it and evaluated it,
understood and examined it.
- ²⁸And He told man: "Look now,
fearing the Lord is wisdom,
and turning away from evil is
understanding."

Job: Once God Was with Me

29 Job continued to speak thoughtfully:

- ¹I wish my life were as it was in
earlier months,
in the days when God watched
over me.
- ²When He made His lamp shine
over my head,
and by His light I walked
through darkness.
- ³As I was in my better days,
when God protected my home.

^mOr "serpent" ⁿGk: Heb "its worth"

- ⁵The Almighty was still with me
and my children were around
me.
- ⁶My steps were bathed in curds
and the rocks poured out for
me streams of oil;
- ⁷When I went out of the city gate
and took my seat in the public
place,
- ⁸the young men saw me and
respectfully stepped back,
and the old men got up and
stood;
- ⁹princes stopped talking
and put their hands on their
mouths;
- ¹⁰noblemen hushed their voices
with their tongues stuck to the
roofs of their mouths.
- ¹¹The ear that heard me called me
happy,
and the eye that saw me spoke
well of me,
- ¹²because I rescued the poor who
called for help
and the orphan who had
nobody to help him.
- ¹³Anyone dying blessed me,
and I made the widow's heart
sing happily.
- ¹⁴So I put on righteousness,
and righteousness put on me;
my justice was a robe and a
turban.
- ¹⁵I was eyes to the blind and feet
to the lame.
- ¹⁶I was father to the needy;
I championed the cause of
those I didn't know.
- ¹⁷I broke the jaws of the wicked
and made him drop the prey
from his teeth.
- ¹⁸I thought, "I will expire with my
family,

- with my days as many as the
phoenix.^o
- ¹⁹My roots will spread out to the
water,
and dew will lie all night on
my branches.
- ²⁰My glory will remain fresh with
me,
and my bow will be renewed
in my hand."
- ²¹Men listened to me
and waited silently for my
advice.
- ²²After I had spoken,
they wouldn't speak again,
for my words dripped gently
on them.
- ²³They waited for me as for the
rain
and opened their mouths wide
as for a spring shower,
- ²⁴I would smile at them even when
they were in despair,
and they couldn't make me
look discouraged.
- ²⁵I selected the course they should
take,
and sat as their leader.
I lived like a king among his
troops,
as one who comforts
mourners.

Job: God and Men Are Destroying Me

- 30** But now those who are
younger than I laugh at
me,
whose fathers I didn't think fit
to put with the dogs of my
flock.
- ²What help could the strength of
their hands give me;
they have lost their manly
vigor.

^oThe phoenix was said to live a thousand years; but the line may also be rendered "with my days as many as the sand."

- ¹Gaunt with need and hunger,
by night they gnaw at the dry
ground and barren waste.
- ²They pick saltwort among the
scrub,
and the roots of the broom
plant they use for warmth.
- ³They are driven from the
community;
people shout after them like
after a thief.
- ⁴They have to live in the gullies
and ravines,
in holes in the ground and in
the rocks.
- ⁷They howl among the bushes,
huddled together under the
weeds.
- ⁸They are a senseless and
nameless brood
and are driven with whips out
of the land.
- ⁹And now I am a joke to them;
I have become to them a
byword.
- ¹⁰Loathing me, they keep their
distance
but don't mind spitting in my
face.
- ¹¹They have untied the cord of my
life
and have afflicted me.
They have taken off the bridle
from me,
- ¹²and have attacked me on the
right side like a mob.
They set me free to run,
and then prepare the paths on
which they intend to
destroy me.
- ¹³Yes, they break up my path to
destroy me;
they attack with nobody to
stop them.
- ¹⁴They come as through a wide
breach in the wall;
they roll through where the
wall crashed.
- ¹⁵Terrors are turned against me;
they chase away my dignity
like the wind;
my well-being vanishes like a
cloud.
- ¹⁶Now my soul is poured out in me;
days of suffering grip me.
- ¹⁷At night my bones are pierced,
my gnawing pains don't rest.
- ¹⁸With great strength He lays hold
of my garment;
He seizes me by the neckband
of my tunic.
- ¹⁹He throws me into the mire
so that I become like dust and
ashes.
- ²⁰I call to You for help,
but You will not answer me;
You stand up and watch me;
- ²¹You have become cruel to me;
with Your mighty hand You
pursue me.
- ²²You lift me up and make me ride
the wind,
and toss me about with the
storm.
- ²³Surely I know You will turn me
over to Death,
to the house appointed for all
living things.
- ²⁴But a man doesn't stretch out his
hand against one who is
ruined,
when in his disaster he calls
for help.
- ²⁵Didn't I weep for him who was in
trouble
and my soul grieve for the
poor?
- ²⁶But when I looked for happiness,
misery came;
when I expected light, dark-
ness came.
- ²⁷My bowels are in turmoil and
won't quiet down.
I'm running into days of
misery.

- ²⁸I walk in mourning, without the sun.
I get up in the public meeting,
calling for help.
- ²⁹I'm a brother to jackals
and a companion to ostriches.
- ³⁰My skin turns dark and falls
from me,
My bones burn with fever.
- ³¹So the music of my lyre is turned
to mourning,
and my flute to loud weeping.

Job: If I've Done Wrong . . .

- 31** I made a covenant with
my eyes—
How then can I look with lust
at a girl?
- ¹What must I expect God above
to do,
and what does the Almighty
assign from on high?
- ²Doesn't He appoint calamity for
the wicked
and disaster for those who do
wrong?
- ³Doesn't He see my ways
and count all my steps?
- ⁴Have I been lying,
or have my feet run to
deceive?
- ⁵Let me be weighed in an honest
scale,
then God will know I'm
innocent.
- ⁶If I have left the right way
and my thoughts followed my
eyes,
if any spot is stuck to my
hands,
- ⁷then let someone else eat
what I sow
and what grows for me be
torn out by the roots.
- ⁸If a woman has seduced me
and I have secretly waited
near my neighbor's door,

- ⁹then may my wife grind under
another
and others bend down on her.
- ¹⁰Because that would be a
shameless wrong
and a crime for the judges;
- ¹¹it would be an eternally
destructive fire
and would uproot everything I
have produced.
- ¹²If I despised the right of my
servant, man or woman,
when they disagreed with me,
- ¹³what could I do if God should
rise up,
and what could I answer Him
if He should examine me?
- ¹⁴Didn't He who made me in the
womb make my servant,
and didn't the same One
fashion us in a
mother's body?
- ¹⁵Have I kept a poor man from
getting what he wanted,
or made a widow's eyes give
up looking for help?
- ¹⁶Have I eaten my food alone
without letting the orphan eat
any of it?
- ¹⁷No, from my youth the orphan
grew up with me as with a
father,
and from infancy I have
guided the widow.
- ¹⁸If I saw anyone perish because
he had no clothes
or a poor man going naked,
- ¹⁹if his loins didn't bless me
or the fleece of my sheep
didn't keep him warm,
- ²⁰if I have swung my fist at an
orphan
because I knew I'd get
support in court,
- ²¹then let my shoulder-blade fall
from my shoulder
and my arm be broken from
its socket.

- ²³A calamity from God terrifies me.
before His majesty I can do nothing.
- ²⁴If I trusted in gold
or said to fine gold, "You're my security,"
- ²⁵if I was glad I was very rich,
because my hand had gotten hold of much,
- ²⁶if, seeing the sun shine
or the moon move along in its splendor,
- ²⁷I let them steal my heart away
and threw them a kiss with my hand.
- ²⁸that too would be a crime to be punished,
and I would be untrue to God above.
- ²⁹Have I felt glad about the ruin
of one who hates me
or gleeful when harm came to him,
- ³⁰even though I didn't let my mouth sin
by calling down a curse to kill him?
- ³¹Have the men of my household ever said,
"O that we might eat all we want of his meat?"
- ³²The stranger didn't spend the night outside,
for I opened my doors to the wanderer.
- ³³Have I covered my sin like Adam,
keeping my guilt to myself;
- ³⁴because I dreaded the noisy crowd
and was terrified by the families who might despise me,
so that I kept still and didn't go out of doors?
- ³⁵I wish I had somebody to listen to me.

Look, here is my signature,
so let the Almighty answer me,
let my Opponent write his accusation on a scroll.

³⁶Surely I would carry it on my shoulder
and wind it around my head as a crown.

³⁷I would tell Him the number of my steps
and walk up to Him like a prince.

³⁸If my land cried out against me
and its furrows wept together,

³⁹if I ate its products without paying
and made its owners breathe their last,

⁴⁰then my thistles grow instead of wheat
and foul weeds instead of barley.

Here ends what Job said.

Elihu: I Must Talk

32 These three men stopped answering Job because he thought he was righteous. ²Then Elihu son of Barachel, a descendant of Buz and of the family of Ram, flared with anger at Job because he thought he was more righteous than God. ³He also got very angry with Job's three friends because they found no answer and yet condemned Job. ⁴Elihu waited to talk to Job because they were older than he. ⁵When Elihu saw the three men had no answer, he was very angry. ⁶So Elihu son of Barachel, the descendant of Buz, answered:
I'm young and you're old,
that's why I held back
and was afraid to show you what I know.

- ¹I thought age should speak
and many years should teach
wisdom.
- ²But there is a Spirit in men,
the breath of the Almighty
that gives them insight.
- ³Men aren't wise because they
live long;
they don't understand what is
right because they're old.
- ⁴So I say, listen to me.
I will show you what I know.
- ⁵I waited for you to speak.
I listened for you to give
intelligent answers
and find the right words.
- ⁶I've watched you
but none of you refuted Job,
and no one answered his
words.
- ⁷So don't say, "We've found
wisdom,
so let God rebuke him, not
man."
- ⁸He wasn't aiming at me when
he spoke,
and I won't answer him the
way you did.
- ⁹They are confused and don't
answer anymore;
they haven't another word to
say.
- ¹⁰Should I wait because they don't
speak
because they stand there and
don't answer anymore.
- ¹¹No, I will give my answer,
I too will show what I know.
- ¹²I'm full of words,
the wind in my belly
constrains me.
- ¹³The thoughts in me are like wine
that has no vent,
like wineskins newly filled
and ready to burst.
- ¹⁴I must talk to get relief,

I must open my mouth and
answer.

¹⁵I must not show a special favor
to anyone or flatter anyone.

¹⁶I don't know how to flatter,
else my Maker would soon
take me away.

Elihu: God Sends Pain to Save Us

33 But please, Job, hear my
speech,

and listen to everything I say.

¹Look, I've opened my mouth,
and in it my tongue speaks.

²I talk straight from my heart
and speak sincerely the
knowledge coming from
my lips.

³God's Spirit made me,
the Breath of the Almighty
gives me life.

⁴If you can, answer me;
get ready before me and take
your stand.

⁵I stand before God as you do.
I too was nipped off from a
piece of clay.

⁶I will not terrify you
or urge you strongly.

⁷But I heard you speak
and listened to when you said:

"I'm clean, without a wrong,
I'm pure, without any guilt."

⁸God is picking a quarrel with me
and considers me His enemy.

⁹He puts my feet in the stocks
and watches all my ways."

¹⁰You aren't right in this, I tell
you,
because God is greater than
man.

¹¹Why do you quarrel with Him
for not answering everything
you ask?

¹²God speaks one way or another
without your noticing it.

¹³God may speak in a dream or a
vision at night.

- when people are sleeping
heavily
or slumbering on their beds.
¹⁶He may then open their ears
and terrify them with
warnings.
¹⁷to make men stop what they're
doing
and keep them from getting
proud.
¹⁸He keeps man's soul from going
down to the grave
and his life from crossing the
Channel.
¹⁹By pain he is corrected on his
bed;
endlessly the struggle goes on
in his body.
²⁰So he turns with loathing from
bread
and his appetite from
delicious food.
²¹His flesh wastes away so that it
can't be seen
and his bones, not seen
before, are laid bare.
²²His soul comes close to the Pit;
his life to those already dead.

Elihu: A Redeemer

- ²³If there is an Angel beside him,
one in a thousand, to act as a
Mediator,
to tell man what is right for
him,
²⁴to be merciful to him and say,
"Free him from going down to
the grave—
I have found a ransom,"
²⁵then his flesh will become fresh-
er than a child's
as he goes back to the days of
his youth.
²⁶He prays to God, who is pleased
with him
and he sees His face with a
happy shout,

as God restores to the man his
innocence.

- ²⁷He sings before others and says,
"I sinned and violated what
was right,
and yet He didn't punish me as I
deserved
²⁸but saved me from going to the
grave,
so my life sees the light."
²⁹God does all this
two or three times with a man
³⁰to turn him back from the grave
and let him enjoy the light of
life.
³¹Pay attention, Job, and listen to
me;
keep quiet and I'll say more.
³²If you have anything to say,
answer me.
Speak, because I will be
pleased if you're
righteous.
³³If not, you listen to me;
be silent and I'll teach you
wisdom.

Elihu: God Is Right and Job Is Wrong

- 34** Elihu continued:
¹Hear me speak, you
wise men;
you who know, listen to what I
say;
²for the ear tests words
as the mouth tastes food.
³Let us choose what is right
and decide among us what is
good.
⁴Job says, "I'm righteous,
and God has not treated me
justly.
⁵Although I'm honest,
I'm made out to be a liar.
Though I haven't done wrong,

- His arrow has mortally wounded me."
- ⁷Where is there a man like Job, who drinks scorn like water, ⁸who travels in the company of those who do wrong and goes with wicked men? ⁹He says, "It doesn't do a man any good to be friendly with God."
- ¹⁰So you who understand listen to me. Far be it from God to be wicked and from the Almighty to do wrong.
- ¹¹God will repay a man for his work, and will give a man what he deserves.
- ¹²Surely God will not do anything wicked, and the Almighty will not act unjustly.
- ¹³Did anyone put Him in charge of the earth and the whole world in His care?
- ¹⁴If He thought only of Himself and withdrew His Spirit and His breath, ¹⁵all living beings would perish together, and man would return to dust.
- ¹⁶If you understand, hear this; listen to what I say.
- ¹⁷Can anyone govern when he hates what is right? Dare you condemn Him who is so righteous and mighty?
- ¹⁸Can anyone say to a king, "You good-for-nothing!" or to princes, "You wicked ones!"
- ¹⁹He gives no special favors to princes; nor does He prefer the rich to the poor. His hands made them all.
- ²⁰In a moment they die, in the middle of the night, the people go into convulsions and pass away; the mighty are taken away without a hand on them.
- ²¹God's eyes are on a man's ways; He sees all his steps.
- ²²There's no darkness or shadow where those who do wrong can hide.
- ²³God doesn't have to think long before calling a man to account.
- ²⁴Without examining them, He breaks mighty men in pieces and has others take their place.
- ²⁵He knows what they're doing, overthrows them at night, and they're crushed.
- ²⁶Treating them as criminals, He strikes them where people can see it.
- ²⁷because they turned away and didn't follow Him, and didn't consider any of His ways.
- ²⁸So He makes the poor cry to Him, and He hears the cry of those who suffer.
- ²⁹But if He keeps quiet, who can condemn Him? If He hides His face, to a nation or a single person, who can see Him?
- ³⁰He means to keep the godless from ruling and from ensnaring other people.
- ³¹If such a person says to God, "I was deceived, I will stop acting corruptly.
- ³²Teach me that I may see. If I've done wrong, I'll not do it again."
- ³³Is it your judgment that God should punish him,

- since you object?
 You're the one making the
 choice, not I;
 so tell now what you know.
¹⁴Wise and intelligent men with
 whom I talk, say:
¹⁵"Job talks without knowledge,
 and shows no understanding
 in what he says."
¹⁶I wish Job would be tried to the
 finish,
 because his answers are
 those of the wicked.
¹⁷He adds to his sin:
 He denies his rebellion among
 us,
 and talks a lot against God.

Elihu: God Is High Above Us

- 35** Elihu continued:
¹Do you think it's right
 when you say, "I'm innocent
 before God";
²when you ask, "What benefit is
 it to me,
 and what would I gain from
 my sin?"
³I will answer you,
 you and your friends with you.
⁴Look up to heaven and see;
 see the clouds high above you.
⁵If you sin, how can you harm
 Him?
 If you do many wrongs, what
 can you do to Him?
⁷If you're righteous, what do you
 give Him?
 or what can He get from you?
⁸Your wickedness touches only
 someone like yourself,
 and your righteousness only
 other human beings.
⁹Much oppression makes people
 cry out,
 the arm of the mighty makes
 them call for help,
¹⁰but nobody asks, "Where is God
 who made me;

- where is He who gives songs
 in the night,
¹¹and makes us more clever than
 the animals of the earth
 and wiser than the birds in
 the air?"
¹²There they cry, but He doesn't
 answer them
 because evil men are proud.
¹³Surely God doesn't hear an
 empty complaint;
 the Almighty doesn't even
 notice it.
¹⁴Although you say you can't see
 Him,
 your case is before Him and
 you will have to wait for
 Him.
¹⁵But now that His anger doesn't
 punish,
 and He isn't much concerned
 with foolishness,
¹⁶Job opens his mouth with idle
 talk
 and says a lot of things with-
 out knowledge.

Elihu: God Is Just

- 36** Elihu continued to speak:
¹Wait for me a little
 and I will show you,
 I have more to say for God.
²I will get my information from
 far away
 and ascribe righteousness to
 Him who made me.
³What I say certainly is no lie;
 One who is perfect in knowl-
 edge is with you.
⁴Look, God who is mighty, does
 not despise the pure.
⁵He who is mighty of heart
 doesn't keep the wicked
 alive.
 He brings justice to those who
 are oppressed,
⁷and doesn't look away from
 the righteous.

- He seats them with kings on thrones,
 forever they are exalted.
⁹If they are bound in chains
 and caught in cords of misery,
⁹He tells them what they have done wrong,
 and that they've behaved proudly.
¹⁰He opens their ears to warn them,
 and tells them to turn away from wrong.
¹¹If they listen and serve Him,
 they live out their lives in happiness
 and their years in pleasure.
¹²But if they don't listen, they will cross the Channel,
 and die without knowledge.
¹³But those who are ungodly at heart keep a grudge;
 they don't even call for help when He puts chains on them.
¹⁴They die while they're young
 or live on as male temple-prostitutes.
¹⁵But those who suffer He saves
 by their suffering
 and by distress opens their ears.
¹⁶Yes, He lured you out of trouble
 into a broad place where you were not restrained
 and your table was set with rich food.
¹⁷But the case of the wicked man you did not judge;
 you cut off justice from the orphan.^P
¹⁸Beware or He may entice you with riches;
 and don't let a bribe turn you aside.

- ¹⁹Will your riches deliver you from having to suffer;
 or will all your might and strength save you?
²⁰Don't long for the night
 when people vanish where they are.
²¹Be careful you don't turn to evil,
 because this is why you have been tested with suffering.

Elihu: God Is Great

- ²²God does lofty things by His power.
 Is there any teacher like Him?
²³Can anyone order Him how to live
 and tell Him, "You did wrong"?'
²⁴Remember to praise His work—
 men have sung of it.
²⁵All people have seen it;
 men have looked at it from far.
²⁶God is too great for us to know Him,
 His years are more than we can find out.
²⁷He draws up drops of water
 that filter through as rain
 with its mist,
²⁸flowing from the clouds
 and dropping on many people.
²⁹Can anyone really understand
 how the clouds spread
 and the thunder crashes from His booth?
³⁰See, He spreads over it His light
 and covers the depths of the sea.
³¹He uses the rains to nourish the peoples
 and gives them food in abundance.

^PHeb uncertain

¹¹He covers His hands with lightning
and orders it to hit the mark.
¹²His thunder announces Him, even
the cattle tell about Him
who is coming.

37 This makes my heart
tremble
and jump from its place.
¹Listen, listen to the thunder of
His voice:
the rumble coming from His
mouth.
²He lets His lightning loose every-
where under heaven
even to the very ends of the
earth.
³It is followed by a roaring sound
and a thundering of His
majestic voice.
He doesn't hold back the flashes
when His thunder is heard.
⁴God's thundering voice is
wonderful.
He does great things we can't
understand.
⁵He says to the snow, "Fall to the
ground,"
and to the pouring rain, "Be
strong!"
⁶He makes it impossible for any
man to work
so that all may acknowledge
his work.
⁷The beasts go into their dens
and lie down in their lairs.
⁸A storm comes out of its
chamber
and cold from the sweeping
winds.
⁹God's breath makes ice,
and the wide waters freeze.
¹⁰Yes, He loads the thick clouds
with moisture

and scatters His lightning
from the clouds.
¹¹He guides the clouds as they
churn round and round
doing everything He ordered
them to do
over the face of the inhabited
earth.
¹²Whether for discipline, for
grace or mercy,
He directs them to their goal.
¹³Listen to this, Job,
Stop and consider God's won-
derful works.
¹⁴Do you know how God gives
them orders
and makes the lightning flash
from His clouds?
¹⁵Do you know how the clouds
float?
These are the wonders of Him
who is perfect in
knowledge.
¹⁶When you are sweltering in your
clothes
as the earth is calm under a
southwind,
¹⁷can you, like Him, spread out the
skies,
and make them hard like a
mirror of cast metal?
¹⁸Teach us what we should tell
Him;
we are too ignorant to pre-
pare something to say.
¹⁹Should He be told that I want to
speak?
Should anyone ask to be
destroyed?
²⁰Now people can't look at the sun
when it's bright in the skies,
when the wind has blown and
cleared them.
²¹A golden light comes from
heaven;⁹

⁹Heb "Zaphon"; here the term means, "the place where God dwells"; compare 26:7

around God there's a terrifying majesty.

²³The Almighty whom we can't reach

is excellent in power and judgment.

He is just

but He does not oppress.

²⁴So people should fear Him.

He does not respect those who think they're wise.

God: Do You Know My Wonderful Ways?

38 Then the LORD answered Job out of the storm:

¹Who is this that obscures My purpose by talking without understanding?

²Prepare yourself like a hero: I will ask you, and you show Me.

³Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me if you understand.

⁴Who determined its measurements—you surely know!

Or who stretched a measuring line over it?

⁵On what were the sockets of its pillars placed; who laid its cornerstone,

⁶while the morning stars sang together

and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

⁷Who shut in the sea with doors when it broke through and came out of the womb,

⁸when I made the clouds its garment and dark clouds its baby clothes;

⁹when I prescribed its shoreline, and set up bars and doors,

¹⁰and said, "You may come this far but no farther,

here your surging waves will stop?"

¹¹Did you ever in your life give orders to the morning,

or send the dawn to its place,

¹²so it could take hold of the earth by its borders

and shake the wicked out of it?

¹³The earth changes like clay under a seal,

parts of it stand out like folds in a garment.

¹⁴The light of the wicked is taken away;

his raised arm is broken.

¹⁵Have you gone to the sources of the sea

or walked through the hidden recesses of the deep?

¹⁶Were you shown the gates of death,

have you looked at the portals of darkness?

¹⁷Do you realize how broad the earth is?

Tell me if you know it all.

¹⁸What is the way to the source of light,

and where is the home of darkness,

¹⁹that you may take it to its place and show it the path to its home?

²⁰You must know because you were born then and have lived a long time!

²¹Have you been to the place where snow is stored

and seen the stores of hail

²²that I have reserved for the time of trouble,

for the day of battle and war?

²³How is the light distributed, and the east wind spread over the earth?

²⁴Who made a channel for the torrent of rain,

- and a path for the
thunderclouds.
- ²⁸to bring rain on a land where
nobody lives,
on a desert where there's no
human being.
- ²⁹to satisfy a land that is waste
and desolate,
to make the arid ground
sprout with grass?
- ³⁰Does the rain have a father;
who gave birth to the
dewdrops?
- ³¹From whose womb came the ice;
who has given birth to the
hoarfrost in the air?
- ³²The water hardens like a stone,
and the surface of the earth
freezes over.
- ³³Can you bind into a cluster the
Pleiades
or untie the cords of Orion?
- ³⁴Can you bring out stars at the
right time
or guide the great Bear with
her young?
- ³⁵Do you know the laws of the sky;
did you set up laws of nature
on earth?
- ³⁶Can you call up to the clouds
and have a flood of water
cover you?
- ³⁷Can you send lightning flashes
so they go
and say to you, "Here we
are!"
- ³⁸Who put wisdom within us
or gave understanding to the
mind?^r
- ³⁹Who is wise enough to count the
clouds
and pour out the water-skins
of heaven
- ⁴⁰when the ground cakes into a
hard mass
and the clods cling together?
- ³⁹Can you hunt prey for the
lioness
and satisfy the hungry cubs,
⁴⁰as they crouch in their dens
and lie in wait in the thicket?
- ⁴¹Who prepares food for the crow
when its young ones cry to
God
and are desperately in need of
food?

39 Do you know when the
mountain goat has its
young?

Do you watch the doe give
birth?

³⁹Can you count the months till
they bear
and know when they'll have
their young?

⁴⁰They kneel down to give birth,
and deliver their young.

⁴¹Their young are healthy and
grow up in the open field;
they leave and don't come
back.

⁴²Who lets the wild ass go free
and unties the ropes of the
wild donkey?

⁴³I made the wilderness his home
and barren salt flats his
dwelling place.

⁴⁴He scorns the noise of the city
and doesn't hear the shouting
of the driver.

⁴⁵He explores the mountains for
pasture,
looking for anything green.

⁴⁶Is the wild bull willing to serve
you;
will he stay at night beside
your crib?

^rThe words translated "within us" and "mind" are uncertain in meaning.

- ¹⁰Can you tie a wild bull with ropes and make him stay in his furrow;
will he harrow the valleys as you lead him?
- ¹¹Can you trust him just because he's very strong
or leave your labor to him?
- ¹²Do you believe he'll bring home your grain
and take it to your threshing-floor?
- ¹³The ostrich flaps her wings lustily,
but her wings lack feathers.
- ¹⁴She leaves her eggs on the ground
and warms them in the dust.
- ¹⁵without a thought that a foot may crush them
or a wild animal may trample on them.
- ¹⁶She acts harshly toward her young as if they weren't her own;
it doesn't trouble her that her work is for nothing.
- ¹⁷for God has deprived her of good sense
and hasn't given her much intelligence.
- ¹⁸When she rises to flap her wings,
she laughs at the horse and its rider.
- ¹⁹Can you give strength to a horse
and dress his neck with a waving mane?
- ²⁰Can you make him leap like a grasshopper
with majesty and terrible snorting.
- ²¹He paws mightily and delights in his strength,
when he charges into battle.

- ²²He laughs at fear and isn't afraid
and doesn't turn back from the sword.
- ²³Against him rattles the quiver;
the spear and javelin flash.
- ²⁴Quivering and excited, he eats up the ground
and doesn't trust the sound of the trumpet.
- ²⁵As often as the trumpet sounds, he says, "Aha!"
He smells the battle far away,
the thundering orders of the captains and the war-cries.
- ²⁶Does your intelligence make the hawk fly
when he spreads his wings toward the south?
- ²⁷Is it by your order that the eagle flies high
and makes his nest on the heights?
- ²⁸He perches for the night on a cliff
on a craggy peak, his fortress.
- ²⁹From there he searches for food,
and his eyes see it far away.
- ³⁰His young ones feed on blood;
where there are dead bodies, there he is.

God: Would You Like to Be God?

40 The LORD answered Job and said:

- ¹You critic—will you quarrel with the Almighty?
Anyone who corrects God will have to answer for it.
- ²Job answered the LORD and said:
'I'm so small, how can I answer You?
I lay my hand on my mouth.
'I talked once, but I won't answer;
twice, but not again.

⁶Then the LORD answered Job out of the storm:

⁷Prepare yourself like a hero;
I will ask you, and you tell Me.
⁸Dare you make nothing of My justice?
or find Me wrong so that you may be right?
⁹Do you have an arm like God?
Can you thunder with a voice like His?

¹⁰Then adorn yourself with majesty and excellence.
Dress in splendor and glory.
¹¹Let loose your outbursts of anger.

Look at everyone who is proud and put him down,

¹²look at everyone who is proud and humble him.

Throw down the wicked wherever they are.

¹³bury them all together in the ground,
in their tombs, with their faces wrapped.

¹⁴Then even I will praise you that your own right hand can save you.

God: Look at Behemoth ⁹

¹⁵Look at Behemoth that I made as well as I made you.

He eats grass like cattle.

¹⁶See the strength in his loins, the power in the muscles of his belly.

¹⁷He makes his tail stiff like a cedar;
the sinews of his thighs are intertwined.

¹⁸His bones are bronze tubes and are like iron bars.

¹⁹He is a prime evidence of God's power,
His Maker brings near His sword.

²⁰The animals of the hills support him,
and all the wild animals play there.

²¹He lies down under lotus trees in a hiding place in the reeds and swamp.

²²Lotus trees cover him with their shade,
poplars in the ravines surround him.

²³Though the river surges against him, he's not alarmed;
he's confident even when the Jordan rushes against his mouth.

²⁴Can one capture him in his lair or with traps pierce his nose?

God: Look at Leviathan ¹

41 Can you pull out Leviathan with a fishhook or slip a line on his tongue?

²Can you put a ring in his nose or pierce his jaw with a hook?

³Must he plead with you for mercy or beg you tenderly?

⁴Can he make a contract with you to take him as your slave forever?

⁵Can you play with him as with a bird or keep him on a line for your girls?

⁶Will traders bargain over him and divide him among merchants?

⁹Voriously interpreted as a hippopotamus, water buffalo or some other bovine creature.

¹Some take it to be the crocodile, others the whale or other such sea monster.

- 7Dare you stick his hide full of darts
 or his head full of harpoons?
 8If you put your hand on him,
 think of the struggle,
 and you won't do it again.
 9If you think you can win, you're wrong.
 Doesn't just the sight of him
 overwhelm you.
 10Isn't he too ferocious for you to
 arouse him?
 Who, then, can stand before
 him?
 11Who can meet him and survive?
 Like everything under heaven
 he belongs to Me.
 12Cannot I silence his boasting,
 his powerful word and his
 bold manner?
 13Who can strip off his outer hide?
 Who can penetrate his double
 armor?
 14Who dare open the doors of his
 face—
 terror surrounds his teeth.
 15On his back^u are rows of scales,
 each like a seal close and
 tight,
 16one so near the other
 no space is between them,
 17each joined to the other,
 locked together, and
 inseparable.
 18When he sneezes, he gives out a
 flash of light.
 His eyes are like the rays of
 the dawn.
 19Out of his mouth shoot flames,
 from him fly sparks of fire.
 20Out of his nostrils comes smoke
 like a pot heated over
 brushwood.
 21His breath sets coals on fire,
 and a flame pours from his
 mouth.
- 22Strength is lodged in his neck,
 and before him dances
 despair.
 23The folds of his flesh cling to him,
 fit him tightly and immovably.
 24His heart is hard as a rock,
 solid as a lower millstone.
 25The mighty are afraid of his
 terror,
 broken down, they panic.
 26A sword may strike him but it
 will not stick,
 nor will a spear, javelin or
 dart.
 27To him iron is straw,
 and bronze is rotten wood.
 28An arrow from a bow doesn't
 make him run away.
 Stones from a sling turn to
 stubble against him.
 29Clubs are only straw to him,
 and he laughs at a whirring
 lance.
 30His underside is like sharp
 pieces of broken pottery.
 He stretches out like a thresh-
 ing-sledge on the mud.
 31He makes the deep sea boil like a
 cauldron
 and the ocean like a mixture
 of ointment.
 32He leaves a shining wake in his
 trail,
 so the sea appears to have
 silvery hair.
 33On earth there's nothing like
 him;
 he was made to be without
 fear.
 34He looks down on all high
 things—
 as a king over all proud
 creatures.

^uGk; Heb "pride "

Job: I Am Sorry

42 Then Job answered the LORD:

¹I know You can do everything, and nothing You plan is too hard for You.

²Who am I but one^v that obscures Your purpose without understanding?

Without understanding I have declared things too wonderful for me.

things I didn't know.

⁴You said,^w "Listen now, and I will speak.

I will ask You, and You show me."

⁵I had heard about You by hearsay,

but now I see You.

⁶So I melt away

and repent in dust and ashes.

⁷After the LORD said those things to Job, He said to Eliphaz from Teman, "I'm very angry with you and your two friends because you didn't tell the truth about Me as My servant Job did. ⁸So now, take seven young bulls and seven rams, go to My servant Job and make a burnt offering for yourselves, and my servant Job will pray for you. I will show him favor by not making fools of you because you didn't tell the truth about Me as My servant Job did."

⁹Then Eliphaz from Teman, Bildad from Shuah, and Zophar from Naama went and did what the LORD told them to do. And the LORD showed favor to Job.

¹⁰The LORD restored Job's prosperity when he prayed for his friends, and the LORD gave him twice as much as he had before.

¹¹Then all his relatives, men and women, and all who had known him before came to him. They ate with him at his home, sympathized with him and comforted him for all the sorrow the LORD had brought on him, and each gave him a piece of money and a gold ring.

¹²The LORD blessed the last years of Job more than the first so that he acquired 14,000 sheep and goats, 6,000 camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand female donkeys. ¹³He also had seven sons and three daughters. ¹⁴He called the first Dove, the second Cassia, and the third Mascara.^x ¹⁵No women in the whole country were so beautiful as Job's daughters. And their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers.

¹⁶Job lived after that 140 years and saw his children, grandchildren, and greatgrandchildren. ¹⁷Then, being old and satisfied, he died.

⁴²
² Mt 18:26;
Mk 10:27

^vHeb "Who is this . . ." ^w"you said" is added for the sense

^xLiterally "A-horn-of-eye-paint "

THE PSALMS

The Blessed Man

1 Blessed is the man
who doesn't go with the wicked
in their planning,
stand in the ways of sinners,
or sit in the company of
mockers.

²but delights in what the LORD
teaches
and reads it thoughtfully day
and night.

³He's like a tree planted by
streams of water:
It produces its fruit in its
season,
and its leaves don't wither.
He succeeds in everything he
does.

⁴The wicked are not like that
but like chaff that the wind
blows away.

⁵And so when they're judged the
wicked will not stand,
nor will sinners in the con-
gregation of the righteous.

⁶You see, the LORD cares about
what happens to the
righteous,
but the wicked go their way
and perish.

God's Son

2 Why are the nations getting
together so noisily
and the people plotting so
uselessly?

^a"Anointed" means "Christ," and this is the name the New Testament writers read here in their Greek translation of the Old Testament.

⁷The kings of the earth are taking
their stand,
and the rulers are planning
together
against the LORD and His
Anointed,^a saying:

⁸"Let us tear their ropes in
pieces
and throw their cords
away."

⁹Sitting on His throne in heaven,
the Lord laughs and mocks at
them.

¹⁰Then He talks to them angrily
and by His fury terrifies them.

¹¹"I installed My King on Zion, My
holy hill."

(The Anointed:)

¹²I will tell about the decree of the
LORD:

He said to Me, "You are My Son
today I have begotten You.

¹³Ask Me and I will give You the
nations as Your inheritance
and the most distant parts of
the earth as Your
possession.

¹⁴You will break them in pieces
with an iron rod
and smash them like a potter's
jar."

¹⁵Now then, you kings, be wise,
be warned, you rulers of the
world.

¹⁶Serve the LORD with fear
and live in dread.

2
1-2 Acts 4
25-27, Rv
11-15,
19-19
7 Mt 3:17,
17:5, Mk
1:11, 9:7,
Lk 3:22,
9:35, Acts
13:33, Heb
1:5, 5:5,
7:28, 2 Pt
1:17
9 Rv 2:26-27,
12:5, 19:15

"Kiss the Son
or He'll get angry and you'll
perish on your way;
because His anger can blaze
quickly.
Blessed are all who find shelter
in Him.

My Shield

David's psalm when he fled from
his son Absalom.

3 LORD, how my enemies have
increased!

Many are attacking me.

"many are saying of me, "God
will not save him." (Music)^b

"But You, LORD, are a Shield
around me.

You give me glory and lift up my
head.

"I call aloud to the LORD,
and He answers me from His
holy hill.
(Music)^b

"I lie down and sleep and then
wake up
because the LORD supports
me.

"I'm not afraid of an army of tens
of thousands,
that attacks me from all sides.

"Come, LORD! Save me, my God!
Hit all my enemies in the face,
and smash the teeth of the
wicked.

"Only You can save, LORD;
so bless Your people. (Music)^b

In the Evening

For the choir leader: with string

instruments; a psalm by David.

4 When I call, answer me, O
God, by whom I am made
righteous.

I'm hard-pressed—set me free.
Be kind to me and hear my
prayer.

"You mortals, how long are you
going to insult the One I
honor?

You love worthless idols and
seek falsehood. (Music)^b

"You should know that the LORD
makes the one He loves
someone special to Him.
The LORD hears me when I call
to Him.

"Tremble and don't sin.
Think about it on your beds and
weep. (Music)^b

"Bring the proper sacrifices in
the right spirit,
and trust the LORD.

"Many are saying, "If only some-
one could show us
prosperity!"

Let the light of Your face shine
on us, LORD.

"You put more joy in my heart
than a season with plenty of
new grain and wine.

"I can lie down and sleep in
peace,
because You alone, LORD,
enable me to live without
fear.

In the Morning

For the choir leader; upon the
flutes;^c a psalm by David.

5 Listen to what I'm saying,
LORD:

^bThis word (*Selah*) is conjectured by most to be a musical notation.

^cThe meaning is uncertain.

understand what I'm sighing
about.

¹Listen to me when I call for help,
my King and my God,
because I'm pleading with
You.

²LORD, in the morning listen to
me,
in the morning I lay my needs
before You and look up.

⁴You are not a God who likes
wickedness.

Evil can't live with You.

⁵Those who brag can't stand
before Your eyes.

You hate all who do wrong

⁶and destroy those who tell
lies.

The LORD abhors anyone who
murders and cheats.

⁷Your great love makes me come
to Your house
and worship in Your holy
temple with a feeling of
awe for You.

⁸LORD, lead me in Your
righteousness
as I face those who hate me.
Make Your way smooth before
me.

⁹There's no truth in what they
say,
but treachery is in their
hearts.

Their throat is an open grave.

When they talk, they flatter.

¹⁰O God, make them suffer for
their sins
and fall by their own plans.
Throw them out because they
did so much wrong
and rebelled against You.

¹¹Then all who find their shelter in
You
will be glad forever, shouting
happily.

You will protect those who love
Your name,
and they will delight in You.

¹²O LORD, bless the righteous
man,
surround him with kindness
as with a big shield.

Because You Love Me

For the choir leader; with string
instruments, for bass voices;^d a
psalm by David.

6 LORD, don't be angry and
punish me,
don't be furious and correct
me.

²Be kind to me, LORD, because I
feel miserable.

Heal me, LORD, because I'm
shaken to my bones.

³My spirit is terribly upset.
O LORD, how long will you wait?

⁴Come back, LORD, rescue me,
save me because You love me.

⁵Once a person is dead, he can't
remember You.
Can anyone in the grave
praise You?

⁶My groaning wears me out.
Every night I make my bed swim
and my couch flow with
tears.

⁷My eyes are hollow with grief
and feel old because of all my
distress.

⁸Get away from me, all you who
do wrong,
because the LORD has heard
my crying.

⁵
⁹ Ro 3:13
⁸
⁸ Mt 7:23,
Lk 13:27

^dThe meaning is uncertain. Literally "on the eighth."

⁸the LORD has heard me ask
for mercy.

the LORD accepts my prayer.

¹⁰All my enemies will feel miser-
able and terrified
and suddenly turn back in
disgrace.

Trust in a Righteous God

A complaint David sang to the
Lord about Cush, a descendant of
Benjamin.

7 LORD, my God, You are my
Shelter.

Save me from all who pursue
me, and rescue me.

²or like a lion they will tear me
to pieces,
dragging me off with nobody
to save me.

³LORD my God, if I did this:
if there's wrong in my hands,
⁴if I paid back my friend with
evil

or plundered anyone who op-
posed me without a
reason,

⁵then may an enemy chase me
and catch me,
trample my life into the
ground,

and lay my honor in the dust.
(Music)^b

⁶Arise and be angry, LORD,
rise against the fury of my
enemies; awake,
my God, order a trial.

⁷have an assembly of peoples
gather around You
and over them reign on high.

⁸O LORD, judge the nations.
Judge me, LORD, according to
my integrity;

judge me according to my in-
nocence, O Most High.

⁹O may the wickedness of the
wicked end,
while You make the righteous
secure—

You are a righteous God who
examines minds and hearts.

¹⁰God Most High, is my King.^e
He saves those who are right
at heart.

¹¹God is a just Judge,
a God who is angry every day.

¹²If anyone will not repent, He
sharpens His sword,
He bends His bow and aims it.

¹³He aims His arrows to kill
him,
making them blaze with fire.

¹⁴Here's one who conceives evil,
is pregnant with harm for
others,
and gives birth to a lie.

¹⁵He digs a hole and keeps on
digging
till he falls into the hole he
was making.

¹⁶The harm he plans comes back
on his own head.
The crime he means to do comes
down on his own skull.

¹⁷I will thank the LORD—He is
righteous.

I will sing about the name of the
LORD Most High.

Without God, Then Glory

For the choir leader; on the git-
tith; a psalm by David.

8 LORD, our LORD,
how wonderful is Your name
all over the earth!
Your glory is sung over the
heavens.

^eOr "Shield"

²From the mouths of children and babies
You have established strength^f
despite Your foes,
in order to silence the enemy
and the avenger.

³When I look at Your heavens
that Your fingers made,
the moon and the stars that
You set up,

⁴what is man that You should
think of him,
or a son of man that You
should come and visit him?

⁵You make Him lower than God
for a little while;
then crown Him with
glory and honor

⁶and make Him ruler over
what Your hands have
made,
putting everything under His
feet:

⁷All the sheep and cattle,
and the wild animals too,

⁸birds in the air,
and fish swimming in the
paths of the seas.

⁹LORD, our Lord,
how wonderful is Your name
all over the earth!

The Judge Is My Refuge

For the choir leader; about the
death of the oppressor;⁸ a psalm by
David.

9 I thank You, LORD, with all my
heart;
I tell of all the wonderful things
You did;

¹I am happy and delighted in You
and sing to praise Your name,
O Most High.

²My enemies turned back,
stumbling and perishing be-
fore You.

³You judged me with justice;
You sat on Your throne and
judged fairly.

⁴You denounced nations, de-
stroyed the wicked,
and wiped out their name
forever.

⁵The enemy is finished, destroyed
forever.
You uprooted their towns, and
they are forgotten.

⁶The LORD is sitting on His
throne forever;
He has set up His throne to
judge.

⁷He judges the world with justice
and gives the people a fair
trial.

⁸The LORD is a mountain refuge
for the oppressed,
a refuge in times of trouble.

⁹Those who know You trust You
because You don't forsake
those who come to You
for help.

¹⁰Sing to the LORD who lives in
Zion;
tell among the people the
great things He does.

¹¹He cares for those who mourn,
remembers them,
and doesn't forget the cries of
those who suffer.

¹²O LORD, be kind to me;
see how those who hate me
make me suffer;
pick me up from the gates of
death

⁵
² Mt 21:16
⁴⁻⁶ Heb 2:
⁶⁻⁸ 1 Co
^{15:27, 28}
^{Ep 1:22}
³
⁸ Acts 17:31;
Rv 19:11

^fOr "praise"

⁸Conjectural; The Hebrew may be a musical notation

¹⁴so I can proclaim your praise.
In the gates of Zion's people
I will delight in Your
salvation.

¹⁵Nations are sunk in the pit they
themselves made.

their feet are caught in the
very net they hid.

¹⁶The LORD shows who He is by
His justice.

The wicked were trapped by
their own doings. (Solemn
music)^h

¹⁷The wicked go back to the grave
like all people who forget
God.

¹⁸The poor will not always be for-
gotten
or those who suffer lose hope
forever.

¹⁹Rise, O LORD, to keep men from
being triumphant. ^{7, no. 3, 14}

Nations will be judged before
You.

²⁰O LORD, frighten them—
so nations will know they're
only human.

Help the Oppressed

10 Why are You staying so far
away, O LORD?

Why do You hide whenever
there's trouble?

²The wicked proudly hunt down
the oppressed;
may they be caught by their
own schemes.

³The wicked man boasts of his
selfish lust.

He is greedy for a blessing but
scorns the LORD.

⁴Because of his angry pride the
wicked won't ask Him for
help.

God is left out of all his plans,

⁵but he seems always to
succeed.

Your judgments are too high for
him to see.

He puffs at all his enemies.

⁶He thinks, "Nothing can shake
me. I'll never have any trouble."

⁷His mouth is full of cursing, de-
ception, and oppression;
under his tongue lurk mischief
and wrong doing.

⁸He sits in ambush in the villages,
from his hiding-places he kills
the innocent;

his eyes are looking for
victims.

⁹He lies in his hiding-place like a
lion in his den.

waits there to catch the
helpless,

and takes them away, drag-
ging him in his net.

¹⁰The victim is crushed and sinks
down,

because of his power he falls
helpless.

¹¹But the wicked man says to him-
self, "God doesn't care.

He hides His face and will
never see it."

¹²Come, LORD God! Lift Your
hand,

and don't forget the
oppressed.

¹³Why should the wicked despise
God

and think that You won't
punish?

¹⁴See for Yourself the trouble and
look at the grief,

so You can take it in hand.

^hSelah Higgsaion

The victim entrusts himself to
You,

for You are the One who helps
the orphan.

¹⁵Break the arm of the wicked and
evil man,
punish his wickedness till it is
gone.

¹⁶The LORD is King forever.
The heathen must perish from
His land.

¹⁷LORD, You hear the desire of
the oppressed.
Encourage them and listen to
them.

¹⁸Give the orphan and the op-
pressed fair treatment
so that nobody on earth will
terrify them again.

The Lord Loves Righteousness

For the choir leader; by David.

11 I take refuge in the
LORD.

How can you tell me:
“Flee like a bird to your hills”?

¹Look at the wicked:
They bend their bow, and fix
their arrows on the string,
to shoot in the dark at those
who are honest.

²When the foundations are torn
down,
what does the Righteous One
do about it?

³The LORD is in His holy temple,
the Lord’s throne is in
heaven—
His eyes see, yes, His eyes
examine mortal man.

⁴The LORD, the Righteous One,
tests the wicked.

He hates anyone who loves
crime,

⁵He rains fiery coals and burn-
ing sulphur on the wicked.

A scorching wind will be the
drink in their cup.

⁶Yes, the LORD is just and loves
righteousness.

If you do what is right, you will
see His face.

When People Lie

For the choir leader; for bass
voices;¹ a psalm by David.

12 Help, Lord,
for there are no more godly
people!

The faithful have vanished from
the world.

¹Everyone tells lies.
They talk with flattering lips
and a double mind.

²May the LORD cut off every lip
that flatters
and tongue that talks big.

³saying, “We’ll show with our
tongues how mighty we are.
We say what we please. Who
can be our master?”

⁴“Because the poor are robbed
and the needy groan,

I will now rise,” says the LORD.

“I will provide safety to the one
who longs for it.”

⁵What the LORD says is pure.
like silver refined in a furnace
purified seven times.

⁶LORD, You watch over us.
You keep us safe forever from
this world,

⁷where the wicked prowl
around
praising what is vile among
people.

¹Conjecture

How Long?

For the choir leader: a psalm by David.

13 How long, LORD? Will You forget me forever?
 How long will You hide Your face from me?
 How long must my mind be in revolt,
 and my heart be grieving?
 How long is my enemy going to triumph over me?
 How long and answer me, LORD my God!

Give light to my eyes,
 or I'll sleep the sleep of death,
 and my enemy will say, "I overpowered him,"
 and my foes will be delighted because I've fallen.

But I trust Your love.
 I'll take delight in Your saving me.

I'll sing to the LORD,
 because He has been good to me.

We Are Sinners

For the choir leader; by David.

14 A fool says in his heart,
 "There is no God."
 They do corrupt and detestable things.
 No one does anything good.
 The LORD looks at the world from heaven
 to see if there is anyone wise,
 who comes to God for help.
 They have all turned away together and become corrupt.
 Not one does right, not a single one.

Don't all these who do wrong know,
 don't these who devour my people know
 that if anyone eats the bread of the LORD
 without calling on Him,
 panic will overtake them,
 because God is among the assembly of the righteous?
 The assembly of the humble will put the wicked to shame
 because the LORD is their shelter.

If only Someone would come from Zion to save Israel.
 When the LORD restores His people,
 Jacob will be delighted and Israel will be glad.

Close to God

A psalm by David.

15 (Congregation:)
 LORD, who may come to stay in Your tabernacle?
 Who may live on Your holy hill?
 (Leader:)

If you live perfectly,
 do what is right,
 and tell the truth from your heart.

If you don't use your tongue to do wrong to others,
 or insult your neighbor.

You despise one whom God rejects
 but honor those who fear the LORD.

When you swear, you don't change it even if it hurts you.

You don't take interest on money you loan
 or take a bribe against an innocent person.

14
 1-3 Ro 2
 10-12

If you do these things, you will never fail.

Victory over Death

An inscription by David.

16 Keep me safe, God—You are my shelter.

¹I told the LORD, "You are my Lord.

My well-being is only in You."

²But as for those on earth who are holy, they are noble ones in whom is My total delight.

³Those who buy another god quickly multiply their sorrows.

I will not pour out drink offerings of blood for them or take their names on my lips.

⁴The LORD has measured out to me a cup of smooth wine. You have cast my lot.

⁵The land allotted to me is in pleasant places; my heritage is something beautiful.

⁷I praise the LORD who gives me counsel, at night my heart teaches me what is right.

⁸I always keep the LORD before Me.

With Him at My right hand, I can't fail.

⁹That is why My heart is glad, and My soul is delighted.

Also My body will rest securely

¹⁰because You will not leave Me in the grave

or let Your loved One experience decay.

¹¹You show Me the path of life—plenty of joy in Your presence,

delightful things at Your right hand forever.

In the Shadow of Your Wings

A prayer by David.

17 LORD, listen to a just case.

Hear my cry, listen to my prayer,

for there's no dishonesty on my lips.

¹Let me get justice from You; Your eyes see what is right.

²Test my heart, examine me at night, test me in fire;

You will find no evil intentions in me;

nor do they cross my lips.

⁴As for what others do—

by Your word of warning I've kept myself from violent ways.

⁵My steps have not strayed from Your paths, my feet have not slipped.

⁶I call You, O God, because You answer me.

Turn Your ear to me, listen to what I say.

⁷Do Your wonderfully kind acts.

With Your right hand save from their enemies those who trust in You.

⁸Keep me like the pupil of Your eye.

Hide me in the shadow of Your wings

⁹from the wicked who violently mistreat me, from my mortal enemies who surround me.

¹⁰They are given over to arrogance, their mouths talk proudly.

¹¹They track me down and then gather around me,

16
8-11 Acts 2
25-28, 31;
13:35

looking determined to throw
me to the ground.

¹⁷Each is like a lion longing for
prey,

like a young lion lying in his
hiding-place.

¹⁸Rise, LORD, oppose him to his
face,

put him down on his knees,
with Your sword save me from
the wicked,

¹⁹with Your hand from men,
LORD,

from men who have only this
life and don't go on.

As for those You treasure—fill
their stomachs,

may their sons be satisfied
and leave what they have left
to their infants.

²⁰With righteousness I will see
Your face,
and be satisfied, when I awake,
by seeing You.

¹⁷
¹⁵ Ps 22:4
¹⁸
² Heb 2:13
Lk 1:69
⁸ Rv 11:5

David's Victory

For the choir leader. By David the
LORD's servant, who spoke this
song to the LORD when the LORD
rescued him from Saul and all his
enemies. He said:

18 I love You, LORD, my
Strength.

²The LORD is my Stronghold, my
Fortress, my Rescuer,
my God, my Rock where I find
shelter,
my Shield,^l my Horn of salva-
tion, my mountain
Refuge.

³I called on the LORD who de-
serves praise

^lOr "my King"

^kAn angelic being, usually symbolized in animal form.

and was saved from my
enemies.

⁴Death surrounded me with its
snares,

torrents of destruction over-
whelmed me;

⁵the grave was all around me to
catch me,

death came toward me to trap
me.

⁶In my trouble I called the LORD;
I cried to my God for help.

In His temple He heard me call,
and my cry for help came to
His ears.

⁷Then the earth swayed and
quaked,

the foundations of the moun-
tains shook

and rocked because He was
angry.

⁸Smoke went up from His
nostrils,

and from His mouth came a
devouring fire

that made coals glow.

⁹He spread apart the heavens
and came down

with a dark cloud under His
feet.

¹⁰He rode on a cherub^k and
flew,

darting along on wings of the
wind.

¹¹He made the darkness around
Him His hiding-place;

dark water and thick clouds
became His shelter.

¹²Light shone ahead of Him as
dark clouds passed by,

with hail and lightning.

¹³The LORD thundered from
heaven;

the Most High spoke out;

there was hail and lightning.
 14He shot His arrows and scattered them,
 He shot His lightning flashes and threw them in a panic.
 15Then the floor of the sea could be seen,
 the foundations of the earth were laid bare
 at Your rebuke, O LORD,
 at the blast of the breath of Your nostrils.
 16He reached down from above and took hold of me;
 He pulled me out of many waters,
 17and rescued me from my strong enemies,
 from those who hated me,
 because they were too strong for me.
 18They came against me on the day I faced disaster,
 but the LORD helped me
 19and brought me out to a place where I was free.

So He rescued me because He took delight in me.

20The LORD rewarded me according to my righteousness.
 He gave me what my clean hands deserve,
 21because I've kept the LORD's ways
 and haven't wickedly turned away from my God.
 22His laws are all before me;
 I don't lay aside His rules.
 23I am blameless before Him;
 I have kept myself from doing wrong,
 24so the LORD will reward me according to my righteousness,
 because He sees my hands are clean.

25 Mt 5,7

25You are kind to him who is kind,
 sincere with him who is sincere,
 26pure with him who keeps himself pure,
 but shrewd with a crooked person.
 27Yes, You save a suffering people,
 but You humble those who look proud.
 28You light my lamp, LORD;
 my God lights up my darkness.
 29With You I can run into a troop,
 with My God I can jump over a wall.
 30God's way is perfect,
 the LORD's promise has been tested by fire.
 He's a Shield to all who go to Him for shelter.
 31Is there any God beside the LORD?
 Is there any Rock beside our God?
 32This God arms me with strength
 and makes my way perfect.
 33He makes my feet like those of deer
 and gives me a sure footing on the heights.
 34He trains my hands to fight
 so that my arms can bend a bronze bow.
 35You gave me Your shield to save me,
 Your right hand supports me;
 Your coming down to help me is what makes me great.
 36You make a wide path for me to walk on,
 and my ankles don't waver.
 37I chase my enemies and catch up with them

and don't go back till they're completely defeated.

³⁸I smash them so they can't get up but fall under my feet.

³⁹You arm me with strength to fight and make those who attack me bow at my feet.

⁴⁰You enable me to put my feet on the back of my enemies, so I wipe out those who hate me.

⁴¹They cry for help, but there's nobody to save them, to the LORD, but He doesn't answer them.

⁴²I beat them fine like dust flying in the air, like mud on the streets I clear them away.

⁴³You free me from a people in revolt, and make me a leader of nations.

⁴⁴People I don't know serve me and obey me as soon as they hear of me. Foreigners cringe before me.

⁴⁵Foreigners wilt like leaves and come trembling out of their fortifications.

⁴⁶The LORD lives! Praise be to my Rock! Let high honor come to God who saves me,

⁴⁷the God who gives me salvation and subdues people under me.

⁴⁸He rescues me from my enemies; You lift me above those who attack me; You rescue me from the men of violence.

⁴⁹For that I will thank You, LORD, among the nations,

and sing to praise Your name.

⁵⁰You give His king great victories; You love His anointed, David and his descendants, forever.

God's Wonders

For the choir leader; a psalm by David.

19 The heavens are telling how wonderful God is, and the sky announces what His hands have made.

²One day tells the next a lively story, and one night informs the next ³without talking, without words, without a voice that can be heard.

⁴Yet their sound goes out all over the earth, and what they say to the most distant parts of the world. He has set up a tent in the heavens for the sun, ⁵and it comes like a bridegroom out of his chamber. Like a strong man it delights to run along its path, ⁶starting from one end of the sky and moving around to the other. Nothing can hide from its glowing heat.

⁷The LORD's word is perfect and gives new life. The LORD's truth can be trusted to make simple people wise.

⁸The LORD's instructions are right, delighting the mind. The LORD's commandment is pure, a light for the eyes.

⁴⁹ Ro 15:9
19
⁴ Ro 10:18

⁹The LORD's command to fear Him is clean and forever the same.

The LORD's decisions are true and altogether right.

¹⁰We want them more than gold, more than plenty of fine gold.

They're sweeter than honey even when it flows from the honeycomb.

¹¹Your servant gets light from them.

If we keep them, we get a great reward.

¹²Who can know his unintentional errors?

Cleanse me from hidden faults.

¹³Above all keep Your servant from proud sins, don't let them get control over me.

Then I'll be blameless and innocent of any great wrong.

¹⁴May what I say please You and what I think be what You like.

O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

Before Battle

For the choir leader; a psalm by David.

20 (Chorus:)
May the LORD answer you when you're in trouble!
May the name of Jacob's God lift you up on a safe height.

²May He send you help from His holy place and support you from Zion.

³May He remember all your gifts and accept your burnt offerings. (Music)^b

⁴May He give you your heart's desire

and carry out all your plans.

⁵Then we'll shout joyfully over the victory given you and in our God's name wave our banners.

May the LORD give you everything you ask for.

(Solo:)

⁶Now I'm sure the LORD will give His anointed a victory as He answers him from His holy heaven with mighty deeds by His right hand.

⁷For some it's chariots; for others, horses; but we will boast in the name of the LORD our God.

⁸They will totter to their knees and fall, but we will rise and stand up.

(People:)

⁹LORD, save the king! and answer us when we call.

After Battle

For the choir leader; a psalm by David.

21 (Chorus:)
LORD, in Your power the king rejoices;
in Your victory how very delighted he is!

²You've given him what his heart desired and didn't keep from him what he asked for. (Music)^b

³You come to him blessing him with good things and put on his head a crown of fine gold.

⁴He asked You for life— You gave it to him, long life, forever and ever.

⁵His glory is great because of the victory You gave him,

⁹ *Rv* 16.5. 7.
19.2

You have laid honor and majesty
on him.

*You have given him blessings
that last forever.

You have made him glad as he
joyfully looks at You.

(Solo:)

¹Yes, the king is trusting the
LORD,

and the love of God above
doesn't let him fail.

*Your hand finds out all your
enemies,
your right hand all who hate
you.

²O LORD, when You appear,
You will burn them as in a
blazing furnace.

In His anger the LORD will
devour them,

like a fire consuming them.

³By destroying their children you
will rid the earth of them
and the world of their
descendants.

⁴When they plan evil against you,
scheming and plotting,
they can't succeed.

⁵You make them turn their backs
by shooting your arrows at
their faces.

(People:)

⁶LORD, rise in Your might!
Then we'll sing songs and
praise Your power.

The Suffering Savior

For the choir leader, on the Doe of
Dawn, a psalm by David.

22 My God, My God, why did
You forsake Me?

Why are You so far from helping
me,
as I roar out?

⁷My God, I call by day, but You
don't answer,
at night, and I get no rest.

⁸But You are holy, on Your
throne,

You are praised by Israel.

⁹Our fathers trusted You,
they trusted You, and You
rescued them.

¹⁰They cried to You and were
saved,
they trusted You and were not
disappointed.

¹¹But I am a worm and no man,
scorned by men and despised
by people.

¹²All who see Me mock Me,
with mouths wide open they
are wagging their heads
[saying]:

¹³"He put His confidence in the
LORD.—

Let Him rescue Him and save
Him,
seeing He delights in Him!"

¹⁴You drew Me out of My mother's
womb
and made Me feel safe on My
mother's breasts.

¹⁵I was cast on You from the time I
was born,
from My mother's womb You
have been My God.

¹⁶Don't go far away from Me—
trouble is near and there's
nobody to help Me.

¹⁷Many bulls gather around Me,
strong bulls from Bashan sur-
round Me.

¹⁸They come for Me with mouths
opened wide—
like lions tearing and roaring.

¹⁹I am poured out like water,

22
1 Mi 27:46.
2 Mi 15:34
3 Ro 5:5
4 Mi 27:39.
5 Mi 15:29.
6 Lk 22:35
7 Mi 27:43

and all My limbs are torn
apart.

My heart is like wax, melted
within Me.

¹⁵My strength is dried up like a
piece of broken pottery.

My tongue sticks to My jaws.
You have brought Me down to
the dust of death.

¹⁶Dogs gather around Me,
a gang of villains surrounds
Me.

They have pierced My hands and
feet.

¹⁷I can count all My bones.

They watch; they gloat over Me.

¹⁸They divide My clothes among
themselves
and throw lots for My
garment.

¹⁹But You, LORD, don't go far
away.

O My Strength, hurry to help
Me.

²⁰Save My life from the sword,
My precious life from the edge
of the ax.

²¹Save Me from the lion's mouth
and from the horns of the wild
bull deliver Me.

²²I will spread Your fame among
My brothers.

I will praise You in the assembly:

²³"You who fear the LORD,
praise Him!

All you descendants of Jacob,
glorify Him!

Fear Him, all you descendants
of Israel!

²⁴He didn't despise or abhor the
Sufferer's suffering,

nor hide His face from Him.

But when He called to Him for
help,

He listened to Him."

²⁵I praise You a hundred times in

the great assembly.

I keep my vows in the pre-
sence of those who wor-
ship Him.

²⁶Let the humble eat and be
satisfied,

and those who go to the LORD
for help praise Him—
let their hearts live forever!

²⁷In all parts of the world people
will remember

and come back to the LORD.
all the families of the nations
will worship You

²⁸because the LORD is King and
rules the nations.

²⁹Though all the rich people in the
world will bow down to
Him,

and all who go down to the
dust, crouch before Him.

He Himself will not grant to
them life.

³⁰There will be descendants that
serve Him

when those of a coming age
are told about the Lord.

³¹They will come and tell a people
still to be born
about His righteousness and
what He has done!

My Shepherd

A psalm by David.

23 The LORD is my Shepherd—
I have everything I need.

²He makes me lie down in fresh
green pastures
and leads me to water where I
can rest.

³He restores my life.
He leads me on paths of
righteousness
for His name's sake.

⁴Even though I walk in a very
dark valley,

16 Zch 12:10
18 Mt 27:35
19 Mk 15:24
Lk 23:34
Jn 19:24
21 2 Ti 4:17
22 Heb 2:12
17
23 Rv 19:5
27 Rv 3:9
15:4
28 Rv 11:15
31 Jn 19:30
23
2 Rv 7:17

I fear no harm because You
are with me;
Your rod and Your staff give
me comfort.

⁴You set a table before me
right in front of my enemies.
You have anointed my head with
oil;
my cup is running over.

⁶Surely goodness and mercy will
follow me all my life,
and I will live in the LORD's
house forever.

Welcome the King of Glory!

A psalm by David.

24 (Congregation in proces-
sion:)

*The earth is the LORD's
and everything in it,
the world and all its people.*

²He laid its foundation over the
seas
and set it firmly above the
rivers.

(Voice:)

¹Who can go up on the LORD's
hill?

Who can stand in His holy
place?

(Leader:)

⁴The person whose hands are
clean,
whose mind is pure,
who doesn't set his heart on
worthless idols,
or lie when under oath.

⁵Such a person will be blessed by
the LORD
and vindicated by the God
who saves him.

⁶These are the people who seek
Him,

who come for help to the God
of Jacob. (Music)^b

(Congregation entering:)

⁷Lift up your heads, O gates,
rise, O ancient doors,
the King of glory is coming in!

(Voice:)

⁸Who is the King of glory?

(Leader:)

The LORD, strong and mighty!
The LORD, a hero in battle!

(Congregation:)

⁹Lift up your heads, O gates,
rise, O ancient doors,
the King of glory is coming in!

(Voice:)

¹⁰Who is the King of glory?

(Congregation:)

The LORD of armies, He is the
King of glory. (Music)^b

Forgive and Help, Lord

By David.

25 I long for You, LORD. ²My
God, I trust You, don't let
me down;

don't let my enemies triumph
over me.

³No one who looks to You for help
will be disappointed.

but those who for no reason
are unfaithful will be dis-
appointed.

⁴LORD, help me know Your ways
and teach me Your paths.

⁵Lead me in Your truth and teach
me,

because You are the God who
saves me.

I am always looking to You for
help.

⁶Remember, LORD, how merciful
and kind You've always
been.

24
1 1 Co 10 26
4 Mt 5 8
25
3 Ro 5 5

⁷Don't remember how I sinned
and did wrong when I was
young.

You are so kind—remember me
and show how good You are,
LORD.

⁸Because the LORD is good and
upright,

He shows sinners how to live.

⁹He enables the humble to live
right,

teaching them His way.

¹⁰The LORD is kind and true in
everything He does
for those who keep His coven-
ant and His truth.

¹¹Glorify Your name, O LORD,
and forgive My sin—it is
great.

¹²If you are one who fears the
LORD,

He will teach you the way you
should choose.

¹³You will enjoy good things in
your life,
and your children will inherit
the land.

¹⁴If you fear the LORD, He will be
your friend
and show you what His coven-
ant means.

¹⁵I'm always looking to the LORD
because He can get my feet
out of every trap.

¹⁶Turn to me and be kind to me—
I am lonely and miserable.

¹⁷Relieve the distress of my heart,
and bring me out of my
trouble.

¹⁸See how poor and miserable I
am,
and take away all my sins.

¹⁹See how many enemies I have
and how violently they hate
me.

²⁰Protect and rescue me.

Don't let me be disappointed—
because I've come to You for
shelter.

²¹May innocence and honesty
protect me
as I look to You for help.

²²O God, free Israel from all their
troubles!

Help Me—I'm Innocent

By David.

26 Give me justice, O LORD—
I've lived innocently
and trusted the LORD without
wavering.

²Examine me, LORD, and test me.
probe my heart and my mind.

³I see how kind You are;
I live in Your truth.

⁴I don't sit with men who lie;
I don't keep company with
hypocrites.

⁵I hate every assembly of those
who do wrong
and will not sit with the
wicked.

⁶I wash my hands in innocence
and march around Your altar,
LORD,

⁷to praise You with a loud
voice
and tell all the wonderful
things You've done.

⁸LORD, I love the house You've
made Your home,
the place where Your glory
dwells.

⁹Don't take away my life with
sinners and murderers,

¹⁰whose hands are busy with
vice

and whose right hands are
full of bribes.

¹¹I am living innocently—
free me and be kind to me.

²⁰ Ro 5:5

²⁶
² Rv 2:23

"My foot stands on even ground.
In the congregations I will praise
the LORD.

Nothing to Fear

By David.

27 The LORD gives me light and
saves me—
of whom should I be afraid?
The LORD is a fortress where
my life is safe—
whom should I fear?

¹When wicked men attack me
to tear me in pieces,
my enemies and foes will
stumble and fall.

²Though an army besieges me,
I'm not afraid.
Even if a battle is waged against
me,
I'll still be confident.

³I ask the LORD for one thing—
this is what I want:
to stay in the LORD's house as
long as I live,
and see how delightful the
LORD is,
and to do research in
His temple.

⁴He hides me in His shelter when
there's trouble,
keeps me hidden in His tent,
and sets me high up on His
mountain.

⁵Then my head is raised over my
enemies around me.
I want to bring sacrifices into
His tabernacle with happy
shouting;
I want to sing and play music
for the LORD.

⁶LORD, hear me as I call out,
be kind to me and answer me.

Ṣyriac; Heb "to Me"

⁷"Come," my heart says, "Come
to Him¹ for help."

I am coming to You, LORD.

⁸Don't hide Your face from me;
in anger don't turn away Your
servant,
but help me.

Don't leave me or forsake me, O
God, my Savior!

⁹If my father and my mother for-
sake me,
the LORD will take care of me.

¹⁰LORD, teach me Your way,
and lead me on an even path
as I face those who hate me.

¹¹Don't give me up to the will of my
enemies,
because they appear against
me as false witnesses,
breathing out accusations of
crime.

¹²I'm sure I will see the goodness
of the LORD in the land of
the living.

¹³Wait for the LORD to help you.
Be strong and full of courage.
Yes, wait for the LORD.

Prayer and Thanks

By David.

28 I'm calling You, O LORD,
O my Rock, don't turn silent-
ly away from me.

If You are silent,
I will be like those who go
down to the grave.

²Listen to me plead as I call to
You for help,

as I raise my hands toward
Your most holy place.

³Don't drag me away with the
wicked,
with those who do wrong,

who talk of peace with their neighbors
but have evil in mind.

⁴Pay them back according to what they have done,
according to their wicked deeds.

Pay them back according to what their hands have done,
and give them what they deserve.

⁵Because they don't consider what the LORD has done
or what His hands have made,
He will tear them down
and never build them up again.

⁶Praise the LORD—
He has heard my call for mercy.

⁷The LORD is my strength and my shield.

My heart trusts Him and so I'm helped;

I'm delighted and praise Him
in my song.

⁸The LORD is our strength and a fortress for His anointed one.

⁹Save Your people and bless Your heritage!

Be their Shepherd and carry them forever!

Everything Says, "Glory!"

A psalm by David.

29 Give to the LORD, O sons of God,

give to the LORD glory and power,

²give to the LORD the glory due His name.

Worship the LORD in holy splendor.

³The LORD's voice is over the waters,

the God of glory is thundering,

the LORD is over many waters,

⁴the LORD's voice is powerful,
the LORD's voice is majestic,

⁵the LORD's voice shatters the cedars,

the LORD smashes the cedars of Lebanon.

⁶He makes Lebanon jump like a calf,

and Mount Hermon like a wild bull.

⁷The LORD's voice cuts down with flames of fire.

⁸The LORD's voice shakes the wilderness,

the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

⁹The LORD's voice splits the oaks and strips the forests bare.

In His temple everything is saying, "Glory!"

¹⁰The LORD sits enthroned over the flood;

the LORD is a king on His throne forever.

¹¹The LORD gives His people power,

the LORD blesses His people with happiness.

Thank You for Saving My Life

A psalm sung at the dedication of the Temple. By David.

30 I praise You, O LORD, for pulling me out

and not letting my enemies rejoice over me.

²LORD my God, I called to You for help,

and You made me well.

³LORD, You lifted me up from the grave

²⁹
1 Acts 7:7

and saved me from going
down to the pit.

⁴Sing to the LORD, you people
that He loves,

and praise Him as you re-
member how holy He is.

⁵His anger means destruction,
but His favor means life.

Weeping may last for a night,
but in the morning there's
happy shouting.

⁶When all was well with me,
I thought, "I'll never fail."

⁷LORD, by Your kindness
You made me like a mighty
mountain.

But when You hid Your face,
I was terrified,

⁸I called to You, O LORD;
I pleaded with my Lord:

⁹"What's the good of my being
killed and going down to the
grave?" ³¹
^{5 LA 23 46}

Can the dust praise You or tell
how faithful You are?

¹⁰Listen, LORD, and be merciful to
me!

LORD, help me!

¹¹Change my weeping to dancing,
take off my sackcloth and
fasten joy like a robe
around me.

¹²Now my heart can sing to You
and not weep.
LORD my God, I will praise
You forever."

When Friends Run Away

For the choir leader; a psalm by
David.

31 I've taken refuge in You,
LORD,
don't let me be disappointed.
Because of Your righteousness
rescue me.

²Listen to me—hurry to save me.
Be my Refuge, my Mountain
Fortress to save me.

³You are my Rock and my
Fortress;
for the honor of Your name
lead me and guide me.

⁴Pull me out of the trap secretly
laid for me,
because You are my Refuge.

⁵Into Your hands I entrust my
spirit—
Redeem me, O LORD, my
faithful God.

⁶I hate those who worship worth-
less idols,
but I trust the LORD.

⁷I rejoice and take delight in Your
love—
You see my misery and care
about me in my troubles.

⁸You haven't surrendered me to
the enemy,
but You have set my feet in a
place where I can move
freely.

⁹LORD, be kind and help me—I'm
in trouble.
My eyes, my throat, and my belly
waste away with grief.

¹⁰My life is consumed with sor-
row, and my years with
groaning.

My grief breaks down my
strength and wastes away
my limbs.

¹¹I'm scorned by all my enemies.
I'm a curse to my neighbors,
and I frighten my friends—
they look at me on the street
and run away from me.

¹²I'm forgotten like one who is
dead.^m
I'm like a broken dish.

^mOr "shriveled like corpse"

- ¹³I hear many slander, frightening me from all sides.
Scheming together against me, they plot to take my life.
- ¹⁴But I trust You, LORD. I say, "You are my God."
- ¹⁵What happens to me is in Your hands—
rescue me from my enemies who pursue me.
- ¹⁶Let Your face shine on Your servant,
and save me by Your love.
- ¹⁷I have called to You, LORD, don't let me be disappointed,
but let the wicked end in shame and be thrown into a grave.
- ¹⁸May their lying lips be muzzled when in proud scorn they dare to talk against the righteous.
- ¹⁹What great kindness You secretly reserve for those who fear You,
and do for those who trust in You, for all the world to see.
- ²⁰You hide them in the shelter of Your presence,
from being slandered by men; You keep them safe in a shelter from quarrelsome tongues.
- ²¹The LORD be praised for being wonderfully kind to me in a besieged city.
- ²²I said when panic-stricken, "I'm cut off so that You can't see me,"
but You heard me plead and call to You for help.
- ²³Love the LORD, all you whom He loves.
The LORD preserves the faithful but pays back in full those who act proudly.

24 1 Co 16:13
32
1-2 Ro 4:7-8
2 1 Pt 2:22;
Rv 14:5

²⁴Be strong and full of courage,
all you who look hopefully to the LORD.

Your Sins Are Forgiven

A psalm by David, to be played skillfully.^a

32 How blessed you are if your wrongs are forgiven and your sins are covered.

²How blessed you are if the LORD doesn't count you as guilty, and if there is no deception in your spirit.

³When I kept silent,^o
I wore out my limbs, groaning all day long.

⁴Day and night Your hand lay heavy on me;

I was turned to ruin by the summer heat. (Music)^b

⁵I told You my sin and didn't cover my wrong.

I said, "I will confess, O Most High,

I will confess my wrongs, O LORD."

And You took away my sin and guilt. (Music)^b

⁶That is why all Your devoted ones pray to You.

When distress comes, or a flood of raging waters,
it will not reach them.

⁷You are a hiding place for me; You protect me from distress.

You surround me with people who are rescued,
and shouting happily about it. (Music)^b

(The LORD:)

⁸I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go.

^aConjecture. Perhaps "A Wisdom Song"

^oOr "devised mischief"

I'll not close My eye on you.

*Don't be like a horse or a mule
without sense;
with a bit and bridle their re-
bellion must be
restrained
so you can come near them.

¹⁰The wicked suffer much!

But if you trust the LORD,
He will surround you with
love.

¹¹Delight in the Lord and be glad,
you who are righteous,
and sing happily, all you
whose hearts are honest.

A Happy People

33 Shout happily in the LORD,
O righteous people!

You good people, for it is
beautiful to praise.

²Praise the LORD with a lyre;
praise Him with a ten-
stringed lute.

³Sing to Him o new song,
play well on the instruments
with happy shouting.

⁴The LORD is right in what He
says,
and you can trust everything
He does.

⁵He loves what is right and just.
The earth is full of the LORD's
love.

⁶The LORD made the heavens by
His Word,
and all the stars by the Breath
of His mouth.

⁷He gathers the water of the sea
in a jar
and puts the deep waters in
storage.

⁸The whole earth should fear the
LORD,

and all who live in the world
be in awe of Him.

⁹He spoke and it was,
He ordered and it came into
being.

¹⁰The LORD makes the plans of
the nations fail;
He hinders them in what they
propose to do.

¹¹But what the LORD plans stands
firm forever;
what He proposes is for all
time.

¹²Blessed is the nation whose God
is the LORD,
the people He chose to be His
own.

¹³The LORD looks down from
heaven and sees all
humanity.

¹⁴From the place where He sits
enthroned
He looks down on all who live
on earth.

¹⁵The Creator sees their hearts;
He is well aware of everything
they do.

¹⁶A king can't win victory just
with a large army,
or a hero save himself just by
his great strength.

¹⁷It isn't true that a horse brings
victory;
despite its great strength it
can't help you escape.

¹⁸Remember the LORD's eye is on
those who fear Him,
who look hopefully to His love.

¹⁹to save them from death and
keep them alive when
starving.

²⁰We long for the LORD, who
helps us and shields us.

²¹Yes, our hearts delight in Him,
and we trust His holy name.

³³
³ Nu 5:9
¹⁰ 1 Co 1:19

²²May Your love be on us, LORD,
as we look hopefully to You.

God Rescues Us

By David when he pretended to be mentally ill before Abimelech, causing Abimelech to drive him away.

34 I will always bless the LORD,

my mouth will continually praise Him.

²My soul will glory in the LORD;
humble people will be glad to hear it.

³Honor the LORD with me,
and let us lift up His name together.

⁴I went to the LORD for help, and
He answered me
and rescued me from every-
thing I dreaded.

⁵Look to Him and be radiant,
don't let your^p face be
downcast.

⁶This poor man called, and the
LORD heard him
and rescued him from all his
troubles.

⁷The LORD's Angel camps around
those who fear Him
and rescues them.

⁸Taste and see how good the
LORD is;
happy is the man who takes
refuge in Him.

⁹Fear the LORD, you who are His
holy ones,
fear Him, and you will lack
nothing.

¹⁰Young lions may be in need and
go hungry,
but those who go to the LORD

for help have every good
thing.

¹¹Come, sons and daughters, lis-
ten to me,
and I will teach you how to
fear the LORD.

¹²Do you love life?
Do you desire to live long,
and enjoy good things?

¹³Then stop talking evil and saying
deceitful things.

¹⁴Turn away from wrong and do
good;
be eager for peace and pursue
it!

¹⁵The LORD's eyes are on the
righteous.
His ears hear their cry for help.

¹⁶But the LORD's face is against
those who do wrong,
and He will wipe out all
memory of them from the
earth.

¹⁷When the righteous cry, the
LORD hears
and rescues them from all
their troubles.

¹⁸The LORD is near you when
you're brokenhearted
and saves you when you're
crushed in spirit.

¹⁹If you're righteous, you have
many griefs,
but the LORD rescues you
from all of them.

²⁰and protects every bone in
you
so that not one of them is
broken.

²¹Evil kills the wicked,
and those who hate the right-
eous will be punished.

²²But the LORD ransoms the life of
His servants,

34
8-1 Ps 2:3
12-18 1 Ps 3:
10-12;
Heb 12:14
20 Jn 18:20

^pVersions; Heb their face''

and all who take refuge in
Him will not be punished.

When You Feel Hunted

By David.

35 LORD, oppose those who are
opposing me;

fight those who are fighting
me;

¹grab small and large shields
and come to help me;

²draw a spear and javelin to meet
those hunting me down.

Give me assurance that You will
save me.

⁴May those who are trying to kill
me

be humiliated and disgraced;
may those who plan disaster for
me

be turned back with shame;

⁵may they be like chaff blown by
the wind—

the LORD's angel throwing
them down;

⁶may their path be dark and
slippery—

the LORD's angel chasing
them.

⁷They secretly lay their net over
a pit for me;

in ambush, they spy on my
life.

⁸May they be destroyed suddenly
when they least expect it;

may the net they hid catch
them;

may they fall into it and be
destroyed.

⁹I delight in the LORD; I am glad
He saves me.

¹⁰My whole being says, "Who is
like You, LORD?"

You rescue the weak from the
strong.

the poor and needy from the
one who robs him."

¹¹Men get up and accuse me of
crime;

they ask me questions I can't
answer.

¹²They pay me back evil for good,
bringing my life to an end.

¹³When they were sick, I wore
sackcloth

and denied myself by fasting.

(May my prayer come back to
my bosom.)

¹⁴I walked around as if it were my
friend or my brother;

as if it were for my mother, I
bowed down in mourning.

¹⁵But when I stumble they gather
with glee;

they band together against
me,

striking me when I least ex-
pect it.

They slander and never stop.

¹⁶A circle of godless mockers
grind their teeth at me.

¹⁷My Lord, how long will You look
on?

Rescue me from their destruc-
tion, my precious life from
the lions.

¹⁸I will thank You in the great
congregation

and praise You in a large
gathering of people.

¹⁹Don't let my false enemies
gloat over me,

nor those who without a reason
hate me

give me an evil look.

²⁰They don't talk of peace

but plot to betray people living
quietly in the land.

²¹They open their mouths wide at
me, saying,

- "Aha! Aha! We saw it ourselves."
- ²²O LORD, You have seen it—
don't be silent.
Lord, don't be far away from me.
- ²³Rouse Yourself and give me justice,
my God and Lord awake and defend my cause.
- ²⁴O LORD, since You are righteous, give me justice,
O my God, keep them from gloating over me.
- ²⁵Don't let them think, "Aha! That's what we want,"
or say, "We have ruined him!"
- ²⁶May those who gloat over my trouble
be altogether ashamed and disgraced;
may those who boast against me
be covered with shame and disgrace.
- ²⁷But those who are pleased when I receive justice
should shout and be glad and keep on saying,
"Great is the LORD, who delights to see His servant happy."
- ²⁸Then my tongue will tell how righteous You are
and praise You all day long.

The Spring of Life

For the choir leader; by David, the LORD's servant.

- 36** The wicked man has rebellion in his heart.
God doesn't terrify him.
¹He flatters himself in his own eyes,

¹Or "land"

- and is not aware of his sin to hate it.
- ²He talks only of doing wrong and deceiving,
and has stopped doing what is wise and good.
- ³Lying on his bed, he plans to do wrong
and sets himself on a course that's no good.
He never rejects evil.
- ⁴LORD, Your love is high as the heavens,
Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.
- ⁵Your righteousness is like God's mountains,
Your justice like the deep ocean.
You save men and animals,
LORD.
- ⁶How precious is Your love, O God.
Men and angels come for shelter under the shadow of Your wings;
⁷they are satisfied with rich foods at Your house,
and You let them drink from Your river of delights.
- ⁸With You is the spring of life,
and in Your light^a we shall see light.
- ⁹Keep on loving those who know You
and show yourself righteous to those who are right at heart.
- ¹⁰Don't let the feet of proud men step on me
or hand of the wicked throw me down.
- ¹¹Then those who do wrong will fall,

pushed down never to get up.

Don't Envy the Wicked

By David.

37 Don't get upset about evil people

or jealous of those who do wrong.

¹Like grass they soon wither
and fade away like a green plant.

²Trust the LORD and do good;
live in the land, practice being faithful.

³Delight in the LORD,
and He will give you your heart's desire.

⁴Commit your ways to the LORD,
trust Him,
and He will act (for you).

⁵He will make Your righteousness shine like a light
and your just cause like sunshine at noon.

⁶Stand still and look to the LORD
for help.

Don't get upset when somebody
is successful
and accomplishes the evil he plans.

⁸Stop being angry, quit raging;
don't be upset, it only leads to doing wrong.

⁹The wicked will be destroyed,
but those who look to the LORD for help, will take possession of the land.

¹⁰In a little while the wicked will be gone;
then look carefully where he was—he won't be there!

¹¹The humble will possess the land
and enjoy great well-being.

¹²The wicked man plots against the righteous,

grinding his teeth at him.

¹³The Lord laughs at him
because he sees his day coming.

¹⁴Wicked men draw their swords
and bend their bows
to strike down the poor and needy
and slaughter those who live right.

¹⁵Their swords will pierce their own hearts,
and their bows will be smashed.

¹⁶Better is a little that the righteous man has
than the wealth of many wicked people.

¹⁷The arms of the wicked will be broken
but the LORD helps the righteous.

¹⁸The LORD takes care of the innocent day by day,
and their heritage will last forever.

¹⁹They will not be miserable in bad times
and in days of famine will eat all they want.

²⁰But the wicked will perish;
the LORD's enemies will vanish like the glory of the meadows;
they will vanish in smoke.

²¹A wicked man borrows and doesn't pay back,
but a righteous man is kind and gives.

²²If the LORD blesses you, you will own the land,
but if He curses you, you will be cut down.

²³When a man's steps come from the LORD

³⁷
Mt 5:5

- they will be firm and his way pleasant.
- ²⁴He may fall but will not be thrown down
because the LORD's hand holds him.
- ²⁵I was young and now I'm old,
but never have I seen the righteous forsaken
or his children begging for bread.
- ²⁶He is always generous and lends money,
and his children will be blessed.
- ²⁷Shun evil and do good
and live in the land forever.
- ²⁸The LORD loves what is right
and will not desert those devoted to Him.
They will be preserved forever,
but the descendants of the wicked will be cut down.
- ²⁹The righteous will own the land
and live there forever.
- ³⁰The mouth of the righteous man
talks wisdom;
his tongue says what is right.
- ³¹The teaching of his God is in his mind
and his steps do not falter.
- ³²A wicked man spies on the righteous
and tries to kill him.
- ³³But the LORD will not leave him
in his power
or condemn him when he is tried.
- ³⁴Look to the LORD for help and
live in His way,
and He will lift you up to own the land,
and you will see the wicked cut down.

- ³⁵I have seen the wicked as a tyrant,
spreading out^r like a cedar full of leaves.
- ³⁶But he passed away, and now he's gone.
I looked for him but couldn't find him.
- ³⁷Keep an eye on a perfect man,
and watch the good man;
that man will finally live happily.
- ³⁸The wicked will be completely destroyed
and their future cut off.
- ³⁹But the LORD saves the righteous
and keeps them safe when trouble comes.
- ⁴⁰The LORD helps them and rescues them,
He rescues them from the wicked and saves them
because they came to Him for shelter.

My Sin and Suffering

A psalm by David. For praying.ⁱ

- 38** Lord, don't correct me in
Your anger
and punish me in Your fury.
- ²Your arrows have gone deep
into me,
and Your hand presses down
on me.
- ³Because You're angry, there's
not a healthy spot in my
body;
because I've sinned, there's
nothing sound in my limbs.
- ⁴My sins overwhelm me,
like a heavy load they burden
me down.
- ⁵Because I was foolish,
my wounds stink and fester.

^rmeaning uncertain

- ⁶I'm twisted and very bowed down.
All day I go about mourning.
- ⁷My loins are all inflamed,
and there's nothing healthy in my body.
- ⁸I am numb and badly crushed.
I groan because my heart is moaning.
- ⁹Lord, You know all my longing,
and my sighing isn't hidden from You.
- ¹⁰My heart is throbbing—I've lost my strength,
even the light of my eyes is gone.
- ¹¹Those who love me, my friends,
stand back at the sight of my disease,
and my relatives stand at a distance.
- ¹²Those who try to kill me lay snares for me;
out to harm me, they talk of my ruin;
all day long they think of ways to deceive.
- ¹³I am like a deaf man—I cannot hear,
and like a dumb man, who doesn't say anything.
- ¹⁴I have become like a man who doesn't hear anything
and has no arguments to offer.
- ¹⁵But I look to You, LORD, for help.
O Lord, my God, You will answer.
- ¹⁶For I have already said, "Don't let them gloat over me.
When my foot slips, don't let them ridicule me."
- ¹⁷I'm about to break down—I'm always in pain.
- ¹⁸I'm going to tell about my wrong—I'm worried about my sin.
- ¹⁹The enemies of my life are strong,
and there are many who hate me deceitfully.
- ²⁰They pay me back evil for good
and bitterly accuse me for trying to do good.
- ²¹Don't desert me, LORD,
my God, don't be far away from me.
- ²²Come quickly to help me,
O Lord, hasten to save me.

Life Is a Vapor

For the choir leader. For Jeduthun. A psalm by David.

39 I said: I will watch my ways

and not sin with my tongue,

I will keep a muzzle on my mouth
while I face the wicked man.

²I kept completely silent and said nothing,

then my grief was stirred up,
³and my heart burned in me.

As I meditated it blazed.

Then I spoke with my tongue:

⁴"LORD, tell me about my end,
how many days I have left,
so that I know how fleeting my life is.

⁵You made my days a few handbreadths,
and my whole life is nothing to You.

⁶Every man stands there as just a vapor; (Music)^b
each one walks around in the dark.

In vain they heap up riches,
without knowing who will get them.

³⁹
¹¹ Lk 22:49;
Mt 27:55;
Mk 15:40

⁷And so, what is there for me to
look forward to, Lord?

You are my hope!

⁸Save me from all who would do
wrong to me,
and don't make me the scorn
of fools.

⁹I am silent and don't open my
mouth—
if You would only act!

¹⁰Take away from me the suffer-
ing You inflicted;
because You have struck me
with Your hand,
I am finished.

¹¹When You punish men by cor-
recting their sin,
You make what is precious to
them crumble
as if eaten by a moth.
Surely every man is just a vapor.

(Music)^b

¹²Listen to my prayer, LORD, and
hear my cry for help, O
God.

Don't be deaf to my tears.

I'm a stranger staying with You,
a guest like all my ancestors.

¹³Look away from me and I'll be
happy
before I pass away and am
gone.

Help Me

For the choir leader; a psalm by
David.

40 I waited patiently for the
LORD,

and He turned and listened to
my cry for help.

²He pulled me out of a desolate
pit, out of the mire and clay,
and set my feet on a rock,
helping me walk firmly.

³He put a new song in my mouth,

a praise to our God.

Many shall see it and fear, and
trust in the LORD.

⁴Blessed is the man who puts his
trust in the LORD,
and doesn't turn to those who
are arrogant
and are entangled in lies.

⁵You have done many wonderful
things for us, O LORD my
God.

You have made many wonder-
ful plans;
no one can be compared with
You.

I want to announce them and tell
about them,
but they are more than I can
tell.

⁶You were not pleased with
sacrifice and offering—

You have opened my ears;
You didn't want burnt offerings
and sacrifices for sin;

⁷then I said, "I have come!
(The writing in the scroll of
the book tells about Me).

⁸I delight to do what You want,
My God.
Your law is in My heart."

⁹I tell the news of righteousness
in the great congregation,
and I don't shut my mouth—
LORD, You know it.

¹⁰I don't keep Your righteousness
a secret in my heart;
I tell how faithful You are and
how You save.

I have not hid from the great
congregation
how loving and true You are.

¹¹You, LORD, don't hold back
Your love from me.
May Your love and Your truth
always protect me;

39
12:1 Pt 2:11
40
3 Rv 5:9; 14:3
6-8 Heb 10:
5-10; Ep 5:2

¹²for evils surround me till they
can't be counted.

My sins have caught up with me
till I can't see,

they are more than the hairs
on my head.

I have lost my courage.

¹³Hurry, LORD, to rescue me!

LORD, come quickly to help me!

¹⁴May those who are trying to de-
stroy me,

all be disappointed and
ashamed,

and those who delight in harm-
ing me

turn back in disgrace.

¹⁵May those who say to me, "Aha!
Aha!"

be appalled by their own
shame.

¹⁶But may all who look to You for
help

find joy and delight in You.

May those who love You for sav-
ing them

always say, "The LORD is
great!"

¹⁷I am poor and needy; may the
Lord think of me.^a

You are my Helper and Deli-
verer. My God, don't delay!

Gossip and a Bad Friend

For the choir leader; a psalm by
David.

41 Blessed is he who treats the
poor with understanding.

When trouble comes, may the
LORD rescue him.

²May the LORD protect him and
keep him alive.

May he enjoy happiness in the
land,

and not be surrendered to the
greed of his enemies.

³May the LORD strengthen him
on his sickbed—

sustain him on his bed and
overthrow his sickness!

⁴I say, "O LORD, be kind to me.

Heal me—I have sinned
against you."

⁵My enemies talk evil of me:

"When will he die and his
name disappear?"

⁶When one of them comes to see
me, he tells lies.

He keeps all the gossip in mind,
and then goes outside and

tells others.

⁷All who hate me whisper to-
gether about me.

They mean to harm me, saying:

"May a deadly disease be
poured out on him;

may he lie there and never get
up again!"

⁸Even My friend whom I trusted,
who ate My food,
gives Me a hard kick.

¹⁰But You, LORD, be kind to me;

help me get up and I will pay
them back.

¹¹Then I will know You are
pleased with me,

if my enemy doesn't triumph
over me.

¹²As for me, You have taken hold
of me in my innocence

and have set me before You
forever.

¹³Praise be to the LORD, the God
of Israel

from everlasting to
everlasting!

So be it, yes, so be it!

^aOr with Psalm 70:5 "O Lord, come to me quickly."

Longing for God

For the choir leader; by Korah's descendants; to be played skillfully.¹

42 As a deer pants for streams of water,
so my soul pants for You, O God.

²I thirst for God, the living God:
O when will I come and see the face of God?

³My tears have been my food day and night
because I'm asked all day long, "Where is your God?"

⁴As I pour out my soul before Him,
I recall how I used to go in the crowd
and lead them to God's house,
with happy shouting and praise
as the crowd celebrated a festival.

⁵Why am I feeling so low
and why am I in such turmoil?
I must look to God for help,
and praise Him who is my Saviour and ⁶my God.

When I'm feeling so low I will remember You
from the land of Jordan,
the peaks of Hermon and at the hill Mizar,

⁷where the floods resound and the waterfalls roar,
where all Your billows and waves passed over me.

⁸During the day the LORD sent His love;

and at night his song was with me;
my prayer was to the God of my life.

⁹I will ask God, "My Rock, why did You forget me?
Why must I go mourning while the enemy oppresses me?"

¹⁰My enemies insult me—it's a crushing of my bones—
by asking me all day long,
"Where is your God?"

¹¹Why am I feeling so low
and why am I in such turmoil?
I must look to God for help,
and praise Him as my Saviour
and my God.

Send Your Light

43 Defend me, O God, and plead my case.

From a nation where there is no love,
from deceitful and evil people
rescue me.

²You are my mountain refuge, O God!

Why do You reject me?
Why must I go mourning while the enemy oppresses me?

³Send Your light and Your truth to guide me

and take me to Your holy hill,
the place where You live.

⁴Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God, the joy of my life;
and I will praise You on the lyre, O God, my God.

⁵Why am I feeling so low
and why am I in such turmoil?
I must look to God for help,
and praise Him as my Saviour
and my God.

42
2 Rv 22:4
5-6-11 Mt
26:38
Mk 14:34
43
5 Mt 26:38
Mk 14:34

¹"skillfully" is conjectural

Why Do You Hide Your Face?

For the choir leader; by Korah's descendants; to be played skillfully.ⁱ

44 God, we heard it ourselves,
our fathers told us
what Your hand accomplished
in their days,
the days of long ago.

²You drove out peoples and
planted our fathers there,

You shattered nations and let
our fathers spread out.

³Not by their sword did they take
the land,

nor did their arms win the
victory.

No, Your right hand, Your arm,
and the light of Your face did
it,

because You were kind to ^{22 Ro 8:36}
them.

⁴It was You, my King, my God
who ordered victories for
Jacob.

⁵With You we pushed down our
enemies,
in Your name we trampled on
those who attacked us.

⁶I don't trust my bow, and my
sword can't save me.

⁷No, You saved us from our
enemies
and put to shame those who
hated us.

⁸We have always boasted in our
God
and will praise Your name
forever. (Music)^b

⁹But now You have rejected us
and brought disgrace on us;
You don't go out with our
armies.

¹⁰You make us turn back from the
enemy,

and those who hate us plun-
der us as they please.

¹¹You surrender us like sheep to
be slaughtered,
and scatter us among the
nations.

¹²You sell Your people cheap
and don't make much by the
price You get.

¹³You allow our neighbors to
scorn us
and those around us to mock
and make fun of us.

¹⁴You make us a byword among
the nations
so that people shake their
heads at us.

¹⁵All day long I see my disgrace
and my face is covered with
shame,

¹⁶because of the voice of those
who insult and revile us,
because of the enemy and the
avenger.

¹⁷While all this happened to us we
didn't forget You,
nor were we untrue to Your
covenant.

¹⁸Our hearts didn't turn away,
and our feet didn't leave
Your way,

¹⁹though You crushed us in a
place for jackals
and covered us with deep
gloom.

²⁰If we had forgotten the name of
our God
and stretched out our hands
to a foreign god,

²¹wouldn't God find it out,
since He knows the secrets of
the heart?

²²No, because of You we are killed
all day long

and considered sheep to be
butchered.

²³Wake up! Why are You sleeping,
O Lord?

Awake! Don't reject us
forever.

²⁴Why do You hide Your face
and forget how we suffer and
are oppressed?

²⁵Our necks are bowed down in
the dust,
and our bellies cling to the
ground.

²⁶Rise and help us!
Save us because You love us!

The King and His Bride

For the choir leader, according to
"Lilies," by Korah's descendants; to
be played skillfully. A love song.

45 A fine theme stirs in my
heart.

I will recite what I'm writing
about a King.

My tongue is the pen of a skillful
writer.

²You are the most beautiful of
men,

Your lips pour out an undeserved
love

so God has blessed You
forever.

³Strap Your sword on Your thigh,
O mighty One;
march on in Your splendor,

⁴with Your majesty drive
to victory.

Ride in the cause of truth
and be concerned with
justice.

And may Your right hand teach
awe-inspiring things.

⁵May people fall beneath You,

with Your sharp arrows, in
the hearts of the King's
enemies.

⁶Your throne, God, is forever and
ever.

You rule as a King with a right-
eous scepter.

⁷You love righteousness and hate
wickedness.

That is why God, Your God,
has anointed You
with the oil of joy above Your
companions.

⁸All Your garments are fragrant
with myrrh,
scented wood, and cassia.

From ivory palaces the music of
stringed instruments de-
lights You.

⁹Among Your noble women are
kings' daughters,

The queen in gold from Ophir
will take her place at Your
right hand.

¹⁰Listen, daughter, look, and turn
your ear to me:

"Forget your people and your
father's home.

"The King longs for your
beauty—
He's your Lord—bow down
to Him.

¹²The people of Tyre, the rich-
est of the people,
want to win your favor with
a gift.

¹³The King's daughter is alto-
gether wonderful,
her dress within is of gold
brocade.

¹⁴In her many-colored robes she is
led to the King,
the virgins, her friends, fol-
lowing her, are brought
to You.

¹⁵With joy and delight they are
brought in

45
6-7 Heb
18-9

and come into the King's
palace.

¹⁶Your sons will take the place
Your ancestors had,
and You will make them
rulers all over the earth.

¹⁷I will cause Your name to be
remembered
by all the people of the coming
ages;

and that is why the nations will
praise You forever and
ever.

God Is Our Refuge

For the choir leader; a song by
Korah's descendants; for soprano
voices.¹ A song.

46 God is our Refuge and
Strength,

a very great help in time of
trouble.

²We're not afraid
even when the earth quakes,
the mountains topple into the
sea;

³even when its waters roar and
foam,
and the mountains shake in the
middle of it. (Music)^b

⁴There is a river whose streams
delight God's city,
the holy place where the most
high God lives.

⁵God is in the city—she can't fall.
God will help her when the
morning dawns.

⁶Nations are in confusion and
kingdoms totter—
when God utters his voice, the
earth trembles.

⁷The LORD of armies is with us,
the God of Jacob is our Refuge.
(Music)^b

⁸Come, see the works of the
LORD,
what terrible things He does
in the world!

⁹He stops wars all over the earth,
smashing bows, cutting off
spears, and burning
chariots.

¹⁰“Stop and realize that I am God!
I am high over the nations,
exalted over the world!”

¹¹The LORD of armies is with us,
the God of Jacob is our Refuge.
(Music)^b

The King of the World

For the choir leader; a psalm by
Korah's descendants.

47 All you people, clap your
hands;

shout to God with loud
rejoicing.

²The LORD, the Most High, in-
spires awe;
He is the great King over all
the earth.

³He made people bow down to us
and put nations under our
feet.

⁴He chose our land for us,
the pride of Jacob whom He
loved. (Music)^b

⁵God has gone up with a shout of
joy,
the LORD with the sound of
the trumpet.

⁶Sing to God, praise Him!
Sing to our King, praise Him!

⁷God is King of the whole world—
sing with skillful music.

⁸God is King of the nations,
God is sitting on His holy throne.

⁹May those who are willing
among the nations rally
round

47
8 Rv 4:2, 9;
5:1, 7, 13
6:16; 7:10
19:4;
21:5

as a people for Abraham's
God.

The rulers of the earth belong to
God;

He is very high.

God's City

A song; a psalm by Korah's
descendants.

48 The LORD is great and
worthy of much praise.

In the city of our God is His holy
hill,

¹rising beautifully, the joy of
all the world.

Mount Zion is on the northern
ridge;

it is the city of the great King.

²God is in her fortified palaces;

He has shown Himself to be a
mountain Refuge.

³Indeed, the kings have gathered! 48
2 MI 5:35

They advanced together,

⁴then they looked and were
amazed,

and in a panic ran away.

⁵Panic seized them there;

they were in anguish like a
woman having a child,

⁶as when an east wind wrecks
ocean going ships.

⁷What we had heard of, we saw
in the city of the LORD of
armies,

the city of our God.

God makes it stand firm forever.

(Music)^b

⁸We think of Your love, God,
while we're in Your temple.

⁹Like Your name, God,

Your praise goes to the ends
of the earth.

Your right hand is full of justice.

¹⁰May Mount Zion be happy
and Judah's towns be glad

as they see Your just actions.

¹¹Walk around Zion, go around
her;

count her towers, ¹²examine
her ramparts;

walk through her fortified
palaces,

so you can tell your de-
scendants in the future:

¹³God is here, our eternal and
everlasting God.

He will lead us forever.

You Can't Take It with You

For the choir leader; a psalm by
Korah's descendants.

49 Hear this, all you
people,

listen, all you who live in the
world,

¹human beings, high and low,
rich and poor.

²My mouth will speak wisely and
my mind think with under-
standing.

³I will turn my ear to a wise
saying,

and with a lyre clarify my
puzzling thoughts.

⁴Why should I be afraid in times
of trouble,

or of the evil of the slanderers
who surround me.

⁵who trust their wealth and
brag of how very rich
they are?

⁶No one can buy anyone's
freedom
or pay God a ransom for him.

⁷The price to be paid for their
soul is too costly. ⁸Even
with that type of ransom
a man will not live for-
ever or avoid the grave.

⁹No, God looks at wise men and
they die.

He gazes on fools and brutish men and they perish, leaving their wealth to others.

¹¹Their graves become their eternal homes, their dwellings for all the ages.

They call their lands by their names.

¹²But man with his precious things can't go on living, he's like the animals that perish.

¹³This is the fate of confident fools and those coming after them who like what they said.

¹⁴Like sheep they have to lie down in the grave with death as their shepherd; and good people will tramp on them in the morning.

Their limbs will be consumed in the grave, away from their princely homes.

¹⁵But God will ransom me from the power of the grave because He will take me. (Music)^b

¹⁶Don't be afraid when a man gets rich and his household becomes more and more wealthy.

¹⁷When he dies, he can't take anything with him, his wealth can't follow him down there.

¹⁸While he's living, he may think he's happy and be praised for doing well for himself;

¹⁹but he will join his fathers who lived before him, never again to see the light.

²⁰A man with precious things but no understanding is like the animals that perish.

God Comes to Judge

A psalm by Asaph.

50 The mighty God, the LORD speaks, and He calls the earth, from where the sun rises to where it sets.

²God is shining from Zion, the perfection of beauty.

³Our God comes and isn't silent, in front of Him a fire is devouring, and around Him a storm is raging.

⁴He summons the heavens above and the earth to His people's trial:

⁵"Gather round Me you whom I love, who made a covenant with Me by sacrifice."

⁶The heavens tell about His righteousness, for God Himself is doing justice. (Music)^b

⁷"Listen, My people, and I will speak; listen, Israel, and I will testify against you: I am God, your God!

⁸I do not criticize you for your sacrifices, for regularly bringing Me your burnt offerings.

⁹But I need not take a bull from your homes or a he-goat from your folds,

¹⁰since all the animals in the forest are mine and the cattle on the hills by the thousand.

¹¹I care for every bird in the hills, and everything stirring in the field is present before me.

- ¹²If I were hungry, I need not tell you
because the world is mine and everything in it.
- ¹³Do I eat the meat of bulls or drink the blood of goats?
- ¹⁴Bring God your thanks as a sacrifice,
and do for the most high God what you vowed.
- ¹⁵Call Me in time of trouble!
When I rescue you, you should honor Me."
- ¹⁶But God tells the wicked:
"What business is it of yours to recite My laws and talk about My covenant?"
- ¹⁷You hate to be corrected,
and toss My words behind you.
- ¹⁸When you see a thief, you want to be with him
and share the life of adulterers.
- ¹⁹With your mouth you devise evil and your tongue plans deceit.
- ²⁰You sit and talk against your brother,
slandering your own mother's son.
- ²¹You do this, and should I say nothing?
You plan to destroy; should I be like you?
I will correct you and lay it before your eyes.
- ²²Consider this, you who forget God,
or I'll tear you in pieces and nobody will rescue you.
- ²³If you bring your thanks as a sacrifice, you can honor Me.
If you set your life in order,
I will have you drink your fill of God's salvation."

Wash Me Clean

For the choir leader; David's

psalm when the prophet Nathan had come to him after he went into Bathsheba.

- 51** O God, You are so kind—be merciful to me,
Your love is so great—wipe out my wrong;
²wash me thoroughly from my guilt,
and cleanse me from my sin.
- ³I realize the wrong I've done,
and my sin is always before me.
- ⁴I sinned against You, against You only,
and did what is wrong in Your sight;
so that You are just when You speak
and pure when You judge.
- ⁵Yes, I was born guilty,
and when my mother conceived me I was in sin.
- ⁶You desire truth in my heart;
You want to teach me to be wise in my inner being.
- ⁷Cleanse me from sin with hyssop
and I'll be clean,
wash me and I'll be whiter than snow.
- ⁸Let me hear singing and joy,
then the limbs You crushed will be glad again.
- ⁹Hide Your face from my sins,
and wipe out all my wrongs.
- ¹⁰Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and give me a steady new spirit.
- ¹¹Don't banish me from Your presence
or take Your Holy Spirit from me.
- ¹²Give me again the joy of Your help

50
14 Heb 13:15;
Mt 5:33
23 Heb 13:15
51
4 Ro 2:4
10 Mt 5:8

and a willing spirit to
strengthen me.

¹³Then I will teach the rebellious
Your ways.

and sinners will come back to
You.

¹⁴O God, rescue me from bloody
wrong. O God who saves
me.

and my tongue will shout
about Your righteous-
ness!

¹⁵Lord, open my lips, and my
mouth will praise You.

¹⁶If You wanted sacrifice I would
give it.

but a mere burnt offering
doesn't please You.

¹⁷The sacrifice which God wants
is a broken spirit.

A broken and crushed heart,
O God, You won't despise.

¹⁸By Your kindness be good to
Zion.

and build the walls of
Jerusalem.

¹⁹Then You will delight in the right
kind of sacrifices.

burnt offerings and whole
offerings.

Then young bulls will be sacri-
ficed on Your altar.

My Enemy Is in God's Hands

For the choir leader: to be played
skillfully; David's psalm when Doeg,
a descendant of Esau, went and told
Saul. "David has come to Ahime-
lech's home."

52 Why, big shot, do you brag
about behaving wickedly
against God's loved one every
day.^u

^uSyriac; Heb obscure

²Your tongue is like a sharp
razor,
scheming to destroy and doing
deceitful things.

³You love evil instead of good,
lying instead of saying what is
right. (Music)^b

⁴You love every kind of destruc-
tive speech,
you deceitful tongue!

⁵God too will destroy you forever,
knock you down and snatch
you out of your tent,
pluck you by the roots out of
the land of the living.
(Music)^b

⁶The righteous will look at him in
awe.

but they will laugh at him:

⁷"Look at the man who wouldn't
make God his fortress
but trusted his great wealth
and got strong by destroying
others."

⁸But I am like a flourishing olive
tree in God's house.
trusting God's love forever.

⁹I thank You forever for what
You did
and announce to those You
love how good Your name
is.

We Are Sinners

For the choir leader: for sickness;
to be played skillfully: by David.

53 A fool says in his heart,
"There is no God."
They do corrupt and detestable
things.
No one does anything
good.

²God looks at the world from heaven
to see if there is anyone wise,
who comes to God for help.

³They have all turned away together and become corrupt.
Not one does right, not a single one.

⁴Don't these who do wrong know,
don't these who devour my people know
that if anyone eats the bread of God

⁵without calling on Him, panic will overtake them?

Certainly there will be panic when God scatters the bones of those who besiege you.

They will be put to shame because God will reject them.

⁶If only Someone would come from Zion to save Israel.

When God restores His people, Jacob will be delighted and Israel will be glad.

Help!

For the choir leader; to be played skillfully on string instruments; by David when the people of Ziph went and told Saul, "Isn't David hiding among us?"

54 O God, save me by Your name, and by Your power get me justice.

¹Listen to my prayer, O God, and hear what I say.

²Strangers attack me, and tyrants try to kill me— they don't keep God before them. (Music)^b

³But look, God is my help! The Lord supports me.

⁴May He pay back evil to my enemies.

With Your truth destroy them!

⁵Then I will gladly sacrifice to You

and praise Your name, LORD, because it is good;

⁶for You have rescued me from every trouble,

and my eye can gaze now at my enemies.

When a Friend Turns Against You

For the choir leader; to be played skillfully on string instruments; by David.

55 Listen to my prayer, O God; don't hide from me when I plead.

¹Turn to me and answer me.

I am restless and troubled,

²and confused by the shouting of the enemy

and the oppression of the wicked.

For they bring me misery and angrily pursue me.

³My mind is in a state of anguish as the terrors of death fall on me;

⁴I fear and tremble and shudder all over.

⁵I say if I only had wings like a dove,

I would fly away and rest.

⁶Yes, I would run far away and stay in the desert. (Music)^b

⁷I would hurry to my shelter from the raging wind and storm.

⁸Destroy them, Lord! Confound their tongues,

because I see violence and conflict in the city.

- ¹⁰Day and night they go around on
its walls;
trouble and misery are in the
city.
¹¹and destruction is also there,
oppression and cheating re-
main in its streets.
- ¹²If it were the enemy who in-
sulted me—
that I could bear;
if it were one that hated me who
attacked me—
I could hide from him.
¹³But it's you, a man of my own
number,
my friend and one I knew so
well!
- ¹⁴We talked in sweet fellowship
and walked with a crowd into
God's house.
- ¹⁵May death take them suddenly;
may they go down alive to the
grave
because wickedness is in their
hearts.
- ¹⁶I will call on God, and the LORD
will save me.
- ¹⁷In the evening, in the morning,
and at noon
I will complain and groan,
and He will hear me.
- ¹⁸He will ransom me by His peace,
from the war waged against
me,
for my adversaries are beside
me.
- ¹⁹May God who sits on His ancient
throne hear
and put them down (Music)^b
because they never change
and don't fear God.

^bSelah

- ²⁰Each lays hands on his friends
and violates his covenant.
²¹His talk is smoother than butter,
but he means to fight;
his words are softer than oil,
but they are like drawn
swords.
- ²²Throw your burden on the
LORD, and He will support
you.
He will never let the righteous
fail.
- ²³But You, O God, will throw the
others down into a deep
grave.
Men who murder and deceive
will not live out half their
days.
But I'm trusting You.

In God I Trust

For the choir leader; according to
"The Dove of Distant Oaks";
David's inscription¹ when the Phi-
listines arrested him in Gath.

- 56** Be kind and help me, O God,
men trample on me.
They fight all day long and they
oppress me;
²all day long my enemies hound
me,
as many fight against me.
- O Most High, ³when I'm afraid,
I put my trust in You.
⁴In God—I praise His Word—
In God I trust—I'm not afraid;
what can flesh do to me?
- ⁵All day long they cause me grief,
thinking only to harm me.
⁶They start a fight and then hide.
They watch where I go
because they're eager to kill
me.

⁵⁵
²² 1 Pt 5:7
⁵⁶
^{4, 11} Heb
^{13:6}

⁷With the wrong they do, can they escape?

In Your anger, O God, put down the peoples.

⁸Write down for yourself my lament;

put my tears in Your water-skin—

aren't they in Your scroll?

⁹Then my enemies will have to turn back on the day I call;

for this I know: God is with me.

¹⁰In God—I praise His Word—

In the LORD—I praise His Word—

¹¹In God I trust—I'm not afraid; what can man do to me?

¹²I'm under vows to You, O God,

I will carry them out by praising You.

¹³You have rescued me from death, and kept my foot from stumbling,

that I might walk before God in the land of the living.

In the Shadow of Your Wings

For the choir leader; "Don't Destroy"; David's inscription when he fled from Saul into the cave.

57 Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me because in You my life finds protection.

I take cover in the shadow of Your wings

till the threat of destruction passes by.

²I call to God, the Most High, who does things for me.

³He sends help from heaven and saves me

from the slander of him who hounds me. (Music)^b

God sends His love and His faithfulness.

⁴But I myself must lie down among lions—men who devour.

Their teeth are spears and arrows,

and their tongues are sharp swords.

⁵You are high above the heavens, O God,

and Your glory is over all the earth.

⁶They prepared a net for my feet, a noose for my neck.

They dug a pit in front of me and then fell into it. (Music)^b

⁷I feel confident, O God, I feel confident.

I will sing and play music.

⁸Wake up, my heart! Wake up, O lute and lyre!

that I might wake up the dawn.

⁹I will thank You among the nations, O Lord,

and play music to praise You among the people.

¹⁰because Your love is as great as the heavens,

and Your faithfulness reaches the clouds.

¹¹You are high above the heavens O God,

and Your glory is over all the earth.

God Will Judge

For the choir leader; "Don't Destroy"; an inscription by David.

58 Will you, O judges, really say what is right?

Will you judge the people fairly?

²No, you act with perverse
minds,
and your hands commit vio-
lence in the land.

³The wicked are wrong from the
womb;

from their birth they go astray
and tell lies.

⁴Their poison is just like the
venom of a snake.

They are like a deaf cobra shut-
ting its ears,

⁵unable to hear the sound of
the charmers,

or anyone trained to cast
spells.

⁶O God, break the teeth in their
mouths!

Knock out the lions' fangs. O
LORD!

⁷May they disappear like water
flowing away,

and shoot their arrows like
feeble men.

⁸May they pass on like a snail
that leaves a slimy track,

or a stillborn child that didn't
see the sun.

⁹Before they sprout thorns like a
bramble,

whether still alive or burnt
may God sweep them
away.^v

¹⁰The righteous will be glad when
he sees vengeance

and washes his feet in the
blood of the wicked.

¹¹Then people will say, "The righ-
teous are still rewarded,

and there still is a God who
judges the earth."

Rescue Me

For the choir leader; "Don't De-

stroy"; David's inscription when
Saul sent men to watch his home
and kill him.

59 Rescue me from my enemies,
O my God!

Provide for me a high refuge
from those who attack
me.

¹Rescue me from those who do
wrong,

and save me from murderers.

²There they lie in ambush for me,

fierce men attacking me for no
wrong or sin of mine,
LORD.

³I've done no wrong, but they run
and get ready for me.

Be aware of my encounter and
see.

⁴You, LORD God of armies, God
of Israel,

awake to punish all the
nations:

show no mercy to any treacher-
ous wrong doer. (Music)^b

⁵When evening comes they
return,

howling like dogs and prowl-
ing around in the city.

⁶See what belches from their
mouths—

swords from their lips.

They think, "Can anyone hear
it?"

⁷But You, LORD, will laugh at
them

and mock at all the nations.

⁸My God is a fortress; I will sure-
ly be protected.

God is my mountain Refuge;
yes, my God is a bulwark.

⁹God will go before me.

^vFollowing some Greek versions. The translation verse 9 is tentative.

and let me gloat over my
enemies.

¹¹O God kill them, or my people
may forget.

By Your power make them
stagger,
then throw them down, O
LORD, our Shield.

¹²For the sin of their mouths and
the words of their lips—
let them be caught in their
arrogance.

For the curses and lies they
tell—

¹³in anger destroy them,
destroy them till they're gone.

Then they'll know God rules over
Jacob

and to the most distant parts
of the world. (Music)^b

¹⁴When evening comes they
return,
howling like dogs and prow-
ling around the city.

¹⁵They wander around to devour,
and if they don't get all they
want,
they go on all night.

¹⁶But I will sing about Your power
and in the morning shout loud-
ly about Your love.

You are my mountain refuge
where I can flee when I'm in
trouble.

¹⁷My God is a fortress; I will sure-
ly be protected.

God is my mountain Refuge;
yes, my God is a bulwark.

After a Defeat

For the choir leader; according to
"Lilies"; a word of truth to be
taught; David's inscription when he
fought the Arameans of Mesopo-
tania and the Arameans of Zobah,
and Joab came back and struck

down 12,000 Edomites in the Valley
of Salt.

60 God, You have rejected us
and broken us,
You have been angry—re-
store us.

²You have made the land quake
and split open—
heal its fractures because it is
tottering.

³You have made Your people suf-
fer cruel things
and given us wine to drink
that makes us stagger.

⁴Give those who fear You a
banner
to display against the bow
man. (Music)^b

⁵Save us by Your right hand and
give us victory
in order to free Your dear
people.

⁶God spoke from His sanctuary:
"I will be exultant and divide
up Shechem,
and measure off the valley of
Succoth.

⁷Gilead is mine, and Manasseh
is mine;
Ephraim is a helmet on My head;
Judah is My scepter;

⁸Moab is the basin I wash in; I
will plant My sandal on
Edom—

I have shouted in triumph
against Philistia."

⁹Who, then, will bring me into the
fortified city?
Who will lead me to Edom?

¹⁰Didn't You reject us, O God?
Didn't You, O God, refuse to
go out with our armies?

¹¹Give us help against the enemy,

for human deliverance is
useless!

¹¹With God we'll do great things.
He will trample down our
enemies.

Far from Home

For the choir leader; on string
instruments; by David.

61 Listen to my cry, O God;
hear my prayer!

¹From a distant spot on earth I'm
calling You,
because I feel faint.
Lead me to a Rock that towers
above me.

²Yes, be my Shelter, a strong
Tower
to protect me against the
enemy.

³I want to live in Your tabernacle
forever
and take refuge under the
Shelter of Your wings.
(Music)^b

⁴O that You, God, would hear my
vows
and give me the heritage due
those who fear Your
name.

⁵Add days to the king's life,
may his years go on and on,
⁶and sit enthroned before God
forever.

May love and truth be appointed
to keep him safe.

⁷Then I will sing of Your name
forever
as I daily fulfill my vows.

Look to God

For the choir leader; according to
Jeduthun; a psalm by David.

62 Surely my heart is calm be-
fore God,
for He saves me.

¹Surely He is my Rock and my
Savior,
my mountain Refuge where I'll
not be shaken.

²How long will you assail a man;
how long will you be intent on
murder?
You are all like a leaning wall,
a sagging fence.

³Yes, they plan trickery,
and bring disaster by delight-
ing in lies.
They bless with their mouths
but curse in their hearts.
(Music)^b

⁴Surely my heart is calm before
God,
for He gives me hope.

⁵Surely He is my Rock and my
Savior,
my mountain Refuge where I'll
not be shaken.

⁶The Most High God is my Salva-
tion and Glory;
God is my strong Rock and my
Shelter.

⁷Trust Him always, you people!
Pour out your hearts before
Him.
God is our Shelter. (Music)^b

⁸Mortal men are only a breath,
even important men a
delusion.

When they are weighed the
scales rise;
they are altogether less than a
vapor.

⁹Don't trust to get anything by
extortion
or scheme to get anything by
robbery.

When you get rich, don't rely on
it.

¹⁰God said it once, twice I heard
it:

"Power belongs to God."

¹²And to You, O Lord, belongs love,

but You pay a man according to what he does.

Your Love Is Better than Life

David's psalm when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

63 O God, You are my God;
I'm eagerly looking for You,
I'm thirsting for You.

My body faints with longing for You,
more than a dry and parched land where there is no water.

²So I look for You in the sanctuary
to see Your power and glory.

³Because Your love is better than life,
my lips praise You.

⁴I will bless You as long as I live,
raising my hands in Your name.

⁵You satisfy my hunger as with rich food;
I praise You with jubilant lips.

⁶When I remember You on my bed
and think of You during the night—

⁷how You are my help,
how in the shadow of Your wings I shout happily,

⁸then my heart clings to You
and Your right hand holds me up.

⁹But as for those who try to destroy my life,
may they go into the depths of the earth.

¹⁰May they be thrust through by the sword,

and left as food for the jackals.

¹¹But the king will delight in God.
Everyone who swears by Him will feel happy,

but the mouths of those who tell lies will be shut.

Men's Arrows and God's

For the choir leader; a psalm by David.

64 Hear my voice, O God, when I complain.

Protect my life against an enemy who frightens me.

²Hide me from men secretly talking about doing evil,
from the mob of wicked men.

³They sharpen their tongues like swords,
and aim their poisoned arrows

⁴to shoot at the innocent from their hiding-places.

They shoot suddenly, without warning.

⁵They encourage one another by checking their evil plan to secretly lay snares.

They think: Who will see us?
⁶Who will investigate our perfect crime?

But the Investigator does investigate
what is inside a man, even the depths of the heart.

⁷God will shoot them with an arrow,
striking them down suddenly.

⁸Their evil tongues ruin them.
All who see them shake their heads.

⁹Everybody will be afraid and declare, "God did that,"

62
12 MI 16:27;
Ro 2:8;
2 Ti 4:14;
Rv 2:23;
20:12, 13;
22:12

and will learn a lesson from
what He did.

"The righteous are delighted in
the LORD and find shelter
in Him,
and all who are right at heart
will feel happy.

Thank You, God

For the choir leader; a psalm by
David; a song.

65 It is fitting to praise You, O
God, in Zion.

One should do for You what he
vowed ²for You hear prayer.

Everyone should come to You
and confess his guilt.

³Our sins overwhelm us,
but You atone for them.

⁴Blessed is anyone You choose;
everyone You bring to live in
Your courts. 65
7 Lk 21:25

We are satisfied with the bless-
ings of Your house,
and the holiness of Your
temple.

⁵O God, our Savior,
in Your righteousness and
with Your terrible deeds
cause us to triumph!

On You depend all the distant
parts of the earth
and the faraway places in the
sea.

⁶You are girded with strength;
You set up the mountains by Your
power.

⁷You quiet the raging seas and
their roaring waves.

The nations are restless,
⁸and people who live faraway
stand in awe of Your
wonder.

All the way from the rising of the
sun to its setting
there is a happy shout.

⁹You visit the earth and water it,
making it fruitful with
showers.

You fill God's rivers with
water,
and grow grain for them.
For that You prepare the
ground,

¹⁰water its furrows, soften its
clods,
dissolve it with showers,
and bless what grows on it.

¹¹You crown the year with Your
bounty.

From Your tracks the abun-
dance drips,

¹²dripping on the meadows in
the desert;

the hills are wreathed with
joy,

¹³pastures are clothed with
flocks,

and valleys wrapped in grain.
They shout to one another—
yes, they sing.

Thank God for a Wonderful Rescue

For the choir leader; a song; a
psalm.

66 Shout with joy to God, every-
one on earth.

²sing about the glory of His
name;

glorify Him with praise.

³Tell God, "How awe-inspiring
are the things You do!

Your power is so great Your
enemies cringe before
You.

⁴The whole world should bow to
You,

sing to You, and praise Your
name." (Music)^b

⁵Come and see what God has
done.

what He does for human beings
inspires awe:

⁶He changed the sea to dry
land,

and they went through the
river on foot.

So let us delight in Him.

⁷By His power the everlasting
One rules.

His eyes watching the nations
to keep rebels from rising
against Him. (Music)^b

⁸Bless our God, O you nations!

Let all hear how you praise
Him;

⁹for He kept us alive and didn't
let our feet slip.

¹⁰But, O God. You have tested us.
You have purified us like
silver.

¹¹You caught us in a net.
and put misery on our bodies.

¹²You let men drive over our
heads;
we went through fire and
water;

but then You brought us out to
have plenty.

¹³I will enter Your temple with
burnt offerings

and do for You what I vowed,

¹⁴what my lips said and my mouth
promised
when I was in trouble.

¹⁵I will sacrifice to You fatlings as
burnt offerings

with the fragrant smoke of
sacrificed rams.

I will offer cattle and goats.
(Music)^b

¹⁶Come, listen, all you who fear
God,

and I'll tell you what God did
for me.

¹⁷When I called to Him with my
mouth,

high praise was on my tongue.

¹⁸If I had meant to do wrong,

The Lord would not have lis-
tened to me.

¹⁹But God did listen to me and
hear me pray.

²⁰Praise God for not rejecting my
prayer
or withdrawing His love from
me.

God Bless Us!

For the choir leader; on string
instruments; a psalm; a song.

67 May God be merciful to us
and bless us!

May His face shine on us,
(music)^b

²that the world might know
Your dominion
and the nations know how You
save.

³May the people praise You, O
God,
all the people praise You.

⁴Then the nations will be glad
and shout happily
because You judge the people
with justice
and have pity on the nations in
the world. (Music)^b

⁵The people should thank You, O
God,
all the people should thank
You—

⁶the land has produced its
crop,
and God, our God, has blessed
us.

⁷May God go on blessing us
and all the most distant parts
of the world worship
Him.

God's Victory

For the choir leader; a psalm by
David; a song.

⁶⁷
² ACT 28:28

68 God arises—His enemies scatter,

and those who hate Him run away from Him.

¹Like smoke that is blown, You blow them away.

Like wax melted by a fire, the wicked perish before God.

²But the righteous are glad, rejoicing before God and overflowing with joy.

³Sing to God, sing to praise His name!

Make a high way for Him to drive through the deserts!

His name is the LORD.

Be very happy before Him.

⁴In His holy dwelling God is the Father of the fatherless and the Defender of widows.

⁵God gives the lonely a home to live in;

He releases prisoners, making them happy. ⁶⁸ ¹⁰ ^{ES 4-10}

But the rebellious must live in a parched land.

⁷O God, when You went out in front of Your people and marched through the desert. (Music)^b

⁸the earth quaked and the sky poured down rain,

before God, the One of Sinai, before God, the God of Israel.

⁹You poured out plenty of rain, O God;

and when Your land was exhausted, You refreshed it.

¹⁰Your living family settled there, Being kind, God, You provided for the poor.

¹¹The Lord uttered the word

^w "and you found" is conjectural

that made a mighty army rejoice.

¹²The kings and their armies fled; they fled

and the woman staying home got her share of the spoil.

¹³Some of you lingered among the sheepfolds,

and you found^w a dove's wings covered with silver, its feathers with yellow gold.

¹⁴Meanwhile the Almighty was still scattering kings there, like snow falling on Mount Zalmon.

¹⁵O mountain of might! O mountain of Bashan!

O mountain of heights! O mountain of Bashan!

¹⁶O mountain of heights, why do you look with envy

at the mountain where God likes to live?

Yes, the LORD will live there forever.

¹⁷God's chariots are twice ten thousand, thousands upon thousands.

You, Lord, who made Sinai a sanctuary,

¹⁸You went up on high. You took prisoners captive.

You received gifts from men.

Surely the LORD God has made the rebellious submit.

¹⁹Praise the Lord!

Day by day He carries our load for us.

This is the God who saves us. (Music)^b

²⁰Our God is the God who saves us;

the LORD God rescues us from death.

²¹Yes, God crushes the heads of
His enemies,
the hairy scalps of those who
go on in their guilt.

²²The Lord says, "I will return
from Bashan,^a

I will return even from the
depths of the sea

²³so that you can bathe your
feet in blood
and your dogs' tongues can
get a share of the enemy."

²⁴One can see Your festive pro-
cession, O God,
the procession for my God, my
King, into the holy place.

²⁵First come singers, then those
who play instruments,
surrounded by girls beating
tambourines:

²⁶"In the meetings of the con-
gregation,
bless God, the Lord, you who
are born of Israel."

²⁷Look, Benjamin, the youngest, is
leading them!

Judah's leaders with their
shouting crowd,

Zebulun's leaders, Naphtali's
leaders.

²⁸Summon Your power, O God!
Exert Your strength, O God,
in what You do for us,

²⁹from Your temple over
Jerusalem!

Kings will bring You presents.

³⁰Rebuke that beast among the
reeds,
and his herd of bulls with its
calves.

He trampled on the nations in
his lust for silver;
delighting in war he scattered
the peoples.

³¹Princes will come from Egypt,

Ethiopia will stretch out her
hands to God.

³²O kingdoms of the world, sing to
God,

sing to praise the Lord,
(Music)^b

³³who drives through the highest
heavens,
the ancient heavens.

Listen, His voice thunders
mightily—

³⁴acknowledge the power of
God;

His majesty is over Israel
and His power in the skies.

³⁵O God, You are terrifying
when You come from Your
holy place.

But the God of Israel is the One
who gives His people strength
and power.

Praise God!

God's Servant Suffers

For the choir leader; according to
"Lilies," by David.

69 Save Me, O God, the waters
come up to My neck.

¹I'm sunk in deep mud where
there's nothing to stand on.

I have come into deep water
where streams sweep Me
away.

²I'm tired of calling. My throat is
hoarse.

My eyes are bleary looking for
My God.

³Those who hate Me without a
reason

are more than the hairs on My
head.

My deceitful enemies number
more than My locks.

^aOr, "from the Serpent"

- I have to pay back what I didn't rob.
- ⁵God, You know My foolishness;
My guilt isn't hidden from You.
- ⁶Don't let those who look to You for help be disgraced because of Me.
O Lord, the LORD of armies.
Don't let those who eagerly come to You be put to shame for My sake.
O God of Israel.
- ⁷Yes, for You I took insults and blushed with shame;
I've become a stranger to My brothers
and a foreigner to My mother's sons.
- ⁸*the zeal for Your house consumed Me,
and the insults of those who insult You fell on Me.*
- ⁹I wept and ate nothing and was insulted for it.
- ¹⁰I made sackcloth My garment and became the butt of their jokes.
- ¹¹Those who sit at the gate gossip about Me,
and drunkards make up songs about Me.
- ¹²As for Me, My prayer is to You,
if now You'll accept it, O LORD.
You're so great in love,
answer Me, O God.
By Your faithful help,
"pull Me out of the mud—I don't want to sink into it.
I want to be rescued from those who hate Me
and from the deep water.
- ¹³Don't let the flood sweep Me away,
or the deep water swallow Me,
or the pit shut its mouth over Me.
- ¹⁴Answer Me, LORD, Because Your love is precious.
Your mercy is so great, turn to Me.
- ¹⁵Don't hide Your face from Your servant;
because I'm in trouble—answer Me quickly.
- ¹⁶Come near Me and redeem Me;
because of My enemies, set Me free.
- ¹⁷You know how I'm insulted, put to shame, and disgraced—
My enemies are all before You.
- ¹⁸Insults have broken My heart and I am sick.
I'm looking for sympathy and there's none,
and for comforters and can't find any.
- ¹⁹And they put gall in My food
and for My thirst give Me vinegar to drink.
- ²⁰May their table, spread before them, become a snare,
and their banquet a trap.
- ²¹May their eyes turn dark so they can't see
and their loins continually shake.
- ²²Pour Your anger on them;
may Your blazing fury catch them.
- ²³May their camp turn to ruins;
and nobody live in their tents.
²⁴because they pursue Him whom You struck
and talk about the pains of those You wounded.
- ²⁵Give them the punishment their sin deserves.
Exclude them from Your righteousness.

9 Jn 2:17,
Ro 15:3,
Heb 11:26
21 Mt 27:34
48, Mk 15
36; Lk 23
36, Jn 19
28-29
22-23 Ro 11
9-10
24 Rv 16:1
25 Acts 1:20

²⁸May they be blotted out of the book of life and not be listed with the righteous.

²⁹But I am suffering and in pain. By Your saving power lift Me to a safe height, O God.

³⁰Then I will praise God's name in a song and with thanks tell how great He is.

³¹The LORD will like that better than a young bull with horns and hoofs.

³²Look, you who are oppressed and rejoice; you who go to God for help, may your spirits be refreshed.

³³For the LORD listens to the needy and doesn't despise His own when they are in prison.

²⁸ Ps 35, 13 B, 17 B, 20, 12, 15, 21, 27

³⁴Heaven and earth praise Him, the seas and everything moving in them,

³⁵because God saves Zion and builds Judah's towns so that people can settle there and own them.

³⁶His servants' descendants will inherit the land, and those who love His name will live there.

Help Me

For the choir leader; by David, as a prayer.ⁱ

70 Come quickly, O God, to rescue me, O LORD, to help me.

²May those who are trying to destroy me be disappointed and ashamed,

and those who delight in harming me turn back in disgrace.

³May those who say, "Aha! Aha!" be appalled by their own shame.

⁴But may all who look to You for help find joy and delight in You. May those who love You for saving them always say, "God is great!"

⁵I am poor and needy, O God, come to me quickly. You are my Helper and my Deliverer, O LORD, don't delay!

When I'm Old

71 LORD, in You I take shelter, don't ever let me be disgraced.

²By Your righteousness rescue me and help me escape. Listen to me and save me.

³Be my Mountain Refuge where I can always go.

You planned to save me because You are my Rock and my Fortress.

⁴My God, rescue me from the hands of the wicked, from the hands of those who are unjust and cruel.

⁵You are my Hope, O Lord. You have been my confidence from my youth, LORD.

⁶I have depended on You from birth, from my mother's body You have been my Strength.

I praise You continually. ⁷To many I am a wonder, but You are my strong shelter.

⁸My mouth is full of praise of You and of Your glory all day long.

⁹Don't discard me when I'm old
or leave me when I lose my
strength.

¹⁰because my enemies talk
about me,
and those who watch to take
my life plan together.

¹¹They say, "God has abandoned
him.

Pursue and grab him—there's
nobody to rescue him."

¹²O God, don't be far away from
me,
my God, come quickly to help
me.

¹³May those who accuse me come
to a shameful end,
and those who are out to harm
me
be covered with disgrace and
humiliation.

¹⁴But I will always have hope and
praise You more and more.

¹⁵I will count Your righteous acts
and Your saving deeds every
day,
although they're more than I
can number.

¹⁶I will enter Your house O Lord,
and recite the triumphs You
alone perform.

¹⁷O God, You taught me from my
youth;
I still talk about the wonderful
things You have done.

¹⁸Even when I get old and gray,
don't forsake me, O God,
till I tell this age what Your
arm has done;
and tell all who enter Your
house

¹⁹that Your righteousness
reaches to heaven, O
God.

You have done great things, O

²⁰Or with Greek: "He will endure . . ."

God. Who is like You?

²⁰Though You made me endure
many troubles and miseries,
You will restore me to life
again,
and lift me up from the depths
of the earth again.

²¹You make me very great
and come to comfort me.

²²Then I will praise You with a
lute
for being faithful, my God.
I will play on a lyre to praise
You, O Holy One of Israel.

²³My lips will shout happily as I
praise You,
my very being that You have
freed.

²⁴All day long my tongue will loudly
tell how righteous You
are,
and those who are out to harm
me
will then be ashamed and
disgraced.

The Coming King

By Solomon.

72 God, give the king Your justice

and the king's son Your righteousness,

²that he may judge Your people
with righteousness
and Your poor with justice.

³May mountains bring well-being
to the people
and the hills righteousness.

⁴Then he will give justice to those
who suffer,
save the children of the poor,
and crush the oppressor.

⁵They will fear You as long as

there's a sun and a shining moon,
 throughout the ages.
 6He will come down like rain on mown grass,
 like showers on waterless land.
 7In his days the righteous man will flourish,
 and peace will abound till the moon is no more.
 8He will rule from sea to sea
 and from the Euphrates to the ends of the world.
 9The desert people will bow to him,
 and his enemies will lick the dust.
 10The kings of Tarshish and of the lands by the sea
 will pay tribute,
 the kings of Sheba and Seba
 will bring gifts.
 11All the kings will bow down to him,
 and all the nations serve him;
 12because he will rescue the needy who call for help
 and the oppressed who have nobody to help them.
 13He will pity the weak and the poor
 and save the lives of the needy.
 14He will redeem them from oppression and violence;
 their blood will be precious in his sight.
 15May he live long and receive gold from Sheba.
 Let prayer be made for him continually,
 and blessings be his all day long.
 16May there be plenty of grain in the country;

may it grow even on top of mountains,
 its fruit blossom like Lebanon,
 and flourish like grass on the ground.

17May His name endure forever,
 and His name increase as long as the sun shines.
 May all nations be blessed in Him and call Him happy.

18Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel,
 who alone does wonderful things.

19May His glorious name be blessed forever,
 and His glory will fill the whole world.
 Let it be so! Let it be so!

20Here end the prayers of David, Jesse's son.

Does It Pay to Be Good?

A psalm by Asaph.

73 Surely God is good to Israel, to those whose hearts are pure.

2But my feet almost slipped, and I almost lost my footing
 3because I was jealous of those who are proud
 and saw how the wicked prosper.

4They suffer no pains.
 Their bodies are healthy and sleek

5They have no drudgery like ordinary people
 and aren't plagued like others.

6Therefore, pride is their necklace
 and crime the garment that covers them

7Their eyes stand out in their fat faces.

73
 9-11 MI 2:1
 10 Lk 1:66
 73
 1 MI 5:8

Their imagination goes too far.

⁸They mock and speak wickedly, talking about oppression from on high.

⁹They set up their mouths against the heavens and their tongues wag against the earth.

¹⁰So His people turn to them, swallow their words^a

¹¹and ask, "How can God know and the Most High understand?"

¹²Look! They are wicked, and with never a worry they've piled up wealth.

¹³Yes, it was for nothing I kept my heart pure and washed my hands in innocence.

¹⁴I am plagued all day long and take my beating every morning.

¹⁵If I had decided to talk like that, I would have betrayed Your people.

¹⁶So I thought this over to understand it—it looked too difficult to me,

¹⁷till I came into God's holy place

and saw the end in store for them.

¹⁸Surely You will set them in slippery places and make them fall into ruin.

¹⁹How quickly they will be destroyed, completely wiped out in terrifying ways!

²⁰Like a dream when one wakes up,

so You, Lord, will awake

and despise the very thought of them.

²¹When I feel bitter and stirred up inside,

²²I'm stupid and don't understand, like an animal in Your presence.

²³But I'm always with You—You hold my right hand.

²⁴You will guide me with Your advice and finally take me to glory.

²⁵Who is mine in heaven? Having You, I don't want anything else on earth.

²⁶My flesh and my heart waste away, but God is the Rock my mind rests on and my heritage forever.

²⁷Those who wander far from You are lost; You destroy all who go lusting away from You.

²⁸So it is best for me to come close to God.

I've made You, O Lord God, my shelter, so I can talk of everything You've done.

Think of Your Defeated People

By Asaph; to be played skillfully.

74 O God, why do You reject us forever,

why does Your anger blaze against the sheep of Your pasture?

²Remember Your congregation that You bought, the tribe You redeemed long ago,

⁷⁴
1-2 Acts
20:28

^aConjecture; Heb difficult

- Mount Zion which You made
Your home.
- ¹Lift up Your people from these
permanent ruins—
the enemy has wrecked every-
thing in the sanctuary.
- ⁴Your foes have roared in the
place where the assembly
met
and set up their own emblems
as banners.
- ⁵From the entrance on
they hacked like a woodman
in a forest:
⁶they smashed all its carved
work with axes and
crowbars.
- ⁷They set Your holy place on fire,
polluted and tore down the
sanctuary bearing Your
name.
- ⁸They thought, "We will crush
them altogether,"
and they burned every place
in the land where God
met with us.
- ⁹We no longer see signs,
and there are no prophets
anymore,
or anyone who knows how
long this will last.
- ¹⁰How long, O God, will the enemy
insult us?
Will the enemy scorn Your name
forever?
- ¹¹Why do You withdraw Your
hand
and keep Your right hand in
Your bosom?
- ¹²Yet from long ago God has been
my King,
performing victories through-
out the country.
- ¹³By Your power You stir up the
sea
and crush the heads of sea
monsters in the water.
- ¹⁴You smash the heads of the
leviathan
and give them as food to the
sharks in the sea.
- ¹⁵You cut openings for springs
and brooks
and dry up rivers that always
flowed.
- ¹⁶The day is Yours, and the night
is Yours—
You set up the moon and the
sun.
- ¹⁷You set all the boundaries of the
earth.
You make summer and winter.
- ¹⁸Remember how the enemy has
defied You, O LORD,
how a foolish people have
scorned Your name.
- ¹⁹Don't let wild beasts take the life
of the one who confesses
You,
or forever forget the lives of
Your suffering servants.
- ²⁰Have regard for Your covenant,
because darkness and dens of
violence have filled the
land.
- ²¹Don't let the down-trodden re-
turn in disgrace;
let the poor and needy praise
Your name.
- ²²Rise, O God, fight for Your
cause.
Remember how a fool defies You
all day long.
- ²³Don't forget the shouting of Your
enemies,
the continuous noise of those
attacking You.

God Will Judge

For the choir leader; "Don't

Destroy!" A Psalm by Asaph; a song.

75 We thank You, O God;
we praise Your name, O One
who is near;
we tell of the wonderful things
You have done.

(The Lord:)

¹"I will seize the appointed time,
and judge men fairly.

²When the earth totters with all
who live on it,

I will make its pillars stand
firm. (Music)^b

³Tell those who brag, 'Don't
brag,'

and the wicked, 'Don't raise
your horns,

⁴don't raise your horns so high
or speak so proudly against
the Creator,'

⁵for He will be victorious from
the east to the west
from the desert to the
mountains."

⁷⁵
Ps. 14:10

⁶Yes, God is Judge, He puts one
down and raises the other.

⁷In the Lord's hand there's a cup
of foaming wine
thoroughly mixed with spices,
and He will pour from it—
surely all the wicked on earth
will drink it down to the
dregs.

⁸I will glorify the Eternal One,
and sing to praise Jacob's
God.

⁹"I will cut off all the horns of the
wicked,
but the horns of the righteous
will be raised high.

The Lord Triumphs

For the choir leader; on string

^bSelah ^cOr "the eternal mountains."

instruments; a psalm by Asaph; a
song.

76 God has shown Himself in
Judah;

His name is great in Israel.

²His tent is in Salem; His home is
in Zion.

³There He broke the flaming
arrows,
the shield, the sword, and war
itself. (Music)^b

⁴O Terrifying One,

You are shining with might
more splendidly than the
mountains of prey.^c

⁵Valiant men were plundered
and went to their last
sleep—
not a fighting man could lift a
hand.

⁶At Your rebuke, O God of Jacob,
chariots and horses were
paralyzed.

⁷As for You, You terrify—
who can stand before You,
before Your ancient fury?

⁸From heaven You announce
a verdict,
the earth hushed in fear.

⁹When You rise to judge, O God,
to save all who suffer on
earth, (Music)^b

¹⁰surely the anger of men will
praise You
their surplus of anger will
honor You.^d

¹¹Make vows to the LORD your
God and keep them.

Let all around Him bring gifts
to the One who is to be feared.

¹²He cuts off the lives of rulers
and terrifies the kings of the
world.

^dGreek; Heb "will encircle"

I Will Remember

For the choir leader; according to
Jeduthun; a psalm by Asaph.

77 With my voice I call to God—
to God, with my voice; and
He hears me.

¹When I'm in trouble, I go to my
Lord for help.

At night I stretch out my hands
without getting tired.

I refuse to calm down.

²I remember God, and I sigh.
I think of Him, and my spirit
faints. (Music)^b

³You keep my eyelids open,
I'm so troubled I can't talk.

⁴I think of the early days, the
years of long ago.

⁵At night I play the lyre,
my mind thinking and my
spirit searching:

⁶Is my Lord rejecting me forever
and not going to be kind
again?

⁷Has His love stopped forever,
and His promise been forever
canceled?

⁸Has God forgotten to be merciful,
or in anger locked up His
mercy? (Music)^b

⁹Then I said, "It makes me feel
sick,

that the right hand of the
Most High might change.

¹⁰I recall the LORD's accomplish-
ments;

I remember the wonders You did
long ago,

¹¹and meditate on all Your
work;

I think of what You have done.

¹²God, Your way is holy.
Is any god as great as our God?

¹³You are the God who does
wonders.

You have shown Your power
among the nations.

¹⁴By Your arm You freed Your
people,

both Jacob's and Joseph's de-
scendants. (Music)^b

¹⁵The waters saw You, God.
the waters saw You and
shook,

yes, they were stirred to the
depths.

¹⁶The clouds poured down water.
the skies thundered and Your
arrows darted.

¹⁷Your thunder rumbled in the
sky,

lightning flashes lit up the
world,

the earth trembled and shook.

¹⁸You tread through the sea.
Your paths were through
many waters,

yet nobody could tell where
You walked.

¹⁹You led Your people like a flock
by the hands of Moses and
Aaron.

*The Lord's Wonderful Way with
His People*

By Asaph, to be played skillfully.

78 My people, listen to my in-
struction,
pay attention to what I say.

¹I will open my mouth with a
parable
and speak of the ancient
mysteries

²that we have heard and
known and our fathers
told us;

³which were not hidden from
their children
but told to the next
generation:

- about the LORD's wonderful deeds.
His power and the marvelous things He did.
- ⁹How He established the truth in Jacob
and set up the law in Israel.
How He ordered our fathers to teach their children.
¹⁰so a coming generation would know it;
and children yet to be born might grow up and tell their children
¹¹to put their trust in God and not forget the things God did.
That they might do what He ordered
¹²and not be stubborn and rebellious like their fathers, whose hearts didn't stand firm,
whose spirits were unfaithful to God.
- ¹³Ephraim's men, armed with bows,
turned and ran on the day of battle.
- ¹⁴They hadn't kept God's covenant and refused to live as He ordered.
- ¹⁵They forgot what He did and His wonders that He showed them.
- ¹⁶In the presence of their fathers He did wonders in Egypt, in the land of Zoan.
- ¹⁷He divided the sea and led them through,
making the water stand up like a wall.
- ¹⁸During the day He led them by a cloud
and all night by the light of a fire.
- ¹⁹He split rocks in the wilderness,
and let them drink as from deep water,
²⁰making streams come out of a rock
and water flow like rivers.
- ²¹But they kept on sinning against Him,
rebellious against the Most High in the desert.
- ²²In their hearts they tested God by demanding the food they craved.
- ²³They talked against God, asking,
"Can God set a table in the desert?"
- ²⁴He struck a rock, water gushed out, and streams flowed down—
but can He also give bread or provide meat for His people?"
- ²⁵So, when the LORD heard it, He got angry,
His fire burned against Jacob and His anger blazed at Israel,
- ²⁶because they did not trust God or believe He could save them.
- ²⁷Yet He commanded the clouds above,
and opened the doors of heaven.
- ²⁸He rained on them *manna* to eat,
and gave them the *bread of heaven*.
- ²⁹So man ate the bread of angels,
and He sent them plenty of food.
- ³⁰He let loose the east wind from the heavens
and drove the south wind by His power.
- ³¹He rained meat on them like dust
and winged birds like sand by the sea,

²⁴ Jn 6:31;
Rv 2:17

- ²⁸He let them fall in the middle of
their camp,
all around their tents.
- ²⁹So they ate and were filled;
He brought them what they
craved,
³⁰but they didn't get over their
craving.
Their food was still in their
mouths
³¹when God got angry with them
and killed some of their husky
men
and struck down Israel's
young men.
- ³²In spite of all this they kept on
sinning
and didn't believe His
wonders.
- ³³So He made their days vanish
like a vapor
and their years came to an
end in terror.
- ³⁴When He struck them down,
they searched for Him,
repented, and eagerly looked
for God.
- ³⁵They remembered God was their
Rock,
and the Most High their
Redeemer.
- ³⁶But, with their mouths they flat-
tered Him
and with their tongues they
lied to Him.
- ³⁷In their hearts they didn't stand
true to Him
but were unfaithful to His
covenant.
- ³⁸Yet being merciful, He forgave
their sin and didn't destroy
them.
Many times He restrained His
anger
and didn't stir up all His fury.
- ³⁹He remembered they were only
flesh,
a breeze that blows and
doesn't come back.
- ⁴⁰How often they rebelled against
Him in the wilderness
and grieved Him in the desert!
- ⁴¹Over and over they tempted God
and made Israel's holy One
feel sad.
- ⁴²They didn't remember what His
hand did
when He freed them from
those who oppressed
them,
⁴³by doing His miracles in Egypt
and His wonders in the land of
Zoan.
- ⁴⁴He turned their Nile into blood
so they couldn't drink from
their streams.
- ⁴⁵He sent among them flies that
devoured them
and frogs that destroyed
them.
- ⁴⁶He gave their crops to
grasshoppers
and what they worked for to
locusts.
- ⁴⁷He killed their vines with hail
and their figs with frost.
- ⁴⁸He let the hail strike their cattle
and lightning flashes their
flocks.
- ⁴⁹He sent them His blazing anger,
wrath, fury, and distress—
an escort of troublesome
messengers.
- ⁵⁰He cleared a path for His anger
and didn't spare them from
death.
He let the plague take their
lives.
- ⁵¹He struck down every firstborn
in Egypt,
the very first son of their vigor
in the tents of Ham.
- ⁵²But His own people He led out
like sheep

37 Acts 8:21
44 Rv 16:4

- and guided them like a flock
through the desert.
- ⁵⁵He led them safely, without fear,
while the sea covered their
enemies.
- ⁵⁶He brought them into His holy
land,
to this mountain His right
hand had won.
- ⁵⁷He drove out the nations before
them,
and gave them their land as a
heritage.
He settled Israel's tribes in their
tents.
- ⁵⁸Still they tempted God and re-
belled against the Most
High
and didn't live by His truth.
- ⁵⁹They left Him and became
traitors like their fathers,
turning like a bow you can't
trust.
- ⁶⁰They made Him angry by wor-
shipping on their high places,
and made Him jealous with
their idols.
- ⁶¹God heard them and got furious.
He vehemently rejected Israel
⁶²and abandoned His home in
Shiloh,
the tabernacle where He lived
among people.
- ⁶³He let His fortress be captured
and His glory go into the
enemies' hands.
- ⁶⁴He let the sword kill His people
and was furious with His own.
- ⁶⁵Fire consumed their young men,
and no wedding song praised
their girls.
- ⁶⁶The sword struck down their
priests,
and their widows couldn't
even weep.
- ⁶⁷Then the Lord awoke like one

79
3 Rv 16.6

- who had been sleeping,
like a strong man shouting
from wine.
- ⁶⁸He beat His enemies back and
disgraced them forever.
- ⁶⁹He rejected Joseph's tents, and
didn't choose the tribe of
Ephraim.
- ⁷⁰He chose rather the tribe of
Judah
and Mount Zion that He loved.
- ⁷¹He built His sanctuary like the
high heavens
and founded it forever like the
earth.
- ⁷²He chose His servant David and
took him from the
sheepfolds.
- ⁷³From tending the ewes He
brought him,
to be the shepherd of Jacob,
His people,
and Israel, His possession.
- ⁷⁴So He shepherds them with a
pure heart
and leads them with skillful
hands.

Jerusalem Is in Ruins — Help!

A psalm by Asaph.

- 79** O God, the heathen have in-
vaded Your heritage,
and defiled Your holy temple,
and laid Jerusalem in ruins.
- ²They have given the dead bodies
of Your servants
as food to the birds of the sky,
and the flesh of Your loved
ones to the beasts of the
earth.
- ³They had shed their blood like
water around Jerusalem,
and nobody buried them.
- ⁴Our neighbors insult us,
those around us mock and
scoff at us.

¹How long, LORD? Will You be
angry forever?

Will Your zeal go on burning
like fire?

²Pour out Your fury on the nations
who don't know You
and on the kingdoms that
haven't called on Your
name.

³They have devoured Jacob and
made his home a deserted
ruin.

⁴Don't hold our fathers' sins
against us.

Hurry to come to us with Your
mercy—we are helpless.

⁵O God, our Savior, help us,
because of Your glorious name
rescue us;
yes, forgive our sins for Your
name's sake.

⁶Why should the nations ask,
"Where is their God?"

5 RV 6 10
6 1 TH 4:5
2 TH 1:8

May Your vengeance for the
shed blood of Your servants
become known among the na-
tions while we watch.

⁷May the groaning of the pris-
oners come before You;
with Your strong arm keep
alive those doomed to die.

⁸Pay back our neighbors, seven
times into their laps,
for the insults with which they
defied You, Lord.

⁹Then we, Your people, the sheep
that You shepherd,
will thank You forever and tell
from age to age
the wonderful things You
have done.

Save Your Vine, Lord!

For the choir leader; according to
"Lilies;" Asaph's testimony; a
psalm.

80 O Shepherd of Israel,
listen.

You who led Joseph like a flock,
O One enthroned between the
cherubim, shine!

¹As You lead Ephraim, Benjamin,
and Manasseh,
stir up Your power and come
to save us.

²O God, restore us and let Your
face shine to save us.

³O LORD God of armies, how long
will You be angry
with the prayer of Your
people?

⁴You have fed them on the bread
of tears,
and have given them tears to
drink three times.

⁵You make us something for our
neighbors to quarrel about,
and our enemies mock us.

⁶O God of armies, restore us and
let Your face shine to save
us.

⁷You plucked up a vine from
Egypt,
drove out nations, and
planted it.

⁸You cleared the ground before it
so that it struck roots and
filled the country.

⁹Its shade covered mountains,
its boughs the mighty cedars.

¹⁰It sent out its branches to the
sea
and its shoots to the river.

¹¹Why did You break down its
stone fences?
All who pass by are picking its
fruit,

¹²the boar from the woods
devours it,
the beasts of the field feed on
it.

¹³God of armies, come back,

look from heaven and see.

Come to help this vine.

¹⁵Take care of what Your right hand planted.

the son you strengthened for Yourself.

¹⁶May those who burnt it with fire and cut it off perish before Your angry face.

¹⁷May Your hand be on the man at Your right hand, the man You strengthened for Yourself.

¹⁸We have not turned away from You, so give us life, and we'll call on Your name.

¹⁹LORD God of armies, restore us and let Your face shine to save us.

If You Will Only Listen

For the choir leader; on the gittith; by Asaph.

81 Ring out with praise to God, our Strength, shout in triumph to Jacob's God.

¹Sing a psalm and beat the tambourine, play the lyre with its pleasant music and the lute.

²Blow the trumpet on the first of the month, at the full moon, on the day of our festival.

³This is a law for Israel, an ordinance from Jacob's God.

⁴This is the testimony God gave in behalf of Joseph when He went to war against Egypt:

⁵"When I heard a language I didn't understand,

⁶I took the burden off his shoulder, and his hands were freed from the basket.

⁷When you called in distress, I rescued you; hidden in thunder, I answered you.

I tested your loyalty at the Water of Meribah. (Music)^b

⁸Listen, My people, and I will warn you. O Israel, if you will only listen to Me!

⁹Don't ever have a strange god among you, don't ever worship a foreign god.

¹⁰I am the LORD your God, who took you out of Egypt. Open your mouth wide and I will fill it.

¹¹But My people didn't listen to Me. Israel didn't want to follow Me.

¹²So I let them go their stubborn way and follow their own plans.

¹³If only My people would listen to Me and Israel would live in My ways.

¹⁴how quickly I would make their enemies surrender as I turn My hand against their foes.

¹⁵But I would feed Israel with the finest wheat and satisfy him with honey from a rock."

¹⁶May those who hate the LORD cringe before Him, may they have everlasting trouble.

God Judges the Judges

A psalm by Asaph.

82 God presides in the divine assembly
and does the judging among
the "gods":

"How long are you going to
judge unjustly
and favor the wicked?"
(Music)^b

"Give justice to the weak and
fatherless
and those who suffer and are
poor.

"Rescue the weak and the needy,
save them from the hands of
the wicked."

"They don't know or understand
anything
as they walk around in the
dark,
and all the foundations of the
world are shaken.

82
6 Jn 10:34

"It was I who said, "You are
gods,
all of you are sons of the Most
High;

"but as human beings you die
and fall like any of the
princes."

"Come, O God, judge the world
because all the nations belong
to You.

Like a Forest Fire

A song, a psalm by Asaph.

83 O God, don't keep silent,
don't be quiet, O God, and
fail to act.

"Your enemies are raging,
and those who hate You hold
their heads high.

"They discuss shrewd plots
against Your people

and plan against those You
treasure.

"They say, "Come, let us wipe
them out as a nation,
so no one will remember
Israel's name any
longer."

"All of them agree on their plan
and make an alliance against
You:

"Edom's tents and Ishmael's
descendants,
Moab and Hagar's
descendants,

"Geba, Ammon, and Amalek,
Philistia and those who live at
Tyre;

"Assyria also has joined them,
becoming an arm of Lot's
descendants. (Music)^b

"Do to them what You did to
Midian,
to Sisera and Jabin at the
brook Kishon,

"who were destroyed at Endor
and became fertilizer for the
ground.

"Make their noblemen like Oreb
and Zeeb,
all their leaders like Zebah
and Zalmunnah.

"They said, "We'll take God's
pastures for ourselves."

"My God, make them like
tumbleweed,
like chaff the wind blows
away,

"As a fire burns a forest, as
flames set ablaze the hills,

"so hunt them down with Your
storm
and terrify them with Your
tornado.

"Let their faces blush with shame
when they seek Your name, O
LORD.

- "May they be ashamed and terrified forever
and perish in disgrace.
"Then they will know that You
whose name is the LORD—
that You alone are high over
all the earth.

I Long to Be in God's House

For the choir leader; on the gittith; a psalm by Korah's descendants.

84 How lovely is the place
where You live,
O LORD of armies!

- "I yearn, yes, I'm wearing out
with longing
for the courts of the LORD.
My heart and my body shout
happily to the living God.

- "Even a bird finds a home and a
swallow a nest for herself,
where she can hatch her
young:
Your altars, O Lord of armies,
my King and my God.

- "Happy are those who live at
Your house,
always praising You.
(Music)^b

- "Blessed are those whose refuge
is in You:
Their minds are on the pilgrim
roads.

- "As they pass through the valley
of weeping
He will make it a place of
springs,
and cover it with pools by the
early rains.

- "They go from city to city
till each appears before God
in Zion.

- "LORD God of armies, hear me
pray,

listen, O God of Jacob.
(Music)^b

- "Look at our ruler, O God,
see the face of Your anointed
one.

- "A day in Your courts is better
than a thousand elsewhere.
I would rather stand at the
threshold of the house of my
God
than live in the tents of
wickedness.

- "The LORD is a Sun and Shield;
God bestows grace and honor.

The LORD doesn't keep back
anything good
from those who live
innocently.

- "O LORD of armies, blessed is the
person who trusts in You.

You Have Been Forgiven, Now Make Us Happy

For the choir leader; a psalm by Korah's descendants.

85 You have been kind to Your
country, LORD,
You have brought back Jacob
from captivity.

- "You have taken away Your
people's wrongs
and covered all their sins.
(Music)^b

- "You have withdrawn all Your
fury;
You don't let it blaze anymore.

- "O God, our Saviour, restore us,
and don't be provoked with us
again.

- "Will You be angry with us
forever,
and pour out Your anger
throughout the ages?

⁶Will You not restore our lives
again
so Your people can delight in
You?

⁷LORD, show us Your love and
give us Your help.

⁸I want to listen to what God
says,
because the LORD promised
happiness
to His people who are faithful.
But they mustn't go back to
foolishness.

⁹Surely He is near those who fear
Him to save them,
that His glory may rest on our
country.

¹⁰Love and truth have met,
righteousness and well-being
have kissed.

¹¹Truth sprouts from the ground,
and righteousness looks down
from heaven.

¹²The LORD will also give us what
is good,
and our land will produce its
crop.

¹³Righteousness will go ahead of
Him
as He treads step by step
along the way.

Help Me—You Alone Are God

A prayer by David.

86 Listen, LORD, and answer
me for I am miserable and
poor.

¹Protect me for I am one You love.
My God, save Your servant who
is trusting You.

²Have mercy on me, Lord,
because I call You all day
long.

³Give Your servant joy because I
lift up my heart to You;

⁴You, Lord, are kind and
forgiving,
full of love for all who call to
You.

⁵LORD, listen to my prayer and
hear my plea for mercy.

⁶When I'm in trouble, I call You
because You answer me.

⁷There's no god like You, Lord,
and no accomplishment like
Yours.

⁸All the nations, whom You made,
will come and worship You,
Lord,
and honor Your name.

⁹You are great and do wonders;
You alone are God.

¹⁰Teach me Your way, LORD. I
want to live in Your truth,
make my heart quick to fear
Your name.

¹¹I thank You, Lord my God, with
all my heart
and honor Your name forever.

¹²You have shown great love to
me,
and You have saved me from
the deepest grave.

¹³O God, proud men attack me,
and a cruel mob wants to kill
me.

They don't have any respect for
You.

¹⁴But You, Lord, are a merciful
and kind God,
slow to get angry and full of
love and truth.

¹⁵Turn to me and have mercy on
me.

Give Your servant Your
strength,
and save Your maiden's son.

¹⁶To prove to me it is well, do a
miracle,
that those who hate me may
see it and feel ashamed;

⁸⁶
⁹ Ru 3:9; ¹⁵
¹⁵ Ja 5:11

because You, O LORD, are my
help and my comfort.

Born in Zion

A psalm by Korah's descendants;
a song.

87 She was founded by the
LORD on holy moun-
tains.

¹The LORD loves Zion's gates
more than all of Jacob's
dwellings.

²Wonderful things are told about
you, O city of God! (Music)^b

³"I will count Egypt and Babylon
among those who acknowl-
edge Me.

There is Philistia, Tyre, and
Ethiopia—
each one claims that he was
born there."

⁴But it will be said of Zion.
"Every race is born in her,
and the Most High Himself
will make her secure."

⁵The LORD will write down in His
record of the nations:

"This one was born there."
(Music)^b

⁷There will be singing and
dancing,
for all will find their home in
you. ^e

Why Do You Reject Me, Lord?

A song; a psalm by Korah's de-
scendants; by Heman the native-
born; for the choir leader; to be
sung about sickness and played
skillfully.

88 O LORD God, I call during
the day.

^eGk; Heb "all my springs are in you "

and at night my cry is before
You.

²May prayer come into Your
presence;
listen to my cry.

³I've had enough troubles,
my life has come close to the
grave.

⁴I'm counted with those who go
down to the pit
and am like a man without
strength.

⁵Like those that are slain,
I join the dead who lie in the
grave.

You don't remember them
anymore,
cut off as they are from Your
helping hand.

⁶You put me in a deep pit, in dark
and deep places.

⁷Your anger lies heavy on me;
with all Your waves You over-
whelm me. (Music)^b

⁸You have taken my friends far
away from me
and made them loathe me.

I am shut in and can't get out.

⁹My eyes get weak with grief.

Every day I call You, LORD, and
spread out my hands to
You.

¹⁰Do You do wonderful things for
the dead?

Do their ghosts get up and praise
You? (Music)^b

¹¹Does anybody in the grave tell
about Your love.

do they talk about Your faith-
fulness in that place of
decay?

¹²Does anybody in that dark place
know Your wonders

88
8 Lk 22:49
Mt 27:55

or anyone in the land of oblivion know Your righteousness?

¹³But I call to You for help, LORD; in the morning my prayer comes to You.

¹⁴Why do You reject me, LORD, and hide Your face from me?

¹⁵I've been suffering and close to death from my youth.

I have endured Your terrors— I'm about to pass away.

¹⁶Your blazing anger swept over me;

Your terrors have silenced me.

¹⁷All day long they surrounded me like a flood

and attacked me from all sides.

¹⁸You have removed from me anyone who might love me or be a friend.

The friend I know is—
darkness!

Are You Breaking Your Promise to David, Lord?

By Ethan, the native-born; to be played skillfully.

89 LORD, I will sing of Your love forever.

I will make known to all the coming ages how faithful You are.

¹I will tell how Your grace is forever built in the heavens;

how You firmly set up Your faithfulness there.

²I made a covenant with the man I chose,

I swore to My servant David:

³I will have your line continue forever

and build your throne for all

the ages."—(Music)^b

⁴The heavens praise Your wonders, LORD,

the assembly of the holy ones
Your faithfulness.

⁵Who in the sky can be compared to the LORD?

Who among God's sons is like the LORD?

⁷God, terrifying in the council of holy beings,

is great and more awe inspiring than any around Him.

⁸O LORD God of armies, who is like You?

Your strength and faithfulness surround You.

⁹You rule the raging sea, when its waves rise, You quiet them.

¹⁰You crushed Rahab^f like a carcass,

with Your strong arm You scattered Your enemies.

¹¹Heaven is Yours and the earth is Yours,

the world and everything in it—You made them.

¹²You created Zaphon and Amanus,

Tabor and Hermon ring out with Your name.

¹³Your arm is mighty, Your hand is strong,

Your right hand is lifted high.

¹⁴Your throne is built on righteousness and justice.

Love and truth come to serve You.

¹⁵Blessed are the people who experience that shout of joy,

LORD,

⁸⁹
³⁻⁴ Acts 2:30
^{7-2 Th 1:10}
^{10 Lk 1:51}

^fA reference to Egypt

- as they walk in the light of
Your face.
- ¹⁶They delight in Your name all
day long
and Your righteousness lifts
them up.
- ¹⁷You are their glory and their
strength,
and by Your favor we raise
our horns high.
- ¹⁸because the LORD is our
Ruler
and Israel's holy One our
King.
- ¹⁹Once in a vision You said to
Your faithful ones:
"I set a boy above a warrior
and promoted one chosen
from the people.
- ²⁰I found My servant David
and anointed him with My
holy oil.
- ²¹With a firm hand I will help him
and strengthen him with My
arm.
- ²²No enemy will attack him by
surprise
and no wicked person mis-
treat him.
- ²³I will crush his enemies before
him
and strike down those who
hate him.
- ²⁴But I will be faithful to him and
love him;
My name will raise his horn
high.
- ²⁵I will put the sea under his
power
and the rivers under his right
hand.
- ²⁶He will call to Me, 'You are my
Father,
my God and Rock who saves
me.'
- ²⁷Yes, I will make him the first-
born,
the highest of the kings of the
earth.
- ²⁸I will always love him,
and be faithful in My cove-
nant with him.
- ²⁹I will have his descendants go on
forever
and His throne like the days of
heaven.
- ³⁰If his sons forsake My law and
don't live by My rules,
³¹if they violate My laws and
don't do what I order,
³²I will punish their wrongs
with a rod
and their sins with blows.
- ³³But I will not stop loving him or
prove Myself unfaithful.
- ³⁴I will not violate My covenant or
break My promise.
- ³⁵One thing I swore by My holi-
ness—
I will not lie to David:
³⁶His descendants will go on for-
ever
and His throne will be like the
sun before Me,
³⁷like the moon it will stand for-
ever,
and you can trust the One who
tells the truth in heaven."^a
(Music)^b
- ³⁸But You put away, rejected
and became angry with the
one You anointed.
- ³⁹You have repudiated the cove-
nant with Your servant
and made his crown unholy in
the dust.
- ⁴⁰You tore down all his walls
and laid his fortified cities in
ruins.

20 Acts 13:22
26 1 Pt 1:17
27 Rev 1:5
17:16,
21:24

^aOr "His throne will be more reliable than the heavens."

"All who went along the road
 plundered him,
 and his neighbors insulted
 him.
 "You held high the right hand of
 his enemies
 and made all his foes happy.
 "Yes, You turned back his sharp
 sword
 and didn't let him attack in
 battle.
 "You put an end to his splendor
 and hurled his throne to the
 ground.
 "You cut short the days of his
 youth
 and covered him with dis-
 grace. (Music)^b
 "How long, LORD? Will You hide
 forever?
 How long will Your anger burn
 like fire?
 "Remember Lord, how short my
 life is.
 Why have You made all
 human beings for vanity?
 "Does any man live without ex-
 perience of death;
 can any rescue his life from
 the grave? (Music)^b
 "Where is the love You showed at
 first, Lord,
 and faithfully promised David
 with an oath?
 "Remember, Lord, how Your
 servants are scorned.
 I bear in my heart all the barbs
 of the nations,
 "that Your enemies have used
 to insult me, LORD.
 They have scorned and
 maligned the one You
 anointed.

"Praise be to the LORD forever.
 So be it! So be it!

Our Everlasting God

A prayer by Moses, the man of God.

90 O Lord, You are our home
 through all the ages.
 "Before the mountains were
 born
 or You gave birth to the earth
 and the world—
 O God, You exist from everlast-
 ing to everlasting.
 "You turn man back to dust,
 saying, "Return, children of
 men."
 "A thousand years pass in Your
 sight
 like yesterday,
 like a watch in the night.
 "If You pluck them while they're
 sleeping,
 in the morning they will be
 like cut grass.
 "If they blossom and are cut in
 the morning
 in the evening they will wither
 and dry up.
 "Yes, Your anger consumes us;
 Your fury terrifies us.
 "You have set our sins before
 You,
 our hidden sins before the
 light of Your face.
 "When You pour out Your anger,
 all our days vanish,
 we finish our years like a sigh.
 "We live as long as seventy years,
 and if we're strong enough get
 to be eighty.
 The increase in years brings^b
 toil and trouble,
 pleasure is cut short and we
 fly away.

52 Lk 1:68
 90
 4 2 Pt 3:8

^bOr "Their arrogance brings. . ."

¹Who knows how fierce Your anger is,
or how Your fury is on those
who fear You.

²Teach us to count our days
that we learn to be wise.

³How long till You return, LORD?
Have pity on Your servants.

⁴In the morning satisfy us with
Your love,
then we'll shout happily and
be glad as long as we live.

⁵Make us glad as many days as
You made us suffer,
as many years as we've seen
misery.

⁶May Your servants see what
You can do,
and may Your glory be on our
children.

⁷May the beauty of the Lord our
God be upon us:
Give us success in what we're
doing,
yes, give us success in what
we're doing.

Under the Wings of the Almighty

91 Let him who lives in the
shelter of the Most High
and stays in the shadow of the
Almighty,

¹say to the LORD, "My Refuge
and my Fortress,
my God whom I trust!"

²He is the One who will rescue
you from the snare
and from the deadly plague.

³He will cover you with His
feathers,
and under His wings you will
find refuge.

His arm is a shield and an
armor.

⁴You need not be afraid of any-
thing dreadful at night,

an arrow flying during the
day,

⁵the pestilence moving in the
dark,

or the plague ravaging at
noon.

⁶A thousand may fall at your side
and ten thousand at your
right,

but it will not come near you.

⁷You will only watch it with your
eyes
and see how the wicked are
paid back.

⁸If you have made the LORD, who
is my refuge, the Most High,
your home,

⁹He will not let any harm come
to you
or disaster come near your
home,

¹⁰because He orders His angels to
be with you
and protect you everywhere
you go.

¹¹They will carry you in their
hands
and not let you stub your foot
against a stone.

¹²You will tread on a lion or a
cobra
and trample on a young lion or
a serpent.

(The Lord:)

¹³"Because he clings to Me in
love, I will rescue him
and put him in a safe high
place,

because he knows My name.

¹⁴When he calls Me, I will answer
him,
be with him in trouble, rescue
him, and honor him.

¹⁵With a long life I will satisfy him
and have him drink his fill of
My salvation."

91
11-12 MI 4.6
LK 4:10-11
13 LK 10:19

Like Flowers

A psalm to be sung on the sabbath day.

92 It is good to thank the LORD
and sing about Your name, O Most High,
and talk in the morning about Your love
and at night about Your faithfulness
with a ten-stringed instrument, a lute,
and music on a lyre.

You made me glad, LORD, by what You did,

I will shout about what Your hands accomplished.

How great are Your works, LORD,
and very deep Your thoughts!

A dull person can't understand it,
and a fool can't grasp it.

The wicked come up like grass,
and all who do wrong blossom like flowers
only to be killed off forever.

But You, LORD, are high forever.

Look at Your enemies, LORD,
see how Your enemies perish
and all who do wrong have scattered.

But You raise my horn high like that of a wild bull,
and fresh oil is poured on me.

My eyes see those who watch for me,
my ears hear the evil-doers attacking me.

The righteous flourish like palm trees
and grow tall like cedars on Lebanon.

They are planted in the LORD's house,
they blossom like flowers in the courts of our God.

Even when they're old, they still bear fruit,
being green and full of sap.

to show the LORD means what He says.

He's my Rock, and there's no iniquity in Him!

Our Everlasting King

93 The LORD is King! He dresses in majesty.

The Lord dresses in power,
fastening His belt.

The world also was made to stand firm and can't be moved.

Long ago Your throne was made to stand firm—
You are from everlasting.

LORD, the rivers make a noise,
the rivers make their roaring noise,
the rivers make a crashing noise—

but more than the noise of vast waters
and mightier than the waves of the sea
is the might of the LORD above!

The truths You wrote can be trusted absolutely.

In Your temple, LORD, holiness is beautiful forever.

A Just God Helps

94 God of vengeance; O LORD,
God of vengeance, shine!

1. 4 Rev 19:6

- ¹Rise, judge of the world, give the proud what they deserve.
- ²How long, LORD, how long will the wicked rejoice?
- ³Gushing and talking boldly, all who do wrong brag about themselves.
- ⁴They trample on Your people, LORD, and make Your own suffer.
- ⁵They kill the widow and the stranger and murder orphans, saying, "The LORD doesn't see it; Jacob's God doesn't even notice it."
- ⁶You mindless ones among the people, understand; you fools, when will you get wise?
- ⁷He planted the ear—can't He hear?
He formed the eye—can't He see?
- ⁸He disciplines nations—can't He correct?
He teaches people—doesn't He know?
- ⁹The LORD knows that what man thinks is nothing.
- ¹⁰Blessed is the man whom You, LORD, correct and teach from Your Word, "to give him rest after a time of trouble, while a pit is dug for the wicked.
- ¹¹The LORD doesn't reject His people or forsake His own.
- ¹²The decisions of judges will again become just, and all who are right at heart will pursue justice.
- ¹³Will anyone rise against the wicked in my behalf?
- Will anyone stand by me against those who do wrong?
- ¹⁷If the LORD hadn't helped me, I soon would have gone down to silence.
- ¹⁸When I think my foot is slipping, Your love, LORD, holds me up.
- ¹⁹When there's much troubling me inwardly, Your comforts delight me.
- ²⁰Can anyone on a throne of iniquity be Your partner, when he uses laws to do mischief?
- ²¹They band together to attack the life of the righteous and condemn innocent people to death.
- ²²But the LORD has been my mountain Refuge, and my God is a Rock that shelters me.
- ²³He made their wickedness lash back on them and for their evil He wiped them out—
Yes, the LORD our God wiped them out.

Our King and Shepherd

- 95** Come, let us shout out loud to the LORD;
let us shout happily to the Rock who saves us.
- ²Let us come before Him with praise and hail Him with hymns.
- ³The LORD is a great God, a great King above all gods.
- ⁴In His hand are the deep recesses of the earth;
the mountain peaks are His;
⁵the sea is His—He made it,

and His hands formed the dry
land.

⁶Come, let us worship and bow
down
and kneel before the LORD
who made us.

⁷He is our God,
we're the people of His
pasture
the flock of His hand.
Today, hear if you will, His
voice:

⁸"Don't get stubborn as at
Meribah,
as on that day at Massah in
the wilderness,
⁹where your fathers tested Me
and tried Me out,
although they had seen what I
could do.

¹⁰For forty years I was disgusted
with those people;

I said, 'They're a people
whose hearts are going
astray;
they haven't learned My
ways.'

¹¹So in My anger I took a solemn
oath:

'They will never come to My
place of rest!'

Worship the Lord!

96 Sing to the LORD a new
song!

Sing to the LORD, all the
world!

²Sing to the Lord! Bless His
name!

From day to day tell the news of
how He saves.

³Among the nations tell about His
glory,
about the wonderful things He
does among all the
people.

⁴The LORD is great and ought to
be praised much,
and to be held in awe above
all gods.

⁵All the other gods of the nations
are worthless idols,
but the LORD made the
heavens.

⁶Splendor and majesty are before
Him,
power and beauty in His holy
place.

⁷Give the LORD, O families of the
nations,
give the LORD glory and
power,

⁸give the LORD the glory due
His name.

Bring an offering and come to
His courts,

⁹worship the LORD in holy
garments.

Tremble before Him, all the
world!

¹⁰Tell among the nations: "The
LORD is King!"

He made the earth stand firm
so that it can't be moved.

He will judge the peoples
fairly.

¹¹Let the heavens rejoice and the
earth be glad;

let the sea roar like thunder
and everything in it.

¹²the fields be delighted and
everything in them.

Then all the trees in the forest
will shout

¹³before the LORD when He
comes.

When He comes to judge the
earth,

He'll judge the world fairly
and the people faithfully.

95
7-11 Heb 3:
7-11, 12,
15-18; 4:3,
5-7, 10-11

96
1 Rv 5:9; 14:3
10 Rv 19:6
13 Acts 17:31;
Rv 19:11

We're Happy in Our King

97 The LORD is King. Let the earth rejoice,

and the many coast-lands be glad.

²Clouds and darkness are around Him.

His throne is built on righteousness and justice.

³Fire goes ahead of Him, burning up His enemies all around.

⁴His lightnings light up the world—

seeing it, the earth trembles.

⁵The mountains melt like wax as they face the LORD,

the Master of the whole earth.

⁶The heavens tell about His righteousness,

and all the peoples see His glory.

⁷All who worship images, and brag about vain idols, will come to a shameful end.

All the gods bow down to Him.

⁸Zion is happy to hear it;

Judah's towns are delighted with Your judgments, LORD.

⁹You, LORD, are high above the earth, very high above all gods.

¹⁰If you love the LORD, hate evil. He who preserves the lives of His devoted ones

will rescue them from the hands of the wicked.

¹¹Light dawns for the righteous, and joy for those who are right at heart.

¹²Be happy in the LORD, you righteous, and praise Him as you remember how holy He is.

Sing to Our Victorious King!

A psalm.

98 Sing to the LORD a new song—He has done wonderful things.

His right hand and His holy arm have won Him victory.

²The LORD has shown how He saves

and revealed His righteousness for the nations to see.

³He remembered His love for Israel

and how faithful He was to them.

All the distant parts of the world have seen

how our God can save.

⁴Shout to the LORD, all the world;

break into happy shouting, and sing to praise Him.

⁵Make music to the LORD with a lyre.

with a lyre and the sound of music,

⁶with trumpets and the blowing of a horn.

Shout before the King, the LORD.

⁷May the sea roar like thunder and everything in it,

the world and those who live in it.

⁸May the streams clap their hands,

and the hills shout happily together ⁹before the LORD,

because He will come to judge the world;

He will judge the world fairly and the people with justice.

He Is Holy

99 The LORD is King—the people tremble;

97
1 Rv 19:6
7 Heb 1:6
98
1 Rv 5:9, 14, 3
3 Lk 1:54
Acts 28:28
9 Acts 17:31
99
1 Rv 11:17,
18, 19:6

He's on a throne among the angels—the earth shakes.

²Great is the LORD in Zion and high above all the peoples.

³They should praise Your great and awe-inspiring name; it is holy.

⁴O Mighty King, You love justice and establish fairness! You do what is just and right in Jacob.

⁵Honor highly the LORD our God and worship at His footstool— He is holy.

⁶Moses and Aaron were among His priests, and Samuel was among those who called on His name.

They called the LORD, and He answered them.

⁷and talked to them from a pillar of cloud.

They kept the truth He wrote and the law He gave them.

⁸O LORD, our God, You answered them.

You were their God who forgave them but punished their wrongs.

⁹Honor highly the LORD our God and worship at His holy hill because the LORD our God is holy.

Thank God

A psalm to give thanks.

100 Shout to the LORD, all the world,

²serve the LORD with joy, come before Him shouting happily.

³Realize the LORD is God:

He made us, and not we ourselves.

We are His people and the flock of His pasture.

⁴Come into His gates to give thanks.

into His courts to praise.

Thank Him, bless His name

⁵because the LORD is good and loves us forever and is faithful through all the ages.

The King Hates Wrong

A psalm by David.

101 I will sing of love and justice and make music to You, LORD.

²I want to understand the perfect way.

O when will You come to me?

I will live with a pure heart in my own home.

³I will not put anything wicked before my eyes.

I hate what the unfaithful do;

I want no part of it.

⁴Let every crooked thought be put out of my mind.

I will not be friendly with evil.

⁵I'll silence anyone who secretly slanders his neighbor.

I won't put up with anyone who looks proud and is conceited.

⁶I look for the faithful people in the land,

so they may live with me.

When anyone lives a pure life, he may serve me;

⁷but nobody who does deceitful things shall live in my home;

nobody who tells lies can stay with me.

⁶Every morning I'll destroy all the wicked in the land,
to purge the LORD's city of all who do wrong.

Help Me—I'm Suffering

A prayer by one who is suffering when he feels faint and pours out his troubles before the LORD.

102 LORD, listen to my prayer, and let my cry for help come before You.

²Don't hide Your face from me when I'm in trouble.
turn Your ear to me; when I call, answer me quickly.

³My days vanish like smoke, and my limbs burn as on a hearth.

⁴My heart is parched and withered like grass—
I forget to eat my food.

⁵As I groan my bones cling to my flesh.

⁶I have become like an owl in the desert,

like a night-owl among ruins;

⁷I'm always awake, like a bird alone on a roof.

⁸All day long my enemies insult me;

raging at me, they bind themselves with an oath against me.

⁹Yes, I eat ashes like bread and mix my drink with tears.

¹⁰You were so angry and furious
You picked me up and threw me down.

¹¹My days are like a shadow getting longer,
and I wither away like grass.

¹²But You, LORD, are on Your throne forever;

You are remembered through all the ages.

¹³You will rise and be merciful to Zion—
it's time to be kind to her,
the time that was set has come.

¹⁴Your servants delight even in Zion's stones
and pity even her dust.

¹⁵The nations will fear the LORD's name,
and all the kings of the world
His glory.

¹⁶When the LORD builds Zion, He will be seen there in His glory.

¹⁷He will listen to the prayer of those stripped of everything;
He doesn't despise their prayer.

¹⁸This will be written down for a future generation,
so a people still to be created
can praise the LORD.

¹⁹The LORD looked down from His high and holy place,
He looked from heaven at the earth,

²⁰to hear the prisoner groan
and to free those doomed to die,

²¹to hear those in Zion tell about the LORD's name,
and His praise in Jerusalem.

²²when the nations and kingdoms gather to serve the LORD.

²³My strength was broken and my life shortened,

²⁴so I said, "My God, don't take me away in the middle of my life.

Your years last forever.

⁹Long ago You laid the earth's
foundation,
and Your hands made the
heavens.

¹⁰They perish, but You go on;
they will all wear out like a
garment:
You will change them like
clothes, and they will
pass away;

¹¹but You are the same and Your
years never end.

¹²Your servants' children will live
undisturbed,
and their descendants will
stand firm before You."

Like a Father

By David.

103 My soul, praise the
LORD,
and everything in me, praise
His holy name.

²My soul, praise the LORD,
and don't forget all the good He
does:

³He forgives all my wrongs,
heals all my sicknesses,

⁴saves my life from being
destroyed,
crowns me with love and
mercies,

⁵and satisfies me with good
things as long as I live
so that like an eagle my
youth is renewed.

⁶The LORD does what is right
and just for all who are
oppressed.

⁷He let Moses know His ways
and Israel the great things He
did.

⁸The LORD is merciful and kind,
slow to get angry, and rich in
love.

⁹He will not always accuse us of
wrong
or be angry forever.

¹⁰He hasn't dealt with us as we
deserve for our sins
or paid us back for our
wrongs.

¹¹No, as high as heaven is above
the earth,
that's how great His love is to
those who fear Him.

¹²As far as the rising of the sun is
from its setting,
so far has He put our sins
away from us.

¹³As a father loves His children,
so the LORD loves those who
fear Him.

¹⁴He knows how we are made
and remembers we are dust.

¹⁵A man's days are like grass,
he blossoms like a flower in
the field,

¹⁶the wind blows over him, and
he is gone,
and his home doesn't know
him anymore.

¹⁷But from everlasting to
everlasting
the LORD loves those who fear
Him
and gives His righteousness to
children's children,

¹⁸to those who keep His
covenant
and remember to do what He
orders.

¹⁹The LORD set up His throne in
heaven
and as King rules everything.

²⁰Praise the LORD, you angels of
His,
mighty beings that listen when
He speaks
and do what He says.

²¹Praise the LORD, all His armies.

102
25-27 Heb 1
10-12
103
8 Jas 5:11
11 Lk 1:50
17 Lk 1:50

His servants that do what He
wants.

²²Praise the LORD, all His
creatures
in all places of His kingdom.
My soul, praise the LORD!

Give Thanks

104 My soul, bless the LORD!
LORD my God, You are
very great.

You dress in majesty and
splendor.

²wrap Yourself in light as a
garment,
stretch out the heavens like
tent-curtains.

³lay the beams of Your palace
in water,
make the clouds Your chariot,
and move on the wings of the
wind.

⁴You make Your angels winds
and Your servants flames of
fire.

⁵You set the earth on its
foundations
never to be shaken.

⁶You covered it with deep water
as a garment,
the waters standing over the
mountains.

⁷When You threatened the
waters, they fled,
when You thundered at them,
they ran away—

⁸the mountains rising and the val-
leys sinking down
to the place You appointed for
them.

⁹They can't cross the boundary
You set
or come back to cover the
earth.

¹⁰You make water gush from
springs into the ravines
and flow between the hills

¹¹to let every animal in the
field drink,
so the wild donkeys can
quench their thirst.

¹²Beside the water nest the birds
of the air,
singing among the leaves.

¹³From Your palace You water the
hill-country,
and satisfy the world by what
You do.

¹⁴making grass grow for the
cattle
and plants for man to
cultivate
to get food from the ground:

¹⁵wine to cheer up a man,
olive oil to make his face
shine,
and bread to strengthen
him.

¹⁶The LORD's trees, the cedars of
Lebanon that He planted,
drink their fill.

¹⁷Birds make their nests in them,
the stork having his home in
the fir trees.

¹⁸The high mountains are for the
wild goats,
the rocks are a shelter for
badgers.

¹⁹You made the moon to mark the
seasons,
the sun that knows when to go
down.

²⁰When You make it dark, it is
night,
then all the animals in the
woods move around.

²¹the young lions roar for their
prey,
seeking their food from God.

²²When the sun rises, they slink
away
and lie down in their dens.

²³Then man goes out to work and
toil till the sun goes down.

104
4 Heb 17
12 Mt 13:32
Mk 4:32
Lk 13:19

²⁴LORD, how many are the things
You made,
You made them all by wisdom.
The world is full of Your
creatures,
²⁵beasts large and small.
There is the sea, great and wide,
with countless things moving
in it,
²⁶There go the ships, and Levia-
than You formed to play in
it.
²⁷All of them are looking to You
to give them their food at the
right time.
²⁸You give it to them—they pick it
up;
You open Your hand—they are
satisfied with good things.
²⁹You hide Your face—they are
terrified;
You take away their breath—
they die and turn again to
dust.
³⁰You send out Your Breath—they
are created;
You make new the surface of the
ground.
³¹May the LORD's glory go on
forever,
and the Lord be delighted
with what He made.
³²He looks at the earth and it
trembles,
He touches the mountains and
they smoke.
³³I will sing to the LORD as long as
I live
and make music to my God as
long as I exist.
³⁴May my meditation please
Him—
I will delight in the LORD.
³⁵May sinners vanish from the
world and the wicked be no
more!
My soul, bless the LORD!
Praise the LORD!

*God's People, from Abraham to
the Taking of Canaan*

105 Thank the LORD, call out
His name,
tell among the nations what
He has done.
²Sing to Him and play instru-
ments before Him,
meditate on all the wonderful
things He has done.
³Glory in His holy name.
You who look for the LORD, be
glad at heart.
⁴Search for the LORD and His
strength;
look for Him continually.
⁵Remember the wonderful things
He did,
His miracles and just
utterances.
⁶O descendants of Abraham, His
servant!
O descendants of Jacob, whom
He chose!
⁷He is the LORD our God who
judges the whole world.
⁸Remember forever His covenant
that He ordered for a thou-
sand generations,
⁹the oath He made with Abra-
ham, and swore to Isaac.
¹⁰He confirmed it as a law for
Jacob
as an everlasting covenant for
Israel.
¹¹"I give you the land of Canaan,"
He said,
as your property measured
out to you."
¹²They were then only a few, a
little group,
and strangers in the country.
¹³They wandered from nation to
nation,
from one kingdom to another
people.
¹⁴He let nobody oppress them

35 Rev 19
1, 3, 4, 6
105
8-9 Lk 11
12-13

- and for their sake punished
kings.
- ¹⁵He said, "Don't touch My
anointed ones or harm My
prophets."
- ¹⁶He called for a famine on the
land
and broke every staff of
bread.
- ¹⁷He sent one ahead of them:
Joseph, who was sold as a
slave.
- ¹⁸They hurt his feet with chains,
and iron cut into his neck.
- ¹⁹till the time when what he said
came true.
and the LORD's Word proved
he was right.
- ²⁰The king sent someone to release
him,
the ruler of the nations sent
and gave him liberty.
- ²¹He made him the master of his
palace
and the ruler of everything he
had.
- ²²to train the king's officers the
way he wanted,
and teach his elders wisdom.
- ²³Then Israel came to Egypt,
and Jacob lived as a stranger
in Ham's country.
- ²⁴He made His people grow very
much
and stronger than their
enemies.
- ²⁵They changed their minds so
that they hated His people
and dealt treacherously with
His servants.
- ²⁶He sent His servant Moses, and
Aaron whom He had chosen.
- ²⁷They did His wonders among
them
and miracles in Ham's
country:
- ²⁸He sent darkness, and it got
dark—
they still rebelled against His
word.
- ²⁹He turned their waters to blood
and so killed their fish.
- ³⁰Their country swarmed with
frogs,
even getting into their kings'
bedrooms.
- ³¹He spoke, and swarms of flies
came
and gnats all over their
country.
- ³²He gave them hail instead of
rain
with fire flashing through
their country.
- ³³He struck their vines and fig
trees
and smashed the trees in their
country.
- ³⁴He spoke, and grasshoppers
came,
wingless ones that couldn't be
counted.
- ³⁵They devoured all the plants in
their country,
everything that grew on their
ground.
- ³⁶He struck down every firstborn
in their country,
the first ones born of all their
manly strength.
- ³⁷He brought Israel out with silver
and gold,
and among His tribes nobody
stumbled.
- ³⁸The Egyptians were glad they
were leaving
because they were afraid of
them.
- ³⁹He spread out a cloud to protect
them
and a fire to light up the night.
- ⁴⁰They asked, and He brought
quail

21 Acts 7:10

and satisfied them with bread
from heaven.

¹¹He opened a rock, and water
gushed out
and flowed in a stream
through the dry places.

¹²Yes, He remembered His holy
promise and His servant
Abraham.

¹³He led out His people with joy.
His chosen ones shouting
happily.

¹⁴He gave them the lands of other
nations,

and they took what others had
worked for—

¹⁵so that they might do what He
ordered and keep His
laws.

Praise the LORD!

God's People Rebelled

106 *Praise the LORD!*
Thank the LORD because
He is good and loves us
forever.

¹Who can say what mighty things
the LORD has done
and tell about everything we
should praise Him for.

²Blessed are those who practice
justice
and always do what is right.

³Remember me, LORD, when You
are kind to Your people,
come and help me when You
save them.

⁴so I may see the prosperity of
Your chosen ones,
enjoy the happiness of Your
people,
and boast with those who are
Your own.

⁵We have sinned like our fathers,
doing wrong and wicked
things.

⁷Our fathers in Egypt didn't un-
derstand Your wonders
or remember how much You
loved them.

so they rebelled beside the
sea, the Red Sea.

⁸Yet He saved them to honor His
name;

to let them know His power.

⁹He rebuked the Red Sea, and it
dried up;

He led them through the
floods as through a
desert.

¹⁰So He saved them from the
power of those who hated
them,

and freed them from the
enemy.

¹¹Water covered their enemies,
and not one of them was
left.

¹²Then they believed what He said
and sang to praise Him.

¹³But they soon forgot what He did
and didn't wait for His advice.

¹⁴So they lusted in the wilderness
and tested God in the desert.

¹⁵He gave them what they de-
manded

but also sent a disease that
made them waste away.

¹⁶They were jealous of Moses in
the camp
and of Aaron, the LORD's holy
one.

¹⁷The ground opened and swal-
lowed Dathan,
and buried Abiram's group.

¹⁸Fire consumed their group,
flames burned up the
wicked.

¹⁹At Horeb they made a calf and
**worshiped an image of poured
metal.**

²⁰So they traded their glorious
God

45 Rv 19
1 3 4 6
106
1 Rv 19
1 3 4 6
10 Lk 1:75
20 Ro 1:23

- for a statue of a bull that eats
grass.
- ¹¹They forgot God who saved
them,
who did great things in Egypt,
¹²wonders in Ham's
country,
and terrible things at the Red
Sea.
- ¹³He said He would destroy
them—
if Moses, whom He chose,
hadn't stood in the
breach
to turn back His fury and keep
Him from destroying
them.
- ¹⁴They scorned the delightful
country,
didn't believe what He said,
¹⁵grumbled in their tents,
and didn't obey the LORD.
- ¹⁶Raising His hand, He swore to
them
to strike them down in the
wilderness.
- ¹⁷disperse their descendants
among the nations,
and scatter them in the vari-
ous countries.
- ¹⁸But they went to serve Baal at
Peor
and ate what was sacrificed
to dead idols.
- ¹⁹So they made Him angry by what
they did
and sudden death broke out
among them.
- ²⁰Then Phinehas stood up be-
tween God and the people,
and the plague was stopped;
²¹and it was credited to him as
righteousness
through all the ages forever.
- ²²They made Him angry by the
water of Meribah
and got Moses into trouble,
²³making him feel bitter and
talk rashly.
- ²⁴They didn't destroy the people
as the LORD told them
²⁵but mingled with the nations.
They learned to do what they
did,
²⁶and worshiped their idols,
which were a trap for them.
- ²⁷They sacrificed their sons and
daughters to demons,
²⁸poured out innocent blood,
the blood of their own sons
and daughters
whom they sacrificed to the
idols of Canaan.
**The land was polluted by blood-
shed.**
- ²⁹They defiled themselves by what
they did;
they behaved like prostitutes.
- ³⁰Then the LORD got angry at His
people
and abhorred His own.
- ³¹He put them in the hands of
other nations,
and those who hated them
ruled over them.
- ³²Their enemies oppressed them,
and they became subject to
their power.
- ³³Many times He rescued them,
but they planned rebellion
and sank lower in their
sin.
- ³⁴He saw they were in trouble
when He heard them
crying.
- ³⁵He remembered His covenant
with them
and in accordance with His
great love changed His
mind.
- ³⁶He made all their captors feel
sorry for them.
- ³⁷Save us, LORD our God,
and gather us from the
nations

37 1 Co 10 20
45 Lk 1 72

to give thanks to Your holy
name

and to glory in praising You.

¹⁸Praise the LORD, the God of
Israel,

from everlasting to
everlasting.

And let all the people say Amen.

Praise the LORD!

Back from Exile

107 "Thank the LORD be-
cause He is good and
loves us forever!"

¹That's what those should say
whom the LORD rescued from
the enemy

²and gathered from other
countries,

from the east and from the
west,

from the north and from the
south.

⁴⁸ Lk 1:58;
^{Rv} 15:1;
^{3, 4, 6}
¹⁰⁷
⁹ Lk 1:53
¹⁰ Lk 1:79
²⁰ Acts 10:36;
^{13:26}

⁴Men wandered around on a
desert road in the
wilderness

without finding a town to live
in,

⁵hungry and thirsty, feeling
desperate.

⁶Then they cry to the LORD in
their trouble,

and He rescues them from
their distress.

⁷He leads them in the right way to
go to a town to live in.

⁸Thank the LORD for His love,
for doing wonderful things for
mortal man.

⁹When they are thirsty, He gives
them plenty to drink,
when they are hungry, He fills
them with good things.

¹⁰Men sit in darkness and gloom,
as prisoners in misery and
iron chains

¹¹because they rebel against
the words of God,

and scorn what the Most High
had planned.

¹²So He made them weary with
work to humble them,

and when they fell there was
nobody to help them.

¹³Then they cry to the LORD in
their trouble,

and He saves them from their
distress.

¹⁴He takes them out of the dark-
ness and gloom

and tears off the ropes that
bind them.

¹⁵Thank the LORD for His love,
for doing wonderful things for
mortal man,

¹⁶for smashing the gates of
bronze

and cutting the iron bars in
pieces.

¹⁷Fools suffer for their wicked
ways

and the wrongs they do.

¹⁸They abhor every kind of food,
and come near the gates of
death.

¹⁹Then they cry to the LORD in
their trouble,

and He saves them from their
distress.

²⁰He sends His word and makes
them well

and rescues them from the
grave.

²¹Thank the LORD for His love,
for doing wonderful things for
mortal man.

²²Let them bring sacrifices to
thank Him,

shouting happily as they tell
what He did.

²³Those who go down to sail the
sea in ships,

- who do their business on the
high seas.
- ²⁴see what the LORD can do
and His wonders in the deep
waters.
- ²⁵He spoke and raised a storm
and made its waves dash
high.
- ²⁶Men went up to the heights and
down to the depths;
the disaster melts their
courage:
- ²⁷reeling and staggering like
drunkards,
all their skills go topsy-turvy.
- ²⁸Then they cry to the LORD in
their trouble,
and He brings them out of
their distress.
- ²⁹He makes the storm calm down,
and the waves around them
are still.
- ³⁰They are glad it is quiet.
So He leads them to the haven
they long for.
- ³¹Thank the LORD for His love,
for doing wonderful things for
mortal man.
- ³²Let them glorify Him in the as-
sembly of the people,
and praise Him where elders
sit.
- ³³He changes rivers into a desert,
springs of water into thirsty
ground,
- ³⁴and fertile ground into a salt flat
because the people living
there are wicked.
- ³⁵He changes the desert into pools
of water
and dry ground into springs of
water.
- ³⁶There the hungry settle
and build towns to live in.
- ³⁷Then they sow fields and plant
vineyards
that produce a crop.
- ³⁸He blesses them; they get to be
very many,
and He doesn't let them lose
any cattle.
- ³⁹Their numbers had become few
and they sank down
under oppression, disaster,
and grief.
- ⁴⁰He had poured contempt on
their noblemen
and had made them wander in
a pathless wilderness.
- ⁴¹But now He lifts the poor from
misery
and makes their families like a
flock.
- ⁴²The righteous are glad to see it,
and all wickedness shuts its
mouth.
- ⁴³Are you wise? Then watch for
these things
and see for yourself the love
of the LORD.

Give Us Victory

A song, a psalm by David.

108 I feel confident, O God.
I will sing and play music.

Yes, my heart is roused.

²Wake up, lute and lyre,
that I might wake up the
dawn.

³I will thank You among the na-
tions, LORD,
and play music to praise You
among the people,

⁴because Your love is greater
than the heavens,
and Your faithfulness reaches
the skies.

⁵God, be high over the heavens,
and let Your glory be over all
the earth.

⁶Save us by Your right hand and
answer us
so Your dear people may be
free.

⁷God promised from His holy
place:

“I will go up and divide
Shechem.

and measure off the valley of
Succoth.

⁸Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh
is Mine.

Ephraim is a helmet on My
head, Judah is My scepter.

⁹Moab is the basin I wash in; I
will toss My shoe to
Edom.

I will shout in triumph over
Philistia.”

¹⁰Who can bring me into the
fortified city;

Who can lead me to Edom?

¹¹O God, haven't You rejected us,
O God, haven't You refused to go
out with our armies?

¹²Help us against the enemy—
man's help is worthless!

¹³But with God we'll fight
valiantly.

He will trample down our
enemies.

A Curse on the Evil Man

For the choir leader; a psalm by
David.

109 God, whom I praise, don't
be silent.

¹Wicked and deceitful men have
opened their mouths
against me,
spoken to me with lying
tongues.

²surrounded me with hateful
talk,

and fought against me without
a reason.

⁴In return for my love they
accuse me.

I pray for them,ⁱ

⁵but they give me evil for good
and hate for my love.

⁶[They say:] Appoint a wicked
man over him;

let one stand at his right to
accuse him.

⁷When he's tried, may he come
away guilty;

let his prayer become a sin.

⁸May his days be few,
and another take over his
office!

⁹May his children be orphans
and his wife a widow!

¹⁰May his children wander
around and beg
and look for help far from
their ruined homes!

¹¹May a creditor grab everything
he has

and strangers plunder what
he produced by his work!

¹²May nobody be kind to him
anymore

or pity his fatherless children!

¹³May his descendants be cut off
and their name be wiped out
in the next generation!

¹⁴May the LORD remember the
guilt of his fathers
and not wipe out his mother's
sin;

¹⁵may they always be before the
LORD!

May He cut off the memory of
them from the earth!

¹⁶For he didn't remember to be
kind

but hunted down the poor,
needy and brokenhearted
to kill them.

109

8 Acts 1:20

ⁱ for them” with Syriac; Heb omits

¹⁷He loved to curse—let a curse
come on him!

He didn't like to bless—may a
blessing be far from him.

¹⁸He wore cursing like his
clothes—

may it enter into his body like
water and into his bones
like oil.

¹⁹May it be wrapped around him
like a garment,

like a belt he always wears!

²⁰That is what the LORD should
pay back

to those who accuse me and
talk evil against me.

²¹But You, LORD, my Master, deal
with me according to Your
reputation;

Your love is so good, rescue
me.

²²I am poor and needy,

and my heart is troubled
within me.

²³Like a shadow getting longer, I
am gone;

I'm shaken off like a grass-
hopper.

²⁴My knees give way because of
fasting,

and my body is lean, without
any fat.

²⁵I'm a victim of their insults;

they look at me and shake
their heads.

²⁶Help me, O LORD my God! You
are so kind, save me!

²⁷Then they will know this is Your
hand,

that You, LORD, have done it.

²⁸They may curse, but You bless.

May those who attack me come
to a shameful end,

but may Your servant be glad.

²⁹May those who accuse me put on
disgrace as a garment

and be wrapped in their
shame as in a robe.

³⁰I will thank the LORD very much
and praise Him among many
people.

³¹for He stands at the right side of
the needy man

to save him from those who
condemn him to die.

Our King, Priest, and Judge

A psalm by David.

110 The LORD says to my
Lord, "Sit at My right
till I make Your enemies Your
footstool."

²From Zion the LORD will send
out the scepter of Your
power:

"Rule in the middle of Your
enemies."

³Your people willingly sacrifice
themselves when You call
up Your army.

From the womb of the dawn
like dew,

Your youth will come to You in
beautiful, holy garments.

⁴The LORD has sworn and will
not change His mind:

"You are a Priest forever like
Melchizedek."

⁵At your right the Lord will
smash kings when He's
angry.

⁶He will rout the nations and fill
valleys with dead bodies;

He will smash the rulers over
the wide earth.

⁷Along the way, He will drink
from a brook;

therefore He will hold His
head high.

The Lord Is Kind and Faithful

111 Praise the LORD!
I will thank the LORD

25 Mt 27:39;
Mk 15:29
110
1 Mt 22:44;
26:64;
Mk 12:36;
14:62;
16:19;
Lk 20:42-
43; 22:69;
Acts 2:34;
35; 1 Co 15:
25; Ep 1:20;
22; Col 3:1;
Heb 1:3, 13;
8:1, 10;
12-13; 12:2
4 Heb 5:6;
10; 6:20;
7:3, 11, 15;
17, 21;
24, 28
111
1 Ru 19:
1, 3, 4, 6

with all my heart
in the fellowship of the righteous
and in the congregation.

²The LORD has done great things,
things studied by all who delight
in them.

³His work is glorious and majestic,
and He will be righteous forever.

⁴The wonders He did will be remembered.

The LORD is kind and merciful:

⁵He gives food to those who fear Him
and will always remember His covenant.

⁶He showed His people His power
by His works,
by giving them the land of the nations.

⁷Faithful and just are the works
of His hands;
we can trust all His precepts.

⁸They are unshakably firm forever;
they are faithfully and correctly
put into action.

⁹He sent liberty to His people
and ordered His covenant to be forever.
His name is holy and inspires awe.

¹⁰To be wise, first fear the LORD:
it is good sense for all to do that.
He will be praised forever.

Give to the Poor

112 *Praise the LORD!*
How blessed the man
who fears the LORD,
who takes great delight in His
commandments.

²His descendants will grow strong
in the world
and be blessed as an upright
generation.

³There will be wealth and riches
in his home.
His righteousness goes on forever.

⁴The Light will dawn in the darkness
for the upright,
that is the Kind, Merciful, and
Righteous One.

⁵It is good for a man to be generous
and ready to lend
and fair in doing his business.

⁶Such a man will never fail.
A righteous man will always be
remembered.

⁷He will not have to fear bad news.
As he trusts the LORD, his courage
doesn't waver.

⁸His mind is confident, he's not afraid.
till he sees his enemies go down.

⁹He gives freely to the poor.
His righteousness goes on forever.
His head will be raised in honor.

¹⁰The wicked will see it and not like it;
he will grind his teeth and vanish.
The wicked will never get what he wants.

The Lord Helps the Poor

113 *Praise the LORD!*
Praise Him, O servants of the LORD,
praise the LORD's name!

²Bless the LORD's name from now on
and forever!

³From the rising of the sun to its
going down
praise the LORD's name!

3 Rv 15:3
4 Jk 5:11
9 Lk 1:49, 68
112
1 Rv 19:1
3:4, 6
3:2 Cn 9:9
9:2 Co 9:9
112
1 Rv 19:
1, 7, 4, 6

‘The LORD is high above all
nations
and His glory above the skies.

‘Who is like the LORD our God,
seated on His high throne?
‘He bends to look down on
heaven and earth.
‘He raises the poor from the dust,
and lifts up the needy from the
manure pile.
‘He enables him to sit with
noblemen,
the noblemen of his people.
‘He returns the childless woman
to her own home,
as the happy mother of
children.

Praise the LORD!

A Song of the Exodus

114 When Israel came out of
Egypt
and Jacob’s family left a people
who talk a strange lan-
guage.

‘Judah became His holy place
and Israel His kingdom.

‘The sea saw it and fled;
the Jordan turned back.
‘The mountains danced like
rams;
the hills like lambs.

‘Why have you fled, O sea,
and Jordan, what made you
turn back?

‘O mountains, what made you
dance like rams,
O hills, like lambs?

‘O earth, tremble before the
Lord, before Jacob’s God—
‘He changed the rock into a
pool of water
and the flint into springs of
water.

God Blesses Us

115 Not to us, LORD, not to
us

but to Your name give glory,
because of Your love and
faithfulness.

‘Why should other nations say,
“Where is their God?”

‘Our God is in heaven
and does anything He wants
to do.

‘Their idols are silver and gold
made by human hands.

‘They have a mouth but can’t
talk,

eyes but can’t see,
ears but can’t hear,
a nose but can’t smell,
hands but can’t feel,
feet but can’t walk.

They can’t make a sound with
their throats.

‘Those who make them are like
them,

and so are all who trust them.

9(Leader:)

Israel, trust the LORD.

(Choir:)

He helps and shields them.

10(Leader:)

Aaron’s family, trust the LORD.

(Choir:)

He helps and shields them.

11(Leader:)

You who fear the LORD, trust
the LORD.

(Choir:)

He helps and shields them.

12(Leader:)

The LORD remembers us and He
will bless us.

(Choir:)

He will bless Israel’s family;

He will bless Aaron’s family;

9 Rv 19
1, 3, 4, 6
114
3 Rv 20 11
7 Rv 20 11
115
4-7 Rv 9 20

¹³He will bless those who fear the LORD, small and great.

¹⁴The LORD will cause you and your children to increase.

¹⁵You will be blessed by the LORD who made heaven and earth.

¹⁶The heaven of heavens belongs to the LORD,
but the earth He gave to mortal man.

¹⁷The dead can't praise the LORD or any who go down to silence.

¹⁸But we will bless the LORD from now on and forever.
Praise the LORD!

How Can I Thank the Lord?

116 I love the LORD because He has heard my prayer and plea for mercy;

²because He turned His ear to me when I called.

³The snares of death came around me;

the distress of the grave took hold of me;

I experience anguish and grief,

⁴So I prayed in the LORD's name:
"Please, LORD, rescue me!"

⁵The LORD is kind and righteous; our God is merciful.

⁶The LORD protects the helpless; He saved me when I was weak.

⁷O my soul, go back to your rest, the LORD has been kind to you.

⁸You saved my life from death, my eyes from tears and my feet from stumbling,

⁹so I might walk before the LORD in the land of the living.

13 Rv 11:16;
19:5
18 Rv 19:
1, 3, 4, 6
116
10:2 Co 4:13
11 Rv 3:4
19 Rv 19:
1, 3, 4, 6
117
1:2 Rv 15:11;
Rv 19:1;
3, 4, 6

¹⁰(I believed even when I had to speak of suffering so much.

¹¹I had said in my panic, "Everyone is lying.")

¹²How can I pay back the LORD for all the good He has done for me?

¹³I will raise the cup of salvation and pray in the LORD's name.

¹⁴I will fulfill my vows to the LORD before all His people.

¹⁵Precious to the LORD is the death of those He loves.

¹⁶O LORD, I am Your servant,
I am Your servant, the son of Your maid-servant.

You freed me from the ropes that bound me.

¹⁷With a sacrifice I will thank You and pray in Your name, O LORD.

¹⁸I will fulfill my vows to the LORD before all His people,

¹⁹in the courts of the LORD's temple,
in Your midst,
O Jerusalem.

Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD!

117 Praise the LORD, all you nations!

Praise Him, all you people!

²His grace to us is great, and the LORD is faithful forever.

Praise the LORD!

Procession to the Temple

118 (On the way:)
Thank the LORD because He is good and loves us forever.

²Israel should say, "He loves us forever."

³Aaron's family should say, "He loves us forever."

- "Those who fear the LORD should say, "He loves us forever."
- ⁵From my place of confinement I called the LORD.
The LORD answered me from His place of freedom.
- ⁶The LORD is for me, I'm not afraid.
What can man do to me?
- ⁷The LORD is for me; He helps me.
In victory I view those who hate me.
- ⁸It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust men.
- ⁹It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust the best of men.
- ¹⁰All the nations surrounded me—
in the LORD's name I have cut them off;
- ¹¹they surrounded me, yes, surrounded me—
in the LORD's name I have cut them off;
- ¹²they surrounded me like bees;
but like burning thorns they were quenched;
in the LORD's name I have cut them off.
- ¹³You pushed hard to make me fall,
but the LORD helped me.
- ¹⁴The LORD is my strength and protection;
He has saved me.
- ¹⁵Listen to the happy shouting of victory
in the tents of the righteous.
The LORD's right hand is working mightily,
¹⁶the LORD holds high His right hand,

the LORD's right hand is working mightily.

¹⁷I will not die but live and tell what the LORD has done.

¹⁸The LORD sharply corrected me but didn't let me die.

¹⁹(Entering:)

Open the gates of righteousness for me;

I will go into them and thank the LORD.

²⁰This is the LORD's gate—the righteous go into it.

²¹(Inside:)

I thank You, for You have answered me

and have become my

Deliverer.

²²The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

²³The LORD has done this, and we think it is wonderful.

²⁴The LORD made this day,

let us rejoice and be glad in Him.

²⁵LORD, please save. Lord, please give us success.

²⁶Blessed is He who comes in the LORD's name.

We bless You in the LORD's temple.

²⁷The LORD is God, and He gives us light.

March in festive procession with branches up to the horns of the altar.

²⁸You are my God, and I thank You,

my God, I honor You highly.

²⁹Thank the LORD because He is good and loves us forever!

God's Word

119 Happy are those whose lives are innocent,

118
6-7 Heb 13:6
18 2 Co 6:9
22-23 Mt 21:
42; Mk 12:
10-11; Lk
20:17;
Acts 4:11;
1 Pt 2:7
24 Rv 19:7
25-26 Mt 21:9;
15; 23:39;
Mk 11:9-10;
Lk 13:35;
19:36;
Jn 12:13;
Rv 1:4

- who live by what the LORD teaches.
- ⁷Happy are those who keep the truths He wrote, searching for Him with all their hearts;
- ⁸who do no wrong but walk in His ways.
- ⁹You ordered us to give diligent attention to Your directions.
- ¹⁰O how I want my life to conform to Your laws.
- ¹¹I will never feel ashamed if I set my eyes on all Your commandments.
- ¹²I will praise You sincerely as I learn Your righteous decrees.
- ¹³I will keep Your laws—don't utterly forsake me.
- ¹⁴How can a young man keep his life pure?
By living as You tell him to.
- ¹⁵With all my heart I search for You.
Don't let me stray from Your commandments.
- ¹⁶I treasure in my heart what You say,
so I won't sin against You.
- ¹⁷Blessed are You, LORD—teach me Your laws.
- ¹⁸With my lips I tell of every decree that comes from Your mouth.
- ¹⁹I delight in the way of Your testimonies as much as in all kinds of riches.
- ²⁰I think about how You want me to live and watch Your ways.
- ²¹I delight in Your laws and will not forget what You say.
- ²²Kindly help Your servant,
that I may live and do what You say.
- ²³Open my eyes,
and I will see wonderful things in what You teach.
- ²⁴I'm a stranger on earth—
don't hide Your commandments from me.
- ²⁵At all times I crave and long for Your precepts.
- ²⁶You rebuke the proud who are cursed,
for going astray from Your commandments.
- ²⁷Remove insults and contempt away from me
because I keep the truths You wrote.
- ²⁸Even while princes sit and plot against me,
Your servant thinks about Your laws.
- ²⁹Yes, I delight in the truths You wrote—
they are my advisers.
- ³⁰My spirit clings to the dust—
give me a new life as You promised.
- ³¹When I tell You about my life,
answer me;
teach me Your laws.
- ³²Help me understand how You want me to live,
and I will think of the wonderful things You do.
- ³³My misery deprives me of sleep—
strengthen me as You promised.
- ³⁴Turn me away from falsehood,
and kindly give me Your instructions.
- ³⁵I have chosen the way of faithfulness and set Your decrees before me.
- ³⁶I cling to the truths You wrote—
LORD, don't let me come to shame.

- ¹⁴I will run the way of Your commandments
because You give me a broader understanding.
- ¹⁵LORD, teach me the way You prescribe,
and I will keep it to the end.
- ¹⁶Give me understanding, and I will keep what You teach
and do it with all my heart.
- ¹⁷Lead me in the path of Your commandments—
I am delighted with it.
- ¹⁸Make me interested in the truths You wrote
and not in making profits.
- ¹⁹Turn my eyes away from watching worthless things.
By Your power give me a new life.
- ²⁰Do what You promised Your servant,
what You promised to the one who fears You.
- ²¹Take away the scorn I dread,
because Your decrees are good.
- ²²I long for Your precepts;
by Your righteousness give me life.
- ²³LORD, may Your love come to me;
save me as You promised.
- ²⁴Then I'll have an answer for him who insults me,
for I trust Your promise.
- ²⁵Don't utterly snatch any true word from my mouth
because I put my hope in Your precepts.
- ²⁶Then I will continually and forever
be careful to do what You teach.
- ²⁷I will walk in freedom
because I have studied how You want me to live.
- ²⁸I will talk of Your truth before kings
and not feel ashamed.
- ²⁹I delight in Your commandments, which I love:
- ³⁰I stretch out my hands for Your commandments, which I love,
and meditate on Your laws.
- ³¹Remember Your promise to Your servant
for by it You have given me hope.
- ³²This is my comfort in my misery:
that Your word gives me life.
- ³³Proud men bitterly scorn me,
but I don't turn away from Your teaching.
- ³⁴LORD, I remember Your righteous acts of long ago
and am comforted.
- ³⁵The wicked, who forsake Your teaching, make me hot with anger.
- ³⁶Your laws have been my songs here where I'm a stranger.
- ³⁷At night I think of Your name,
LORD:
during the night-watch, Your law.
- ³⁸It is good for me to follow the way You want me to live.
- ³⁹O LORD, You are my portion, I promise to do what You say.
- ⁴⁰With all my heart I want You to be friendly to me;
be kind to me as You promised.
- ⁴¹When I think of my life,
I always come back to the truths You wrote.
- ⁴²I hurry without a delay to do what You ordered.

¹¹⁹
32 2 Co 6 11

- ⁶¹The wicked put the ropes of
their traps around me,
but I don't forget Your
teaching.
- ⁶²I get up at midnight to thank You
for judging what is right.
- ⁶³I'm a friend to all who fear You
and follow the way You want
them to live.
- ⁶⁴The earth is full of Your love,
LORD.
Teach me Your laws.
- ⁶⁵LORD, You have treated Your
servant well, as You
promised.
- ⁶⁶Teach me good judgment and
knowledge
because I trust Your
commandments.
- ⁶⁷Before I suffered, I was going
wrong,
but now I do what You say.
- ⁶⁸You are good, and You do
good—teach me Your laws.
- ⁶⁹Proud men have smeared me
with lies,
but with all my heart I follow
the way You want me to
live.
- ⁷⁰Their heart is gross like fat,
but I delight in Your teaching.
- ⁷¹It is good for me to have suffered
in order to learn Your laws.
- ⁷²Your teaching is worth more to
me
than thousands in gold and
silver.
- ⁷³Your hands made me and
formed me—help me under-
stand,
and I will learn Your com-
mandments.
- ⁷⁴Those who fear You will see me
and be glad
because I trust Your promise.
- ⁷⁵LORD, I know Your judgments
are just,
and You were faithful when
You made me suffer.
- ⁷⁶May Your love comfort me as
You promised Your servant.
- ⁷⁷and Your mercies come to me so
that I may live
because I delight in Your
teaching.
- ⁷⁸May proud men come to shame
because they wronged me
with lies,
but I'll think of how You want
me to live.
- ⁷⁹Those who fear You should turn
to me
and learn the truths You
wrote.
- ⁸⁰May my heart be blameless in
Your laws
that I might not come to
shame.
- ⁸¹I am worn out as I long for You
to save me—
I trust Your promise.
- ⁸²My eyes are bleary as I look for
Your promise
and ask, "When will You com-
fort me?"
- ⁸³Although I've become like a
wineskin in smoke,
I haven't forgotten Your laws.
- ⁸⁴What is left of Your servant's
life?
When will You punish those who
pursue me?
- ⁸⁵Proud men have dug pits for
me—
not according to Your
instructions.
- ⁸⁶All Your commandments are
true,
but those men persecute me
with lies—help me!
- ⁸⁷They almost wiped me off the
earth.

- but I didn't forsake the way
You want me to live.
- ⁸⁸According to Your love give me a
new life,
and I will keep the truths You
spoke.
- ⁸⁹LORD, Your word stands for-
ever firm in heaven.
- ⁹⁰You are faithful through all the
ages.
You formed the earth, and it
continues to stand.
- ⁹¹By Your decrees they stand firm
today
because all things serve You.
- ⁹²If I hadn't been delighted in
Your teaching,
I would have perished in my
misery.
- ⁹³I will never forget Your
directions—
by them You gave me a new
life.
- ⁹⁴I am Yours—save me,
because I've studied how You
want me to live.
- ⁹⁵The wicked have waited for me,
to destroy me,
but I want to understand the
truths You wrote.
- ⁹⁶I have seen how everything per-
fect comes to an end,
but Your commandment ex-
tends very far.
- ⁹⁷How I love Your teaching—I
think about it all day long.
- ⁹⁸Because I always have Your
commandments,
I'm wiser than my enemies.
- ⁹⁹I have a better insight than all
my teachers
because I think of the truths
You wrote.
- ¹⁰⁰I understand better than the old
men
because I follow the way You
want me to live.
- ¹⁰¹I keep my foot from walking on
any evil path—
I want to do what You say.
- ¹⁰²I haven't turned away from
Your precepts
because You have taught me.
- ¹⁰³How pleasant Your words taste,
better than honey in my
mouth.
- ¹⁰⁴I get understanding from Your
decrees;
that is why I hate all
deception.
- ¹⁰⁵Your Word is a lamp for my feet
and a light on my path.
- ¹⁰⁶I made a promise with an oath
and will keep it,
an oath to carry out Your
righteous decisions.
- ¹⁰⁷I am suffering so very much,
LORD,
give me the new life You
promised.
- ¹⁰⁸Please accept, LORD, the praise
I gladly give,
and teach me Your precepts.
- ¹⁰⁹I always hold my life in my hand,
but I never forget Your
teaching.
- ¹¹⁰The wicked set a trap for me,
but I never stray from the way
You want me to live.
- ¹¹¹The truths You wrote are mine
forever
because they are my heart's
delight.
- ¹¹²I'm always and to the very end
interested
in doing what Your laws say.
- ¹¹³I hate the double-minded
but I love Your teaching.
- ¹¹⁴You are my hiding-place and my
shield—
I wait for Your promise.

- ¹¹⁵Go away from me, wicked men—
I want to do what my God
orders.
- ¹¹⁶Help me as You promised so that
I may live,
and don't let me be disap-
pointed in my hope.
- ¹¹⁷Strengthen me so I may be
saved,
and I will always turn to Your
laws.
- ¹¹⁸You reject all who leave Your
laws to go wrong—
with a lie they deceive them-
selves.
- ¹¹⁹You get rid of all the wicked on
earth like dross,
but I love the truths You
wrote.
- ¹²⁰My flesh shudders in fear of
You;
Your judgments inspire me
with awe.
- ¹²¹I have done what is just and
right;
don't leave me to those who
oppress me.
- ¹²²Guarantee Your servant's
welfare—
don't let proud people oppress
me.
- ¹²³My eyes are bleary as I look for
You to save me
and for the righteousness You
promised.
- ¹²⁴Deal with Your servant accord-
ing to Your love,
and teach me Your laws.
- ¹²⁵I am Your servant—
help me understand and know
the truths You wrote.
- ¹²⁶O LORD, it is time to act—
they have violated Your
teaching.
- ¹²⁷But I love Your commandments
more than gold or even fine
gold.
- ¹²⁸I agree with all Your precepts,
and hate all deception.
- ¹²⁹The truths You wrote are won-
derful,
that's why I keep them.
- ¹³⁰Your word is a door that lets in
light
and helps the simple person
understand.
- ¹³¹I open my mouth wide and pant
as I long for Your command-
ments.
- ¹³²Turn to me and be merciful to
me
as is right for those who love
Your name.
- ¹³³Make my steps firm by Your
word,
and don't let wrong have con-
trol over me.
- ¹³⁴Free me from the oppression of
men,
and I will follow the way You
want me to live.
- ¹³⁵Let Your face shine on Your
servant,
and teach me Your laws.
- ¹³⁶Tears stream down from my
eyes
because others don't follow
Your teaching.
- ¹³⁷You are righteous, LORD, and
right when You judge.
- ¹³⁸When You gave Your truth,
it was just and very
dependable.
- ¹³⁹My zeal consumes me because
my enemies forget Your
word.
- ¹⁴⁰Your word is very pure,
and Your servant loves it.
- ¹⁴¹I am unimportant and despised,
but I don't forget how You
want me to live.
- ¹⁴²O Just One, Your righteousness
is everlasting.

¹²⁷ Rv. 16.5
7: 19.2

- and Your word is the truth.
¹⁴³I have suffered trouble and anguish,
 but I delight in Your commandments.
¹⁴⁴The truths You wrote are always right,
 make me understand them that I might live.
- ¹⁴⁵I call with all my heart—answer me, LORD;
 I will keep Your laws.
¹⁴⁶As I call You, save me,
 then I will follow the truths You wrote.
¹⁴⁷I was up before dawn calling for help—
 I wait for You to keep Your promise.
¹⁴⁸I wake up during the night-watches to study Your word.
¹⁴⁹Since You love me, listen to me calling;
 according to Your justice, LORD, give me a new life.
¹⁵⁰Those who pursue vice have come near;
 they are far from Your teaching.
¹⁵¹You are near, LORD,
 and all Your commandments are true.
¹⁵²Long ago I learned from the truths You wrote
 that You established them forever.
¹⁵³See what I suffer, and rescue me
 for I never forget Your teaching.
¹⁵⁴Take my side in this conflict and free me;
 give me a new life as You promised.
- ¹⁵⁵The wicked are far from being saved
 because they don't study Your laws.
¹⁵⁶Your mercies are great, LORD,
 according to Your justice give me a new life.
¹⁵⁷Many pursue me and oppress me,
 but I don't turn away from the truths You wrote.
¹⁵⁸I'm disgusted to see those who are unfaithful,
 because they haven't followed Your word.
¹⁵⁹See how I love Your precepts.
 Since You love me, LORD, give me a new life.
¹⁶⁰Your whole word is true,
 and all Your righteous decrees are everlasting.
- ¹⁶¹Princes pursue me without a reason;
 before Your word I stand in awe.
¹⁶²I am delighted with Your word
 like one finding much spoil.
¹⁶³I hate lying and am disgusted with it,
 but I love Your teaching.
¹⁶⁴Seven times a day I praise You
 for Your righteous decrees.
¹⁶⁵Those who love Your teaching
 are very happy,
 and nothing can make them fall.
¹⁶⁶I wait for You to save me, LORD,
 and I do what You order.
¹⁶⁷I keep the truths You wrote and love them very much.
¹⁶⁸I keep Your precepts and the truths You wrote
 because all my ways are before You.
¹⁶⁹Let my loud cry come before You, LORD;

give me understanding as You promised.

¹⁷⁰Let my plea come before You; rescue me as You promised.

¹⁷¹My lips will pour out praise because You teach me Your laws.

¹⁷²My tongue will sing about Your word because all Your commandments are righteous.

¹⁷³May Your hand be ready to help me because I have chosen the way You want me to live.

¹⁷⁴I long for You to save me, LORD, and delight in Your teaching.

¹⁷⁵Give me a new life, and I'll praise You, and help me by Your righteous action.

¹⁷⁶If I wander away like a lost sheep, search for Your servant because I never forget Your commandments.

Rescue Me

A song for going up to worship.

120 In my trouble I call on the LORD and He answers me.

¹LORD, save me from lips that lie and from tongues that deceive.

²What will He give you, O deceiving tongue; what more has He for you?

³Only warrior's sharpened arrows and glowing coals of the broom shrub.

⁴Woe to me—I live as a stranger in Meshech and dwell near Kedar's tents.

⁵I have lived too long with those who hate peace.

⁶I talk of peace but they talk only of war.

Our Guardian Doesn't Sleep

A song for going up to worship.

121 I look up to the hills— where can I get help?

¹I get help from the LORD who made heaven and earth.

²Does He let your foot slip? Does He who guards you slumber?

³No, He who guards Israel doesn't slumber or sleep.

⁴The LORD is your Guardian, the LORD is your shade and your right hand.

⁵The sun will not strike you during the day or the moon at night.

⁶The LORD protects you against every harm,

He protects your life.

⁷The LORD protects you as you go and come now and forever.

May It Be Well with Jerusalem

David's song for going up to worship.

122 I was glad they said to me,

"Let us go to the LORD's house."

¹Our feet are standing inside your gates, Jerusalem.

²Jerusalem is a well-built city,

'where the tribes, the LORD's tribes, go up.

God ordered Israel to praise the LORD's name.

³There stand the seats for judgment to try cases,

¹²¹
⁶ RV 7:16

seats for the men of David's family.

- ⁴Wish Jerusalem well:
 "May it be well with those who love you!
⁷Peace be inside your walls and undisturbed happiness in your palaces!"
⁸Thinking of my relatives and friends I say,
 "May it be well with you!"
⁹Thinking of the house of the LORD our God,
 I will look for your welfare.

I Look Up to You

A song for going up to worship.

123 I look up to You on Your throne in heaven.

- ²Yes, like servants looking to their masters' hand,
 like a maid looking to her mistress's hand,
 so we look to the LORD our God till He has mercy on us.
³Have mercy on us, LORD, have mercy on us
 because we've had more than enough contempt.
⁴We've had our fill of being mocked by those who are at ease,
 our fill of being despised by the proud.

If We Didn't Have the Lord

David's song for going up to worship.

124 "If we didn't have the LORD," Israel should say,

- ²"If we didn't have the LORD when men attacked us,
³then they would have swallowed us alive

- when their anger blazed against us;
⁴then the water would have swept us away,
 a torrent going over us;
⁵then the proudly raging waters would have gone over us."
⁶Praise the LORD who didn't give us up
 as a prey to their teeth.
⁷We escaped like a bird from the hunters' trap—
 the trap is broken and we got away.
⁸Our help is the name of the LORD who made heaven and earth.

The Mountains Around Us

A song for going up to worship.

125 Those who trust the LORD are like Mount Zion,

- never shaken but standing forever.
²Like the mountains around Jerusalem
 the LORD is around His people now and forever.
³The scepter of the wicked will not rest
 on the land allotted to the righteous,
 and the righteous will not need to stretch out their hands
 to do wrong.
⁴Do good, LORD, to those who are good,
 whose hearts are right.
⁵But when people turn to crooked ways,
 the LORD will take them away with the criminals.
Peace be on Israel!

¹²⁵
5 GI 6:16

Glad to Be Home

A song for going up to worship.

126 When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.

²Then our mouths were filled with laughter,
and our tongues were shouting happily.

Then it was said among the nations,

“The LORD did great things for them.”

³The LORD has done great things for us—we are glad!

⁴Return, O LORD our fortunes as the streams return in the Negev.

⁵Though you may sow with tears,
you will reap with shouts of joy.

⁶Though you may go out weeping,
carrying your seed bag,
you will surely come home shouting,
carrying your sheaves.

¹²⁸
6 CI 6:16

If the Lord Is with Us

Solomon's song for going up to worship.

127 If the LORD doesn't build a house,
it's no use working so hard building it.

If the LORD doesn't protect a city,

it's no use to guard and protect it.

²It's no use for you to get up early
and go to bed late,

O you who eat the bread of toil,

for surely He gives sleep to those He loves.

³Behold, children are an inheritance from the LORD;

His reward is a fruitful womb.

⁴Like arrows in a warrior's hand are a man's children who are born when he's young.

⁵Happy is the man who has filled his quiver with them:

He will not come to shame because they will drive the enemies from the gate.

A Happy Family

A song for going up to worship.

128 Blessed is everyone who fears the LORD
and lives in His ways.

²You shall eat what your hands worked for,
and be happy and prosperous.

³Your wife will be like a fruitful vine inside your home,
your children like olive plants around your table.

⁴So you can see how a man is blessed if he fears the LORD.

⁵May the LORD bless you from Zion—

may you see prosperity in Jerusalem as long as you live;

⁶and see your children's children.

Peace be on Israel!

The Lord Defeats Our Enemies

A song for going up to worship.

129 Let Israel say, “Men have often attacked me from the time I was young.

¹Or “He gives to His beloved while they sleep”

²They have often attacked me
from the time I was young
but have never overpowered
me.

³They have plowed my back and
made their furrows long.

⁴But the LORD, who is righteous,
has cut me loose from the
ropes of the wicked."

⁵May all who hate Zion be turned
back in disgrace.

⁶May they be like herbs growing
on the housetops
that wither before it is
plucked.

⁷so no reaper can take a hand-
ful of it,

no gatherer can take it to his
bosom,

⁸and nobody who passes can
say,

"The LORD bless you!

We bless you in the LORD's
name!"

¹³⁰
⁶ Titus 2:14
Rev 1:5
¹³²
⁵ Acts 7:46

the LORD is gracious and has
plenteous redemption;

^aand He will rescue Israel from
all their sins.

A Quiet Trust

David's song for going up to wor-
ship.

131 O LORD, I don't feel
proud or look haughty
or meddle in things too great
and wonderful for me.

²No, I've calmed down and si-
lenced my ambitions
like a child on its mother's
bosom.

My spirit in me rests like a
weaned child.

³Israel, put your hope in the
LORD,
now and forever!

Zion, the Lord's Home

A song for going up to worship.

132 Lord, remember for good
all of David's troubles,

²how he swore to the LORD,
and vowed to the Mighty One
of Jacob:

³"I will certainly not go home,
or go to lie on the bed made
for me,

⁴or let my eyes sleep or
slumber,

⁵till I find a place for the LORD,
a home for the Mighty One of
Jacob."

⁶We heard about the sacred
ark in Ephrathah;
we found it in the woods.

⁷Let us go to His dwelling and
worship at His footstool.

⁸Come, LORD, to Your resting-
place,

You Forgive

A song for going up to worship.

130 Out of the depths I call
You, LORD.

²LORD, listen to me calling;
let Your ears be alert to hear
my plea.

³If You remembered sins, LORD,
who could survive?

⁴But You forgive us to have us
fear You.

⁵I wait for the LORD,
I wait and look for Him to do
what He said.

⁶I turn to the LORD more than
those who watch for the
morning,

yes, more than those who
watch for the morning.

⁷Israel, put your hope in the
LORD;

You and Your mighty chest.
 *Your priests dress in righteousness,
 and Your devoted ones shout happily.

¹⁰For Your servant David's sake
 don't turn away from Your
 anointed.

¹¹With an oath the LORD promised David—
 He certainly will not fail to
 keep it:

*"I will put your own offspring on
 your throne.*

¹²If your sons keep My covenant
 and My truths that I teach
 them,
 their descendants also will sit
 on Your throne forever."

¹³The LORD chose Zion, wanting
 it for His home:

¹⁴"Here is where I will stay
 forever.

Here I will be on My throne
 because that is what I want.

¹⁵I will certainly bless her food
 and satisfy her poor with
 bread.

¹⁶I will dress her priests in
 salvation,
 and her people, whom I love,
 will shout happily.

¹⁷Then I will make a Horn sprout
 up for David
 and will prepare a Lamp for
 My anointed.

¹⁸I will cover His enemies with
 shame as with a garment,
 but on Him His crown will
 sparkle."

Living in Harmony

David's song for going up to worship.

133 See how good and pleasant it is
 for brothers to live in
 unity!

²It is like the fine oil on the head,
 flowing down on the beard
 Aaron's beard,
 flowing down over the collar
 of his garment,

³like the dew of Hermon coming
 down on Zion's mountains.

There, the LORD confers His
 blessing, life forever.

The Lord's Servants

A song for going up to worship.

134 Now bless the LORD, all
 you servants of the
 LORD,

who stand in the LORD's
 temple through the night.

²raise your hands toward the
 holy place and bless the
 LORD.

³The LORD who made heaven
 and earth bless you from
 Zion!

Israel's God

135 Praise the LORD! Praise
 the LORD's name!

Praise Him, you servants of the
 LORD,

²who stand in the LORD's
 temple,
 in the courts of the temple of
 our God!

³Praise the LORD—the LORD is
 good.
 Sing to His name—it is
 delightful.

⁴The LORD chose Jacob to be His
 own
 and Israel to be His treasure.

⁵I know the LORD is great
 and our Lord is above all gods

¹¹ Acts 2:30
¹⁷ Lk 1:69
 134
¹ Ps 19:5
 135
¹ Ps 19:1,
 2, 4, 5, 6
³ Ps 19:1,
 2, 4, 6

- ⁶The LORD does anything He wants to do
in heaven, on earth, in the seas
and all the depths of the ocean.
- ⁷He has fog come up from the distant parts of the earth;
earth;
He makes lightning flashes for the rain.
and brings wind out of His storerooms.
- ⁸He struck down the firstborn of men and animals in Egypt.
- ⁹He sent signs and wonders into the middle of Egypt
against Pharaoh and all his men.
- ¹⁰He struck down many nations and killed mighty kings:
¹¹Sihon king of the Amorites, Og 14 Heb 10:30
15-17 Rv 9:20 king of Bashan,
and all the kingdoms of Canaan.
- ¹²He gave their land as a possession
to His people Israel.
- ¹³LORD, Your name is forever.
LORD, You will be remembered through all the ages.
- ¹⁴*The Lord champions the cause of His people,*
and has compassion on His servants.
- ¹⁵*The idols of the nations are silver and gold
made by human hands.*
- ¹⁶They have a mouth but can't talk,
eyes but can't see,
¹⁷ears but can't hear,
and there is no breath in their mouths.
- ¹⁸Those who make them are like them,
and so are all who trust them.
- ¹⁹O Israel's family, bless the LORD!
O Aaron's family, bless the LORD!
- ²⁰O Levi's family, bless the LORD!
You who fear the LORD, bless the LORD!
- ²¹Blessed be the Lord in Zion!
Blessed be He who lives in Jerusalem!
Praise the LORD!

He Loves Us Forever

136 Thank the LORD for He is good—His mercy endures forever!

²Thank the God of gods—His mercy endures forever!

³Thank the Lord of lords—His mercy endures forever!

⁴He alone does great wonders—His mercy endures forever!

⁵He made the heavens with understanding—His mercy endures forever!

⁶He made the earth stand above the waters—His mercy endures forever!

⁷He made great lights—His mercy endures forever!

⁸the sun to rule the day—His mercy endures forever!

⁹the moon and the stars to rule the night—His mercy endures forever!

¹⁰He struck down the firstborn of the Egyptians—His mercy endures forever!

¹¹and took Israel out of them—His mercy endures forever!

¹²with a strong hand and an outstretched arm—His

mercy endures forever!

¹³He divided the Red Sea—His mercy endures forever!

¹⁴and had Israel go through the middle of it—His mercy endures forever!

and shook Pharaoh and his army

¹⁵into the Red Sea—His mercy endures forever!

¹⁶He led His people through the wilderness—His mercy endures forever!

¹⁷He struck down great kings—His mercy endures forever!

¹⁸and killed mighty kings—His mercy endures forever!

¹⁹Sihon, king of the Amorites—His mercy endures forever!

²⁰Og, king of Bashan—His mercy endures forever!

²¹and gave their land as a possession—His mercy endures forever!

²²as a possessor of His servant Israel—His mercy endures forever!

²³When we were humbled, He thought of us—His mercy endures forever!

²⁴and snatched us from our enemies—His mercy endures forever!

²⁵He gives food to all living beings—His mercy endures forever!

²⁶Thank the God of heaven—His mercy endures forever!

In Exile

137 By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and cried as we thought of Zion.

²There we hung our lyres on the poplars.

³Those who held us captive there

asked us for a song, and those who mocked us wanted us to be cheerful—
“Sing us a song of Zion!”
⁴How could we sing the LORD’s song in a foreign land?

⁵If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand wither
⁶and my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth,
if I don’t remember you,
if I don’t put Jerusalem above my highest joy!

⁷LORD, keep in mind what the people of Edom did on the day Jerusalem fell. They said, “Down with it, down with it, to its very foundation!”

⁸O people of Babylon who destroy,
happy is he who *pays you back for doing what you did to us!*
⁹Happy is he who grabs your little children and dashes them against a rock!

Your Great Promise

By David.

138 I thank You with all my heart.

In the presence of the angels I sing to You

²and bow toward Your holy temple.

I thank Your name because You are kind and faithful,

and have made Your name and Your promise greater than everything.

³When I called, You answered me
and made me bold and strong.

¹³⁷
8 RV 18:6
9 LK 19:44

⁴All the kings on earth will thank
You, LORD,

when they hear the words of
Your mouth.

⁵They will sing of the LORD's
ways,
that the LORD's glory is great.

⁶The LORD is high but He re-
gards the lowly
and knows a proud man from
a distance.

⁷Even though I live in the middle
of trouble,

You keep me alive.

You stretch out Your hand
against my angry enemies,
and Your right hand saves
me.

⁸The LORD accomplishes His
purpose for me.

LORD, You love us forever—

don't drop the work You
started.

138
4 Rv 21:24
139
14 Rv 15:3

You Know Me

For the choir leader; a psalm by
David.

139 LORD, You have searched
me and You know me:

¹You know when I sit down and
when I get up;

You understand from far
away what I think.

³You watch me when I travel and
when I lie down
and know intimately all my
ways.

⁴Before there's a word on my
tongue,

LORD, You know all about it.

⁵You besiege me from behind and
in front

and lay Your hand on me.

⁶Your knowledge is too wonder-
ful for me,
too high for me to reach.

⁷Where can I go from Your
Spirit?

Where can I flee from Your
face?

⁸If I go up to heaven, You are
there,

or make the grave my bed,
You are there.

⁹If I take the wings of the dawn
and stay at the most distant
part of the sea,

¹⁰even there Your hand would
lead me,
and Your right hand hold me.

¹¹If I say, "Surely, darkness over-
whelms me
and the light that was around
me is now night,"

¹²even the dark isn't too dark for
You,

but the night shines like the
day,

and darkness is like light.

¹³You created my inner being
and wove me together in my
mother's womb.

¹⁴I thank You for how marvelously
and wonderfully I am made.

What You do is wonderful,
and I am fully aware of
it.

¹⁵My limbs weren't hidden from
You when I was made in
secret

and skillfully woven as in an
underground workshop.

¹⁶Your eyes saw me before I was
formed;

before a single one of my days
took shape

they were all prepared and
written in Your scroll.

¹⁷How difficult for me are Your
thoughts, O God!

How very many they are!

¹⁸If I count them—they are more
than the sand.

- May I awake and still be with
You.
- ¹⁹O God, if You would only kill the
wicked—
you murderous men, get away
from me.
- ²⁰They speak blasphemy against
You,
and as Your enemies abuse
You.
- ²¹LORD, shouldn't I hate those
who hate You
and feel disgusted with those
who attack You?
- ²²I hate them with a perfect
hatred;
they have become my enemies.
- ²³Search me, God, and know my
mind.
Test me, and know my thoughts,
²⁴and see if there's anything in
me that leads to pain,
and lead me on the everlasting
way.

140
3 Ro 3:13
141
2 Rv 5:8
8:3-4

Rescue Me from My Enemies

For the choir leader; a psalm by
David.

- 140** Rescue me, LORD, from
wicked men;
protect me from criminals,
²who in their hearts plan evil
and always stir up
fighting.
- ³They make their tongues sharp
like a snake's,
their lips hide a viper's poison.
(Music)^b
- ⁴Keep me, LORD, from the hands
of the wicked;
protect me from criminals
who plan to trip me.
- ⁵Arrogant men have hidden a
snare for me,
and spread a net with ropes
and set traps for me along the
path. (Music)^b

- ⁶I say to the LORD, "You are
God,
LORD, hear me pleading
mercy."
⁷Lord GOD, mighty to save me,
cover my head in battle.
- ⁸LORD, don't let the wicked ha
what they want
or succeed with their pla
(Music)^b
- ⁹Those who surround me ra
their heads—
may the mischief they t
about overwhelm them.
- ¹⁰May He rain burning coals
them
and when he casts them in
the watery pit
may they never come
again.
- ¹¹May the slanderer not stand
the land,
and disaster pursue the cr
inal, blow after blow.

- ¹²I know the LORD will uphold
rights of the poor
and the cause of those w
suffer.
- ¹³Yes, the righteous will pra
Your name,
and those who are upri
will live before You.

Keep Me from Sinning w Others

A psalm by David.

- 141** I call You, LORD, hu
to help me.
Listen to me when I call You.
- ²May my prayer be set as incer
before You,
and the raising of my hands
an evening sacrifice.

¹LORD, set a muzzle on my mouth,

guard the door of my lips.

²Don't let my mind be inclined to talk of evil

or to concern myself with evil, with mischievous deeds together with those who practice iniquity;

don't let me eat their delicacies.

³When a righteous person strikes me—it's a kindness; when he corrects me—it is oil for the head.

Let not my head refuse it.

But I will keep on praying against their evil deeds.

⁴When their judges are thrown down from the sides of a cliff,

then they will listen to what I say—

it will sound pleasant.

⁷Their bones will lie scattered at the opening of the grave,

like something broken and shattered on the ground.

⁸But I look to You, Lord GOD;

I go to You for shelter. O God: protect my life.

⁹Keep me from the trap they set for me

and the snares of those who do wrong.

¹⁰May the wicked fall into their own nets while I escape.

Rescue Me

David's prayer when he was in the cave; to be played skillfully.

142 I call out to the LORD and plead with the LORD for mercy,

¹I pour out my complaint before Him and tell Him my trouble.

³When I feel weak enough to give up,

You know my way.

On the path where I have to go they have hidden a snare for me.

⁴Look to the right and see—nobody's concerned about me.

My escape is cut off—nobody cares about me.

⁵I call You, LORD, and say, "You are my refuge,

my own portion in the land of the living!"

⁶Listen to me calling loud—I am very low.

Rescue me from those who pursue me—they are too strong for me.

⁷Get me out of prison so that I can praise Your name.

The righteous will crowd around me when You do good to me.

Like a Thirsty Ground

A psalm by David.

143 LORD, listen to my prayer, hear my plea; You are faithful and righteous—answer me!

²Don't bring Your servant into court

because no one living is righteous before You.

³The enemy has pursued me, stamped my life to the ground,

and made me live in dark places like those long dead.

⁴I feel weak enough to give up

143
2 Re 3:20
Gl 2:16

and am numb inside.

¹I remember the days of long ago,
think of all You have done,
and meditate on what Your
hands have made.

⁶I spread out my hands to You,
longing for You like thirsty
ground. (Music)^b

⁷Answer me quickly, LORD—my
spirit wears out with
longing.

Don't hide Your face from me,
or I'll be like those who went
down to the grave.

⁸In the morning let me hear how
You love me,
because I trust You.

Teach me the way I should go,
because I long for You.

⁹Rescue me from my enemies,
LORD—I hide in You.

¹⁰Teach me to do what You
want—You are my God.

May Your good Spirit lead me on
even ground.

¹¹For Your name's sake, LORD,
give me a new life.

You are righteous—get me out
of trouble.

¹²You are kind—silence my
enemies,

and destroy all who trouble
me,

because I am Your servant.

For Victory and Every Blessing

By David.

144 Blessed be the LORD, my
Rock,
who trained my hands to fight
and my fingers to do battle.

¹He is my Steadfastness and For-
tress, my Refuge and Haven,
my shield in whom I
trust.

He makes my people obey me.

¹LORD, what is man that You
should care about him,
mortal man that You should
think about him?

⁴Man is like a vapor, his life like a
shadow passing away.

⁴LORD, bend Your heaven low,
and come down,
touch the mountains so they'll
smoke,

⁶hurl lightning and scatter
them,

shoot Your arrows and rout
them,

⁷stretch out Your hands from
above,

snatch me and rescue me
from a great flood,

from a foreign people ^awho
tell lies.

who with their right hand
pledge to lies.

⁹God, I will sing You a new song
and play music to You on a
lute with ten strings.

¹⁰You give victory to kings
and rescue Your servant
David from a murderous
sword.

¹¹You snatch me and rescue me
from a foreign people who
tell lies,

who with their right hand
pledge lies.

¹²Bless our sons that are like
plants nurtured from their
youth,

and our daughters that are like
pillars,
carved in a shape to fit a
palace.

¹³Our full granaries provide us

144
9 Rev 5:9
14:3

with one good thing after
another.

Our sheep are producing
thousands
and tens of thousands in our
fields.

- ¹⁴Our oxen are loaded down.
Nobody is breaking into our
cities or going out to war
or crying loud in our streets.
¹⁵Blessed are the people with
whom this is so;
happy are the people whose
God is the LORD!

Great in Power and Love

A song of praise by David.

145 I will praise You highly,
my God and King,
and bless Your name forever.

²I will bless You every day and
praise Your name forever.

³The Lord is great; He deserves
high praise.
His greatness is unsearch-
able.

⁴Those of one age will praise to
the next what You have
done
and tell about Your mighty
acts.

⁵I will think of the splendid
glory of Your majesty and
the wonderful things You have
done.

⁶People will speak about the
power of Your terrible
deeds,
and I will tell about Your
greatness.

⁷They will tell what they re-
member of Your great good-
ness

and shout out loud about Your
righteousness.

⁸The LORD is kind and merciful,
slow to get angry and great in
love.

⁹The LORD is good to everyone
and shows compassion on
everything He made.

¹⁰Everything You made praises
You, LORD,
and Your devoted ones bless
You.

¹¹They talk of the glory of Your
kingdom
and tell of Your power.

¹²They teach the world His mighty
acts
and the wonderful glory of His
kingdom.

¹³Your kingdom is an everlasting
kingdom,

You rule through all the ages.^k

¹⁴The LORD holds up all who are
falling
and raises all who are bowed
down.

¹⁵The eyes of all look to You,
and You give them their food
at the right time.

¹⁶You open Your hand to satisfy
everything that lives with
what it wants.

¹⁷The LORD is just in all His ways
and kind in everything He
does.

¹⁸The LORD is near all who call
Him,
all who call Him sincerely.

¹⁹He does what those who fear
Him want;

He hears their call for help
and saves them.

²⁰The LORD protects all who love
Him

145
8 Jb 5:11
17 Rv 15:3
16:5

^kOne Hebrew manuscript and the Greek, Latin, and Syriac add "The LORD is faithful in everything He says and kind in everything He does."

but destroys all the wicked.

²¹My mouth will praise the LORD,
and every human being shall
praise His holy name
forever and ever.

Trust the Lord!

146 Praise the LORD!
O my soul, praise the
LORD!

¹I will praise the LORD as long as
I live
and sing to my God as long as I
exist.

³Don't put your trust in the best
of men,
or in human beings who can't
save.

⁴for when a man stops
breathing,
he goes back to the ground,
and that day his plans perish.

⁵Blessed are you if your help is
Jacob's God,
and your hope is the LORD
your God.

⁶who made heaven and
earth,
the sea and everything in
them.

He will always be faithful,

⁷provide justice for the
oppressed.

and give the hungry food.

The LORD sets prisoners free;

⁸the LORD gives sight to the
blind;

the LORD raises those who are
bowed down;

the LORD loves the righteous;

⁹the LORD protects strangers;

He makes orphans and widows
happy again.

but ruins the way of the
wicked.

¹⁰The LORD will rule forever:

your God, O Zion, will rule
through all the ages.

Praise the LORD!

Praise Our God!

147 Praise the LORD!
It is good to sing hymns
to our God
because He is delightful, and
praise is beautiful.

²The LORD is rebuilding
Jerusalem
and gathering those of Israel
who were driven away.

³He heals the brokenhearted and
bandages their wounds.

⁴He decides how many stars
there should be
and gives all of them names.

⁵Our Lord is great and very
strong,
and there's no limit to what
He knows.

⁶The LORD makes those who suf-
fer happy again
but throws the wicked down
on the ground.

⁷Sing a hymn of thanks to the
LORD,
play on the lyre to our God.

⁸He covers the sky with clouds,
prepares rain for the
ground,
and makes grass grow on the
hills.

⁹He gives animals their food
and the young crows that call.

¹⁰He doesn't delight in a horse's
strength
or take pleasure in a man's
legs.

¹¹The LORD takes pleasure in
those who fear Him,
who look for His grace.

¹²Jerusalem, praise the LORD!
Praise your God, Zion!

146
1 Rv 19 1
2 4 6
6 Acts 4 24
Rv 10 6
14 7
10 Rv 19 1
3 4 6
147
1 Rv 19 1
3 4 6

¹³He made the bars of your gates strong
and blessed your children within you.

¹⁴He brings peace to your border and gives you plenty of the finest wheat.

¹⁵He sends His order throughout the earth.
His word runs very fast.

¹⁶He gives snow like wool and scatters hoarfrost like ashes.

¹⁷He throws down His ice crystals like crumbs—
who can stand before His cold?

¹⁸He sends His word and melts the ice,
makes the wind blow and the waters flow.

¹⁹He speaks His word to Jacob, His laws and decrees to Israel.

²⁰He hasn't done this for any other nation;
He hasn't taught them His decrees.

Praise the LORD!

All Should Praise Him

148 *Praise the LORD!*
Praise the LORD from the heavens,

praise Him from the heights!

²Praise Him, all You His angels,
praise Him all His heavenly army!

³Praise Him, sun and moon,
praise Him, all you shining stars!

⁴Praise Him, You highest heavens, and waters above the sky!

⁵They should all praise the LORD's name—

He ordered and they were created.

⁶He put them in their places forever,
and gave a law that none can break.

⁷Praise the LORD from the earth,
you sea monsters and all ocean depths,

⁸fire and hail, snow and fog,
stormy wind doing what He tells you,

⁹mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars,

¹⁰wild animals and all that are tame,
crawling things and winged birds,

¹¹kings of the world and all peoples,
officials and all judges in the world.

¹²young men and also girls, old men and boys.

¹³They should all praise the LORD's name because it alone is exalted.

His glory is above the earth and heaven.

¹⁴and He has raised a horn for His people,
something praise-worthy for those devoted to Him,
for the sons of Israel, the people who are close to Him.

Praise the LORD!

Praise—and Punish

149 *Praise the LORD!*
Sing to the LORD a new song,

praising Him in the congregation of His devoted ones.

²Israel should be happy in Him who made them,
and the people of Zion delight in their King.

15 Acts 10:36,
13:26
18 Acts 10:36,
13:26
20 Rv 19:1
3, 4, 5
148
1 Rv 19:1
3, 4, 5
7 Rv 19:1
3, 4, 5
14 Rv 19:1
3, 4, 5
149
1 Rv 19:1
3, 4, 5,
5:9, 14:3

²They should praise His name
 with dancing
 and play on tambourine and
 lyre to Him.
 ³The LORD delights in His
 people;
 He glorifies the humble with
 victory.
 ⁴His devoted ones should rejoice
 in this honor
 and shout happily on their
 beds.
 ⁵High praise to God should be in
 their throats—
 and two-edged swords in their
 hands
 ⁶to take vengeance on the
 nations
 and correct the peoples,
 ⁷to bind their kings with chains
 and their leaders with iron
 fetters,
 ⁸to punish them as it is written.
 This is an honor which belongs
 to all His devoted ones.
Praise the LORD!

9 Rv 19:1.
 3, 4, 6
 150
 1 Rv 19:1.
 3, 4, 6
 6 Rv 19:1.
 3, 4, 6

With Musical Instruments

150 *Praise the LORD!*
 Praise God in His holy
 place!
 Praise Him for the sky spread
 out by His power,
 ²praise Him for His mighty acts,
 praise Him according to His
 great majesty!
 ³Praise Him with a blast of a
 ram's horn,
 praise Him with lutes and lyres.
 ⁴praise Him with tambourines
 and dancing,
 praise Him with string instru-
 ments and flutes,
 ⁵praise Him with loud cymbals,
 praise Him with crashing
 cymbals!
 ⁶Everything that breathes should
praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD!

THE PROVERBS

L The Proverbs of Solomon, David's son, king of Israel:
'to give people wisdom and discipline
to understand intelligent speech
and to learn the discipline of understanding,
to be righteous, just and fair.
They should make the simple shrewd
and give young people knowledge and skill.
A wise person will listen and add to his learning;
an intelligent person will learn how to lead
and help others understand proverbs and puzzling statements,
the teachings of wise men and difficult sayings.
Fearing the LORD is the best way to know anything,
but fools despise wisdom and training.

⁹My son, listen to your father's criticism.
and don't neglect your mother's teaching
¹⁰'because they are a beautiful garland on your head
and an ornament around your neck.

Don't Be Enticed

⁹My son, if sinners tempt you don't be willing to sin;
¹¹if they say, "Come with us, we'll set an ambush to kill;
we'll hide to get the innocent just for fun.
¹²"Like the grave, we'll swallow them alive,

like those who go down to the pit in good health.

- ¹³We'll get all kinds of valuable possessions
and fill our houses with robbed goods.
¹⁴"Throw in your lot with us.
We'll all have just one purse."
¹⁵My son, don't go with them.
Keep your foot away from their path
¹⁶'because their feet are running to do evil,
and they hurry to shed blood.
¹⁷If the birds see it spread,
the net is spread in vain.
¹⁸These men set an ambush for their own bloody execution;
they go into hiding only to lose their own lives.
¹⁹This is what happens to all who get goods by robbing;
those who have such goods lose their lives.

Wisdom Speaks

- ²⁰Wisdom shouts in the streets.
She is calling in the market places;
²¹she calls at the corners of noisy streets,
and speaks at the entrances of city gates:
²²"How long, you thoughtless people,
will you love to be thoughtless,
and you mockers delight in your mocking,
and fools go on hating knowledge?
²³Turn to me as I correct you,
and I'll pour out my mind for you
and make known to you what I have to say.
²⁴Since I called and you refused to listen,

since I stretched out my hands to you
and nobody paid attention,
²⁸and you ignored all my advice and
didn't want me to correct you,
²⁹I too will laugh at your calamity;
I'll mock when you're struck with
panic,
²⁷when calamity comes on you like a
thunderstorm
and disaster like a whirlwind,
when trouble and anguish come on
you.
²⁸Then they will call me, but I won't
answer.
They'll look for me but not find me
²⁹because they hate knowledge
and would rather not fear the
LORD.
³⁰They don't want my advice
and despise all my correction.
³¹They must eat the fruit of their
ways
and be fed with their own
schemes.
³²By backsliding, thoughtless men
kill themselves,
and by overconfidence, fools de-
stroy themselves.
³³But listen to me and you'll live
securely;
you'll have peace of mind and not
fear disaster."

Listen to Wisdom

2 My son, if you accept what I
say
and keep my instructions close to
you
²and listen to wisdom
and in your mind reach for under-
standing;
³yes, if you will ask for insight
and call for *understanding*,
⁴if you will look for it as if it were
money
and dig for it like *hidden treasure*,

⁵then you will know how to fear the
LORD
and will get to know God,
⁶because the LORD gives wisdom
and from His mouth comes knowl-
edge and understanding.
⁷He has reserved success for up-
right people
and protection for those who live
innocently,
⁸to guard those on the right paths
and watch over the ways of those
He loves.
⁹Then you will understand what is
right and just,
what is fair and leads to a pros-
perous life.
¹⁰Wisdom will come into your heart,
and it will be your pleasure to
know things.
¹¹Intelligence will watch over you,
and insight will guard you,
¹²in order to save you from any evil
way,
from anyone saying deceitful
things.
¹³Such people leave the right paths
and walk along dark roads.
¹⁴They are glad to do wrong
and delight in being evil and per-
verse.
¹⁵Their paths are crooked,
and their ways are twisted.
¹⁶Wisdom will also save you from
the strange woman,
from the foreign woman with her
smooth talk,
¹⁷who leaves the man she married
when she was young
and forgets the covenant with her
God.
¹⁸Her house sinks down to death,
and her ways lead you to the
shades of death.
¹⁹None who have sexual intercourse
with her come back
or ever reach the paths of life.

3-4 c1 23

- ²⁰I want you to walk on the way of good men
and keep on the paths of righteous men.
- ²¹because the righteous will live in the land
and the innocent will stay there.
- ²²But the wicked will be killed off in the land,
and those who are disloyal will be driven out of it.

The Way to Wisdom

- 3** My son, don't forget what I teach you,
and keep my instructions in mind,
²because they will give you a long good life
and you will be happy.
- ³May kindness and truth never leave you.
Fasten them around your neck.
Write them on the tablet of your heart.
- ⁴Then you will see how kind and sympathetic
God and man will be to you.
- ⁵Trust the LORD with all your heart,
and don't depend on your own understanding.
- ⁶Acknowledge Him in everything you do,
and He will make your paths smooth.
- ⁷Don't think you are wise.
Fear the LORD and turn away from evil.
- ⁸Then your body will be healthy,
and your bones will be refreshed.
- ⁹Honor the LORD with some of your goods
and with the best of all you produce.
- ¹⁰Then your barns will be filled with plenty,

and your vats will overflow with the juice of grapes.

- ¹¹My son, don't reject the LORD's training
or get disgusted with His correction,
- ¹²because the LORD corrects the one He loves,
like a father corrects a son he delights in.

Wisdom Is the Best

- ¹³Happy is a man who finds wisdom
a man who gets understanding;
- ¹⁴you get a higher gain with wisdom
than with money;
it's more profitable than fine gold.
- ¹⁵It is more precious than corals,
and nothing you desire can equal it.
- ¹⁶In her right hand she offers a long life
and in her left riches and honor.
- ¹⁷Her ways are pleasant,
and all her paths lead to happiness.
- ¹⁸She is a tree of life for those who hold her,
and she makes happy those who cling to her.
- ¹⁹By wisdom the LORD laid the foundation of the earth,
and by understanding He set up the sky.
- ²⁰By His knowledge the deep waters broke out
and the clouds dropped dew.
- ²¹My son, don't lose sight of these things,
use common sense, and plan carefully.
- ²²They will mean life for you
and be an ornament on your neck.
- ²³Then you will go safely on your way,

³
4 Lk 2:52;
Ro 12:17;
2 Co 8:21
7 Ro 12:16
11:12 Ep 6:4;
Hb 12:5-8;
Rv 3:19

- and you won't stub your foot.
 24When you lie down, you won't be afraid,
 and lying there, your sleep will be sweet.
 25Don't be afraid of anything that could suddenly terrify you
 or of the destruction of the wicked when it comes.
 26because you trust the LORD
 and He will keep your foot from getting caught.

Be Fair

- 27Don't keep back anything good from those who have a right to it when you're able to do it.
 28When you have it with you, don't tell your neighbor,
 "Go, and come back; tomorrow I'll give it to you."
 29Don't plan to do wrong to your neighbor while he's sitting there with you, suspecting nothing.
 30Don't quarrel with a man without a reason,
 when he's done you no harm.
 31Don't envy a criminal
 or wish you had any of his ways.
 32because the LORD is disgusted with anyone doing wrong
 but is a close friend of those who are right.
 33The LORD's curse is on a wicked person's house,
 but He blesses the home of the righteous.
 34He mocks those who mock
 but is gracious to the humble.
 35Wise people will be honored,
 but fools will bear disgrace.

Get Wisdom

4 Listen, my sons, to a father's instruction;
 pay attention to get understanding.

25 1 Pr 3:6
 34 Jb 4:6,
 1 Pr 5:5

- 27The learning I give you is good,
 so don't give up anything I teach you.
 28Once I was a boy with my father,
 a tender and only child around my mother.
 29He used to teach me by telling me:
 "With your heart cling to what I say.
 Keep my instructions and you will live."
 30Get wisdom, get understanding,
 Don't forget what I tell you or turn away from it.
 31Don't leave wisdom, and she'll watch over you.
 Love her, and she'll protect you.
 32The most important thing to get is wisdom.
 Purchase understanding with all you have.
 33Cherish her and she'll raise you up.
 Hug her and she'll honor you,
 34give you a lovely wreath for your head
 and hand you a beautiful crown."
 35Listen, my son, accept what I say
 and you'll live many years.
 36I have taught you wisdom's way
 and led you in the right paths.
 37When you walk, your steps will not be hindered;
 even if you run, you won't fall.
 38Cling to discipline and don't let it go;
 keep it because it means your life.
 39Don't go in the way of the wicked
 or walk in the path of evil people.
 40Keep away from it, don't walk near it,
 turn away from it, and pass on.
 For they can't sleep unless they do wrong;
 41they're robbed of their sleep unless they bring people down.
 42They eat food gotten by doing wrong

- and drink wine taken by violence.
 18But the path of the righteous is like the morning light that gets brighter till it has reached the brightest of the day.
 19The way of the wicked is completely dark, so they don't know what they stumble over.
- 20My son, pay attention to what I tell you, and listen to what I say.
 21Don't let these things get out of your sight, but keep them in the center of your heart,
 22because they are life to those who find them and health to their whole bodies.
 23More than anything else watch your heart, because from it flows your life.
 24Put away from you a mouth that says crooked things; put far away from you lips that deceive.
 25Let your eyes look forward, your gaze be straight ahead.
 26Walk a straight path, and all your ways will be sure.
 27Don't turn right or left, and walk away from evil.
- Love, Impure and Pure*
- 5** My son, pay attention to my wisdom listen to the understanding I give you,
 1that you may conduct yourself wisely and talk intelligently.
- 2The lips of an adulteress woman drip with honey, and her mouth is smoother than oil,
 3but in the end she's bitter as a poisonous plant
- and sharp as a double-edged sword.
 4Her feet go down to death; her steps go straight to hell.
 5She doesn't take into account the path of life; she doesn't know where her paths wander.
- 6Now, my son, listen to me, don't turn away from what I tell you.
 7Keep far away from her, and don't go near the door of her house.
 8Or you will give your honor to others and your dignity to some cruel person.
 9Aliens will benefit from your strength, and you will have to work in a stranger's home.
 10Then you will moan when your end comes, when your body and flesh are consumed,
 11and you say, "How I hated discipline and in my heart scorned correction.
 12I didn't listen to what my teachers taught me or hear what my instructors said.
 13I had almost reached total ruin in the assembly and the congregation."
- 14Drink water from your own cistern, water flowing from your own well.
 15Why should the water from your spring flow outside, like streams of water out on the streets?
 16Keep them for yourself alone, and don't share them with strangers.

- ¹⁴Let your own fountain be blessed;
have pleasure with the girl you
married when you were young—
¹⁵a doe to be loved and a lovely wild
goat.
Always let her breasts satisfy you,
always be intoxicated with her
love.
- ²⁰Why should you, my son, fall for an
adulterous woman
and hug a stranger's bosom?
²¹The LORD's eyes see the road
every person takes;
He observes all his paths.
- ²²A wicked person is trapped by his
wrongs
and caught in the ropes of his sin.
²³He dies because he had no dis-
cipline
and by all his foolish lust he's lost.

The Rash Pledge

- 6** My son, if you guarantee a
loan for a neighbor
or pledge yourself by a handshake
with a foreigner,
²you are trapped by what you say,
caught by your promise.
- ³Now do this, my son, and free
yourself
because you have put yourself into
your neighbor's hands.
Go, humble yourself; pester your
neighbor.
- ⁴Don't give your eyes any sleep or
your eyelids any slumber.
- ⁵Free yourself like a gazelle from
what holds you
and like a bird from the bird-
catcher.

Sloth

- ⁶Go to the ant you lazy one.
Watch her ways and get wise.
- ⁷She had no judge, overseer, or
governor.
- ⁸In summer she prepares her
nourishment,

in the harvest she gathers her
food.

- ⁹How long are you going to lie there,
you lazy one?
When are you going to get up from
your sleep?
- ¹⁰"Just a little sleep, a little more
slumber,
a little more folding the hands to
rest"—
- ¹¹So your poverty will come like a
vagabond
and your need like a beggar.

The Villain

- ¹²A worthless person and a villain is
a man who is dishonest in
speech.
- ¹³He winks his eyes, shuffles his
feet, points his fingers.
- ¹⁴With a devious mind he is always
scheming and spreading dis-
cord.
- ¹⁵That is why disaster will come on
him suddenly;
in a moment he will be crushed
beyond recovery.

Seven Vices

- ¹⁶Six things the LORD hates, and
seven He abhors:
- ¹⁷Proud-looking eyes, a lying tongue,
hands that kill innocent people,
¹⁸a mind making wicked plans,
feet that are quick to do wrong.
- ¹⁹a dishonest witness telling lies,
and the man who stirs up quarrels
between brothers.

Adultery Leads to Trouble

- ²⁰My son, do what your father
orders,
and don't reject your mother's
teaching.
- ²¹Fasten them forever on your heart:
tie them around your neck.
- ²²When you walk around, they'll
lead you;

when you lie down, they'll watch over you.
 and when you wake up, they'll talk to you

²³because a commandment is a lamp and a teaching is a light,
 and the rules of discipline are the path of life.

²⁴keeping you from a bad woman and from the smooth tongue of a strange woman.

²⁵Don't use your mind to lust for her beauty,
 and don't let her make eyes with you.

²⁶A prostitute's price is a loaf of bread,
 but a married woman hunts with a costly appetite.^a

²⁷Can a man take fire into his lap without getting his clothes burned?

²⁸Or can anyone walk on red-hot coals without getting his feet scorched?

²⁹So it is with the man who has sex relations with his neighbor's wife;
 anyone who touches her will not escape punishment.

³⁰They don't despise a thief if he steals to satisfy his appetite when he's hungry.

³¹But when he's caught, he has to pay back seven times
 and give up all the goods in his house.

³²Anyone who commits adultery with a woman doesn't have any sense.
 When he violates her he destroys himself.

³³He will get wounds and dishonor,
 and his disgrace will not be blotted out

³⁴because jealousy makes a husband furious.
 He will have no mercy when he takes revenge.

³⁵No money you pay him will move him,
 and the biggest bribe will not satisfy him.

The Prostitute

7 My son, keep my word,
 and treasure my instruction.

²Do as I order you and live;
 guard my teachings like the pupil of your eye.

³Tie them on your fingers,
 write them on the tablet of your heart.

⁴Tell wisdom, "You are my sister,"
 and call understanding your relative—

⁵so they will keep you from the adulterous woman,
 from the strange female with her smooth talk.

⁶At a window of my house I looked through my lattice.

⁷Looking at the silly fellows, I saw among them a lad without much sense.

⁸He was walking along a street near her corner and approaching her house.

⁹In the twilight, in the evening of the day, in darkness of the night—

¹⁰a woman came to meet him,
 dressed as a prostitute,
 with secret plans in mind.

¹¹lusty and rebellious—her feet won't stay home;

¹²one moment she's on the street and the next she's in the square
 waiting at every corner to catch somebody.

^aA married woman committing adultery with a man brought on him the death penalty (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22).

- ¹³She grabs him and kisses him,
puts on a bold face, and tells him,
¹⁴“I have some sacrificial meat; to-
day I paid my vows.
¹⁵That’s why I came out to meet you,
to look for you till I found you.
¹⁶I have spread blankets on my bed,
covers of colored yarn from
Egypt.
¹⁷I have sprinkled my bed with
myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.
¹⁸Come, let us have our fill of love,
till morning let’s enjoy making
love.
¹⁹My husband isn’t home,
he’s gone on a trip far away.
²⁰He took a bag of money with him.
He won’t come home till the full
moon.”
²¹With all her allurements she
persuades him;
with her smooth lips she misleads
him.
²²Immediately he’s following her—
like an ox going to be butchered,
like a ram hobbling into capti-
vity—^b
²³till an arrow pierces him; like a
bird rushing into a snare,
he doesn’t know it will cost him his
life.
²⁴Now, my son, listen to me,
and pay attention to what I say.
²⁵Don’t let your heart turn to her
ways,
don’t wander off on her paths;
²⁶many are those she throws down
dead,
and those she has killed are
numerous.
²⁷Her house is the way to hell,
which goes down to the inner
chambers of death.

^bThe Heb is obscure

Wisdom’s Call

- 8** Isn’t wisdom calling
and understanding raising her
voice?
²She takes her stand at the ascent
to the citadel
at a place where paths meet.
³Beside the gates to the city, where
people enter the doors,
she’s calling loud:
“I’m calling you, O men
and talking to you, O human be-
ings.
⁵You silly people, learn how to be
shrewd;
you fools, become intelligent.
⁶Listen because I tell you important
things;
my lips say what is right.
⁷My mouth expresses the truth,
and my lips abhor evil.
⁸Everything I say is right,
and there’s nothing perverse or
crooked in it.
⁹All of it is correct to an intelligent
person
and right for one who’s getting
knowledge.
¹⁰Take my instruction instead of
money,
and knowledge rather than the
best gold,
¹¹because wisdom is better than
jewels,
and nothing else you desire can
equal it.
¹²I, wisdom, have lived with
shrewdness
and have discovered knowledge
and skill.
¹³Fear the LORD and you’ll hate evil.
I hate conceit and pride,
wicked behavior and perverse
speech.

¹⁴I plan wisely.
I am intelligent and I have strength.

¹⁵By me kings have dominion
and rulers decide what is right.

¹⁶By me princes and leaders rule,
and all who govern the earth.

¹⁷I love those who love me;
look for me eagerly and you'll find me.

¹⁸I have riches and honor,
enduring goods with righteousness.

¹⁹What I produce is better than gold,
fine gold;
my product is better than the best silver.

²⁰I walk in the way of righteousness
and in the paths of justice.

²¹giving integrity to those who love me,
and filling their storerooms.

God's Son

²²*The LORD became My Father at
the beginning of His way,
long ago before any of his works.*

²³*I was set up from everlasting,
from the first, before the earth
was.*

²⁴Before there was any ocean, I was born,
before there were springs, or
sources of water.

²⁵Before the mountains were settled
in their places
and before the hills—I was born.

²⁶When He hadn't yet made land or
gravel
or the mass of soil in the world,

²⁷when He set up the heavens, I was there.

When He marked the horizon on
the surface of the ocean,

²⁸when He made firm the skies
above,
and made the mighty fountains of
the ocean.

²⁹when He set limits for the sea
and wouldn't let the water flow
farther than He ordered,

when He set up the foundations of
the earth—

³⁰then I was beside Him as a master
workman.

From day to day I was delighted,
always happy before Him,

³¹rejoicing in His inhabited world,
and delighted with human beings.

³²And now, my son, listen to me!
Blessed are those who keep my
ways.

³³Listen to instruction and don't
reject wisdom.

³⁴Happy is anyone who listens to me,
watching daily at my gates,
waiting by my doorposts.

³⁵The person who finds me finds life,
and the LORD will be delighted
with him.

³⁶But anyone who wrongs me hurts
himself.
All who hate me love death.

Wise or Foolish?

9 Wisdom has built her house.
She has carved out her seven
pillars.

²She has butchered her meat,
mixed her wine,
and spread her table.

³She has sent away her maids
and calls from the highest spots in
the city:

⁴"If you're untaught, turn in here."
If you don't have understanding,
she tells you,

⁵"Come, eat my bread,
and drink the wine I mix.

⁶Leave ignorant people and begin to
live;
walk the road that leads to under-
standing."

²²⁻²³ Rv 3:14

- ⁷If you correct a scoffer, you get insulted.
If you criticize a wicked person, you get hurt.
- ⁸Don't correct a scoffer or he will hate you;
correct a wise person and he will love you.
- ⁹Give advice to a wise person and he'll be wiser still.
Teach a righteous man and he'll learn the more.
- ¹⁰The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
- ¹¹By me you live longer and add years to your life.
- ¹²If you're wise, your wisdom will help you.
If you scoff, you alone will be held responsible.
- ¹³Folly is like a woman who is lustful, ignorant and shameless.^c
- ¹⁴She sits at the door of her house, or on a seat in the upper parts of the city,
- ¹⁵calling to those who pass by, who are minding their own business:
- ¹⁶"If you're untaught, turn in here." To those who don't have understanding, she says:
- ¹⁷"Stolen waters are sweet, and food eaten in secret is pleasant."
- ¹⁸He doesn't know the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell.

- 10** The Proverbs of Solomon:
A wise son makes his father happy,
but a foolish son makes his mother sad.
- ²Treasures gotten dishonestly don't help anyone,
but righteousness saves a person from death.
- ³The LORD doesn't let a righteous person starve,
but He pushes aside the desire of the wicked.
- ⁴If you do things carelessly, you'll be poor,
but the hands of busy people make them rich.
- ⁵You're a wise son if you gather in summer
but a disgrace if you sleep at harvesting.
- ⁶Blessings are on a righteous person's head,
but the mouth of the wicked uncovers^d violence.
- ⁷The memory of the righteous is blessed,
but the name of the wicked will rot away.
- ⁸If you're wise, you take orders;
but if you talk without thinking, you fall down headlong.
- ⁹Live innocently, and you'll live securely;
but if you're dishonest you'll be found out.
- ¹⁰He who winks with his eyes causes heartache,
and if you talk without thinking you fall down headlong.
- ¹¹The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life,
but the mouth of the wicked uncovers^d violence.
- ¹²Hate stirs up quarrels,
but love covers every wrong.

¹² Ja 5:20.
¹⁰ 1 Pt 4:8

^c"shameless" with Gk: Heb unintelligible ^dor "covers"

- ¹³You will find wisdom on the lips of an intelligent person,
but a rod is for the back of one who has no sense.
- ¹⁴Wise men store up knowledge,
but a fool's mouth threatens ruin.
- ¹⁵A rich man's wealth is his strong city,
but it is poverty that ruins the poor.
- ¹⁶The reward of a righteous man is life;
but the harvest of a wicked man is sin.
- ¹⁷If you practice discipline you're on the way to life,
and if you ignore criticism you'll go wrong.
- ¹⁸Anyone who reveals hatred with lying lips is a fool,
as is the person who spreads slander.
- ¹⁹If you talk a lot, you're bound to make an error,
but if you hold your tongue, you're wise.
- ²⁰What a righteous person says is pure silver,
but what the wicked thinks is worthless.
- ²¹What a righteous person says feeds many,
but fools die for lack of sense.
- ²²It is the LORD's blessing that makes a man rich,
and painful toil can't add anything to it.
- ²³Doing something lewd is fun for a fool,
but wisdom is the intelligent person's fun.
- ²⁴What a wicked person dreads happens to him,
and what righteous persons want is given to them.
- ²⁵When the storm has passed the wicked man vanishes,
but a righteous person has an everlasting foundation.
- ²⁶Like vinegar to the teeth and smoke in the eyes
is a lazy person to him who sends him.
- ²⁷Fear the Lord and you will add to your life,
but the years of the wicked are shortened.
- ²⁸The hope of the righteous flourishes,
but the eager waiting of the wicked comes to nothing.
- ²⁹The LORD's way is a fortress for the innocent,
but ruin to those who do wrong.
- ³⁰A righteous person will never be shaken,
but the wicked will not continue to live in the land.
- ³¹The mouth of a righteous flows with wisdom,
but the perverse tongue will be cut off.
- ³²The lips of the righteous pour out good will,
but the mouth of the wicked is perverse.

11 The LORD hates dishonest scales

- but accurate weights please Him.
- ²Pride comes and then comes shame,
but wisdom is with the humble.
- ³Good people are guided by their innocence,
but the hypocrisy of unfaithful people leads them to ruin.
- ⁴Riches will not help anyone on the day of God's fury,
but righteousness will save a person from death.
- ⁵The righteousness of the innocent makes their road smooth,
but the wicked fall by their wickedness.

- ⁸Good people are saved by their righteousness,
but the unfaithful are trapped by their greed.
- ⁹When a wicked person dies his hope comes to nothing,
and his confidence in strength comes to nothing.
- ¹⁰When a righteous person is rescued from trouble
the wicked man succeeds him in it.
- ¹¹With his talk a godless person tries to ruin his neighbor,
but by knowledge the righteous are rescued.
- ¹²When the righteous prosper a city is glad;
when wicked people perish there's happy shouting.
- ¹³With the blessing of good people a town prospers,
but the talk of the wicked tears it down.
- ¹⁴It is senseless to despise your neighbor,
but it is intelligent to keep one's counsel.
- ¹⁵A person who gossips gives away secrets,
but a trustworthy mind can keep a secret.
- ¹⁶Where there's nobody to lead them an army will fall,
but many advisers can save it.
- ¹⁷A man who guarantees a stranger's loan will get into real trouble,
but if you shun making rash bargains you're safe.
- ¹⁸A gracious woman wins respect,
but ruthless men grasp riches.
- ¹⁹A kind man does himself a favor,
but a trouble maker hurts himself.
- ²⁰A wicked person earns counterfeit wages,
but if you sow righteousness your pay is genuine.
- ²¹The one who upholds righteousness will live,
but anyone who pursues evil will die.
- ²²The LORD hates those who are crooked at heart,
but He is delighted with those whose ways are innocent.
- ²³It is certain, an evil person will not go unpunished,
but the family of the righteous will escape.
- ²⁴A beautiful woman who lacks taste is like a golden ring in a pig's snout.
- ²⁵The desire of the righteous brings about good,
but the hope of the wicked brings about fury.
- ²⁶One man spends freely only to get richer;
another holds back what he should spend only to be in need.
- ²⁷Be generous to others and you'll grow prosperous;
refresh others and you'll be refreshed.
- ²⁸Hold back grain and people will curse you;
sell it and a blessing will be on your head.
- ²⁹If you're eager to do good you'll win good will;
if you look for trouble you'll get it.
- ³⁰If you trust your riches you'll wither,
but the righteous will flourish like green leaves.
- ³¹If you neglect your family you'll inherit the wind;
being a fool you will be a slave of the wise.
- ³²Righteous behavior is a tree of life.
If you take others into your care you're wise.
- ³³If a righteous person is paid back on earth,
how much more a wicked and sinful person!

³¹ 1 Pt 4:18

- 12** If you delight in discipline,
you'll love to learn;
but a stupid person refuses correction.
- ²The LORD delights in a good man
but condemns a malicious schemer.
- ³A man can't stand firm on a wicked basis,
but the root of the righteous cannot be shaken.
- ⁴A good wife is her husband's crown,
but one who brings disgrace is like rot in his bones.
- ⁵The thoughts of the righteous are honest,
but the thoughts of the wicked treacherous.
- ⁶What the wicked say brings about bloodshed,
but what the good say saves people.
- ⁷When the wicked are overthrown and gone,
the house of the righteous will stand.
- ⁸A man is praised according to his intelligence,
but if his mind is perverse, he will be despised.
- ⁹Better to be unimportant and have work
than act important and have nothing to eat.
- ¹⁰A righteous person is concerned about the life of his animals,
but the heart of the wicked is cruel.
- ¹¹If you work your ground, you'll have plenty to eat,
but the stupid chase after illusions.
- ¹²A wicked person delights in setting a trap for his friends,
but the roots of the righteous endure forever.*
- ¹³A bad man is trapped by the wrong things he says,
but a righteous person finds his way out of trouble.
- ¹⁴A man can enjoy good things as a result of his eloquence,
and he will be paid according to what his hands have accomplished.
- ¹⁵A fool considers his own way right,
but a wise man listens to advice.
- ¹⁶When a fool is irritated, he shows it immediately,
but a shrewd man hides the offence.
- ¹⁷A true witness speaks honestly,
but a lying witness utters deceit.
- ¹⁸A man's careless talk stabs like a sword,
but what a wise man says heals.
- ¹⁹The word of truth lasts forever,
but a lying tongue only as long as it takes to wink an eye.
- ²⁰Those who plan evil deceive themselves,
but those who plan for people's welfare are happy.
- ²¹No harm can come to the righteous,
but the lives of the wicked are filled with trouble.
- ²²The LORD hates lips that lie
but is delighted with those that are honest.
- ²³A sensible man doesn't display what he knows,
but the foolish mind proclaims its foolishness.
- ²⁴Diligent hands will gain control,
but a lazy person will be doing slave work.
- ²⁵Anxiety in a person's mind will weigh him down,
but an encouraging word makes him glad.
- ²⁶A righteous person spies out what will harm him,

*Gk; Heb "give"

- but the path of the wicked leads them astray.
- ²⁷A lazy hunter will not take his prey,
but a diligent man will get wealthy.
- ²⁸On the road of righteousness there is life;
it is the path that leads to immortality.
- 13** A wise son is corrected by his father,
but a scoffer doesn't listen to criticism.
- ²A man can eat well as a result of his eloquence,
but the appetite of the faithless feeds on violence.
- ³Watch your mouth and you'll protect your life,
but talk a lot and you'll invite ruin.
- ⁴A lazy man craves food and gets none,
but busy people are well fed.
- ⁵A righteous person hates lying,
but a wicked person behaves shamefully and disgracefully.
- ⁶Righteousness protects the pure in heart,
but it is wickedness that overthrows a sinner.
- ⁷One person pretends to be rich and has nothing;
another pretends to be poor and is very rich.
- ⁸A man with riches may need them to ransom his life,
but a poor man doesn't listen to threats.
- ⁹The light of the righteous shines brightly;
but the lamp of the wicked goes out.
- ¹⁰An empty head causes quarreling by his pride;
but those who take advice are wise.
- ¹¹Get wealth by injustice and it will dwindle away,
but gather it little by little and you'll have plenty.
- ¹²An expectation that drags on and on makes you sick at heart,
but a hope that comes true is a tree of life.
- ¹³If you despise a word of warning you'll pay the penalty for it;
respect an order and you'll be rewarded.
- ¹⁴The teaching of a wise person is a fountain of life;
it turns away the snares of death.
- ¹⁵A fine understanding is gracious;
but the manners of the treacherous are rough.
- ¹⁶Any sensible man will act intelligently;
but a stupid man displays his folly.
- ¹⁷A bad envoy makes trouble,
but a dependable one heals trouble.
- ¹⁸To refuse correction brings poverty and shame;
If you pay attention to criticism you will be honored.
- ¹⁹A desire realized is a pleasant experience;
but fools hate to turn from evil.
- ²⁰Walk with wise men and you'll be wise;
but keep company with fools and you'll suffer for it.
- ²¹Disaster hunts down sinners,
but the righteous are rewarded with good.
- ²²A good man leaves property to his grandchildren;
but a sinner's wealth is stored away for the righteous.
- ²³When people are able to plough, there is much food;
and a person is swept away where there's no justice.
- ²⁴If you fail to use your stick, you hate your son.

But if you love him, you will diligently discipline him.

⁵A good person eats to satisfy his appetite,
but the belly of the wicked is never filled.

14 Every wise woman builds her home.

but a foolish one tears it down with her own hands.

²The man who lives right fears the LORD,

but if you live wrong you'll despise Him.

³Because of a fool's words, a whip is lifted against him,

but the lips of the wise men protect them.

⁴Where there are no cattle, the manger is empty,

but an ox's strength produces a large crop.

⁵A witness you can trust doesn't lie,
but a dishonest witness breathes lies.

⁶A scoffer searches for wisdom without finding it,

but for an intelligent person knowledge comes easily.

⁷Stay away from a fool;
you won't learn anything from his lips.

⁸The wisdom of a shrewd person causes him to behave intelligently,

but the stupidity of fools misleads them.

⁹A fool scorns guilt, but the house of the upright is blessed.

¹⁰The heart knows its own bitterness,

and no one else can share its joy.

¹¹The house of the wicked will be destroyed,

but the tent of good people will prosper.

¹²There is a way a man thinks is right,

but it finally becomes the way of death.

¹³Even while laughing a heart may be aching,

and joy can end in grief.

¹⁴A heart that has turned away will get its fill of its ways,

but a good man will be satisfied with his ways.

¹⁵A simpleton believes everything,
but a shrewd person watches where he's going.

¹⁶A wise person is cautious and turns away from evil,

but a fool is careless and overconfident.

¹⁷Lose your temper and you act foolishly,

and a man plotting evil is hated.

¹⁸Simpletons are gifted with foolishness,

but the shrewd wear knowledge as a crown.

¹⁹Evil people will bow before the good,

and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

²⁰Even his neighbor dislikes a poor man,

but many love a rich man.

²¹If you despise your neighbor you sin,

but if you're kind to him, you'll be blessed.

²²Don't those who plan evil go astray?

But those who plan good are kind and true.

²³In all hard work there's something gained,

but just talking causes poverty.

¹Gk; Heb "among the . . ."

²⁴The crown wise people wear is their wealth;
but the garland fools wear is their folly.

²⁵An honest witness saves lives,
but one who tells lies is a betrayer.

²⁶In fearing the LORD you can have confidence and strength,
and your children will have security.

²⁷The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life
to help us avoid the snares of death.

²⁸In a large population a king has honor,
but without people a ruler is ruined.

²⁹If you have great understanding, you'll be slow to get angry,
but a hot temper is the height of folly.

³⁰A calm mind makes a healthy body,
but jealousy means a rotting of the bones.

³¹If you oppress the poor, you insult his Maker,
but if you're kind to the poor, you honor Him.

³²By his wrongdoing a wicked person is thrust down,
but a righteous person has a refuge even when he's dying.

³³In the heart of an intelligent person wisdom finds a place to rest,
but among fools it is unknown.^g

³⁴Righteousness lifts up a nation,
but sin is the disgrace of people.

³⁵A king is delighted with a servant who acts intelligently,
but he's angry with one who acts shamefully.

15 A kind answer turns away anger,
but harsh words stir it up.

²The tongue of the wise drips with knowledge,
but the mouth of fools pours out nonsense.

³The LORD's eyes are everywhere,
watching the wicked and the good.

⁴A soothing tongue is a tree of life,
but a deceitful tongue breaks the spirit.

⁵A fool scorns his father's correction,
but if you accept criticism you show good sense.

⁶In the righteous man's house is great treasure,
but at the door of the wicked there is trouble.

⁷The lips of the righteous spread knowledge,
but the mind of fools does not.

⁸The LORD hates any sacrifice brought by the wicked,
but delights in the prayer of good people.

⁹The LORD hates the behavior of the wicked,
but loves anyone who pursues righteousness.

¹⁰Anyone who leaves the right path will be severely punished;
anyone who hates criticism will die.

¹¹Sheol and Abaddon^h lie open before the LORD;
how much more the hearts of human beings!

¹²A scorner doesn't like to be corrected;
he stays away from the wise.

¹³A happy mind makes a bright face,
but a sad heart breaks the spirit.

^gGk and other versions; Heb "it becomes known"

^hOr "The grave and destruction . . ."

- ¹⁴The mind of an intelligent person searches for knowledge, but fools feed on nonsense.
- ¹⁵Those who suffer are always miserable, but a cheerful mind is always feasting.
- ¹⁶It is better to possess little with the fear of the LORD than have riches with turmoil.
- ¹⁷A dish of vegetables where there's love is better than fattened beef with hate.
- ¹⁸A hot-head stirs up quarrels, but one who is slow to get angry stops them.
- ¹⁹A lazy man's path is overgrown with thorns, but the road of good people is a highway.
- ²⁰A wise son makes his father happy, but a fool despises his mother.
- ²¹Foolishness is fun to a stupid person, but an intelligent person forges straight ahead.
- ²²Plans go wrong without advice, but with many advisers they succeed.
- ²³A man is delighted to hear an answer from his own mouth; how fine is something said at the right time.
- ²⁴The path of life leads upward for the wise, to turn him from the grave below.
- ²⁵The LORD tears down the house of the proud but firmly fixes the boundary of the widow.
- ²⁶The LORD hates the thoughts of an evil man, but friendly words are pure.
- ²⁷The greedy man brings trouble to his home, but if you refuse bribes you will live.
- ²⁸A righteous person tries to think of an answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out malice.
- ²⁹The LORD is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayer of the righteous.
- ³⁰Shining eyes delight the heart; good news refreshes the body.
- ³¹If you listen to criticism you'll live, and be at home among the wise.
- ³²If you fail to take criticism you despise yourself, but if you listen to correction you gain understanding.
- ³³When you fear the LORD, you are trained in wisdom; humility comes before honor.
- 16** A man may plan what he's going to say, but what he says comes from the LORD.
- ²A man may think all his ways are pure, but the LORD weighs the heart.
- ³Entrust your work to the LORD, and your plans will be fulfilled.
- ⁴The LORD has made everything for its own purpose, and also the wicked for the day of trouble.
- ⁵The LORD hates everyone who is proud; let me assure you he will not escape punishment.
- ⁶By kindness and faithfulness sin is forgiven, and by fearing the LORD we turn away from evil.
- ⁷When the LORD is pleased with anyone's ways, he makes even his enemies become his friends.
- ⁸A few possessions gained honestly

- is better than many gotten by injustice.
- ⁹A man's mind may plan his journey,
but the LORD directs his steps.
- ¹⁰When an oracle is on a king's lips,
he cannot speak wrong in a legal decision.
- ¹¹The balance and scale belong to the LORD;
all the weights in the bag are of His making.
- ¹²Kings hate wrongdoing,
because doing right makes a throne stand secure.
- ¹³Kings delight in honest words,
anyone telling the truth is loved.
- ¹⁴A king's anger comes as a messenger of death,
but a wise man can pacify it.
- ¹⁵A king's shining face means life,
and his favor is like a spring cloud bringing rain.
- ¹⁶How much better it is to get wisdom than gold,
and to gain understanding rather than silver.
- ¹⁷The highway of good people turns away from evil;
if you watch your step, you can preserve your life.
- ¹⁸Pride leads to disaster,
and a proud spirit leads to a fall.
- ¹⁹Better to be humble with the lowly
than share plunder with the proud.
- ²⁰A person who is shrewd about a matter will succeed,
but happy is the man who trusts in the LORD.
- ²¹A wise man is considered intelligent,
but it is charming speech that helps others learn.
- ²²To those who possess understanding, it is a fountain of life,
but fools punish themselves with their foolishness.
- ²³A person with a wise mind talks intelligently,
and what he says helps others learn.
- ²⁴Pleasant words are like dripping honey,
sweet to the spirit and healthy for the body.
- ²⁵There's a way that a man thinks is right,
but it ends up as the way to death.
- ²⁶A laborer's appetite works for him
because his hunger drives him on.
- ²⁷A worthless person concocts trouble,
and on his lips is a searing flame.
- ²⁸A malicious man starts quarrels,
and a slanderer can break up a friendship.
- ²⁹A criminal deceives his neighbor
and leads him on a way that isn't good.
- ³⁰One who winks his eyes is plotting something crooked;
one who bites his lips has finished his evil work.
- ³¹Silver hair is a beautiful crown
when found on a person who has lived a righteous life.
- ³²Being slow to get angry is better than being a fighter,
and controlling your spirit is better than capturing a city.
- ³³A lot is cast into a lap,
but how it will come out is decided by the LORD.

17 A bite of dry bread in peace
is better than a house filled with feasting and quarreling.

²An intelligent slave will rule over a shameless son;
he'll have a share of the property as one of the brothers.

³Like a crucible for silver and a smelter for gold,
the LORD tests the hearts of men.

- ⁴A wrong doer is interested in wicked words;
a liar pays attention to a slanderous tongue.
- ⁵If you mock a poor man, you insult your Maker;
if you're happy to see someone in distress, you will not escape punishment.
- ⁶Grandchildren are the crown of old people,
and parents are the glory of their children.
- ⁷Fine talk doesn't fit a fool;
how much less does lying fit a noble person?
- ⁸A gift looks like a jewel to one who gets it;
no matter how you turn it, it looks good.
- ⁹If you cover a friend's wrong, you seek his goodwill,
but if you repeat the thing, you will break up the friendship.
- ¹⁰Criticism to an intelligent person has more effect than a hundred lashes on a fool.
- ¹¹A wicked man is looking for nothing but trouble,
so a cruel envoy will be sent against him.
- ¹²Better to meet a bear robbed of her young
than a fool involved with his nonsense.
- ¹³The person who pays back evil for good
will always have trouble at home.
- ¹⁴Starting a quarrel is like opening a flood gate;
so quit before the quarrel starts.
- ¹⁵One judges the bad to be good,
another the good to be bad—
the LORD hates both of them.
- ¹⁶Why should a fool have money in his hand to buy wisdom
when he doesn't have a mind to grasp it?
- ¹⁷A friend will always love you,
and a brother is born to share trouble.
- ¹⁸A man without good sense will make a bargain with a hand-shake,
and guarantee a debt in the presence of his neighbor.
- ¹⁹Anyone who loves punishment loves a quarrel;
anyone who builds a high gate invites thieves.
- ²⁰A perverse mind will not find happiness,
and one with a malicious tongue will get into trouble.
- ²¹If you are the parent of a fool,
you'll have grief;
the father of a fool has no joy.
- ²²A happy mind is good medicine,
but a depressed spirit saps one's strength.
- ²³When a wicked person secretly accepts a bribe,
he perverts the ways of justice.
- ²⁴An intelligent person finds wisdom in front of his face,
but a fool's eyes are looking for it all over the earth.
- ²⁵A foolish son irritates his father
and is a bitter grief to his mother.
- ²⁶To punish the innocent is not good,
nor is it right to strike noble people.
- ²⁷If you control your tongue, you're really wise;
if you're cool-tempered, you have good sense.
- ²⁸Even a fool is thought wise if he remains silent,
and considered intelligent if he keeps his lips closed.

18 The unsociable man is out to get what he wants for himself;
he opposes every wise undertaking.

- ²A fool doesn't delight in reasoning but only in expressing what he thinks.
- ³When a wicked person appears, he brings shame, and with contempt there's insult.
- ⁴The words that come from the mouth are like deep water; the fountain of wisdom is a gushing stream.
- ⁵It isn't right to favor the guilty nor to deprive the innocent of justice.
- ⁶By talking, a fool gets into a quarrel, and his mouth calls out for a beating.
- ⁷A fool's mouth ruins him, and his lips trap him.
- ⁸The words of a gossip are swallowed greedily and they go down deeply into a person's being.
- ⁹If you're lazy in your work, you're a brother to him who loves to destroy.
- ¹⁰The LORD's name is a strong tower; a righteous person runs into it and is safe.
- ¹¹A rich man's wealth is his strong city; in his imagination it is like a high tower.
- ¹²Before he's destroyed a man is proud; humility comes before honor.
- ¹³If you answer before you listen, you are stupid and insulting.
- ¹⁴A man's spirit can sustain him in sickness, but who can bear a broken spirit?
- ¹⁵The mind of an intelligent person acquires knowledge, and if you're wise, your ears keep listening for knowledge.
- ¹⁶Giving a gift provides access for a person and brings him before great men.
- ¹⁷The first to state his case seems right, until another comes and examines him.
- ¹⁸Settle a quarrel by casting lots; keep strong opponents apart.
- ¹⁹It is harder to win a wronged brother than to take a strong city; a contentious man is like the locked gate of a castle.
- ²⁰What a man says can provide food to fill his belly; the fruit of his lips can provide him a living.
- ²¹The tongue has power over death and life, and those who love to talk will have to eat what they say.
- ²²If you have found a wife, you've found something good, and the LORD will be pleased with you.
- ²³A poor person must beg, but a rich man gives harsh answers.
- ²⁴A man and his friends can destroy one another, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

19 Better be poor and live innocently than fat and perverse in speech.

²Enthusiasm without knowledge isn't good; a man in a hurry makes mistakes.

³When a man by his own foolishness is a failure, his heart rages against the LORD.

⁴Wealth brings many friends, but a poor person may be separated from his only friend.

⁵A lying witness will be punished, and one who utters lies will not escape.

- ⁶Many try to win the kindness of a generous person, and everybody is a friend to one who gives gifts.
- ⁷All of a poor man's brothers shun him; even more do his friends keep their distance from him; when he goes after them and calls to them, they are gone.
- ⁸A person who develops the mind loves only himself; one who fosters understanding finds what is best.
- ⁹A lying witness will be punished, and one who utters lies will perish.
- ¹⁰It isn't fitting that a fool should have luxury; how much less that a slave should rule over princes.
- ¹¹It is intelligent to control your anger and beautiful to forgive a wrong.
- ¹²A king's anger is like a lion's roar, but his being pleased is like dew on the grass.
- ¹³A foolish son ruins his father, and a nagging wife is like water dripping continually.
- ¹⁴A home and wealth are inherited from our fathers, but a sensible wife comes from the LORD.
- ¹⁵Laziness puts you into a deep sleep, and an idle person will go hungry.
- ¹⁶He who keeps the commandment preserves his life, but he who despises the LORD's authority will die.
- ¹⁷When you're kind to the poor, you lend to the LORD, and He'll pay you back for what you do.
- ¹⁸Discipline your son while there's hope, and don't indulge him to his own destruction.
- ¹⁹A person who gets really angry will pay a price for it; if you rescue him you will have to do it again.
- ²⁰Listen to advice and take criticism if you want to be wise the rest of your life.
- ²¹A man has many plans in his mind, but the LORD's plan will stand firm.
- ²²It is attractive to be kind; and better to be poor than a liar.
- ²³Fearing the LORD leads to life; such a person will rest satisfied without suffering harm.
- ²⁴A lazy person buries his hand in a dish and won't even bring it back to his mouth.
- ²⁵Strike a scorner and that simple person may learn a lesson; correct an intelligent person and he will get more intelligent.
- ²⁶A son who brings insult and shame assaults his father and drives away his mother.
- ²⁷Stop, my son, and listen to criticism, before you turn your back on words of knowledge.
- ²⁸A worthless witness mocks at justice, and the mouth of the wicked gulps down wrong.
- ²⁹The rod is ready for scorners, and blows for the backs of fools.
- 20** Wine makes people scoff, and liquor makes them noisy; anyone who staggers with it isn't wise.
- ²A king's terror is like the roar of a lion; anyone who makes him angry puts his life in danger.
- ³A man is honorable when he stays away from a quarrel;

- any fool can start a fight.
- ⁴A lazy person will not plow in the fall;
he will look for something in the harvest and find nothing.
- ⁵The motive in a man's mind is like deep water,
but an understanding person will draw it out.
- ⁶Many a man will profess to be kind,
but where can you find someone you can trust?
- ⁷If you live right and you're honest,
your children after you will be blessed.
- ⁸When a king sits on his throne to judge
he sifts out every evil with his eyes.
- ⁹Who can say, "I have made my heart pure;
I am cleansed from my sin"?
- ¹⁰A double standard of weights and measures—
the LORD hates them both.
- ¹¹Even a child shows what he is by what he does,
whether his work is pure and right.
- ¹²A hearing ear and a seeing eye—
the LORD made both of them.
- ¹³Don't love sleep or you'll be poor;
keep your eyes open and you'll have plenty to eat.
- ¹⁴"Bad! Bad!" says the buyer,
then as he goes away, he brags about his purchase.
- ¹⁵There is gold and plenty of coral,
but what a precious thing the lips of the wise are!
- ¹⁶Take the garment of one who guarantees a foreigner's debt,
and hold the man responsible who makes a pledge in behalf of a stranger.
- ¹⁷Food gotten dishonestly tastes good,
but afterwards your mouth will be filled with grit.
- ¹⁸Advice brings plans to realization;
with shrewd guidance one carries on a war.
- ¹⁹A gossip goes around and tells secrets;
don't have anything to do with a person whose mouth is always open.
- ²⁰If anyone curses his father and his mother,
his light will go out in total darkness.
- ²¹If you begin by amassing property in a hurry,
in the end it will not be blessed.
- ²²Don't think you can pay back evil for evil;
trust the LORD and He will save you.
- ²³The LORD hates unequal weights,
and a dishonest scale is wicked.
- ²⁴The LORD is the One who directs a man's steps;
how else can a man understand which way to go?
- ²⁵It is dangerous to say, "This is a holy gift"
and then have second thoughts after vows have been made.
- ²⁶A wise king scatters the wicked and drives the wheel over them.
- ²⁷A man's spirit is the LORD's lamp searching his whole inner being.
- ²⁸Mercy and truth protect a king,
and by kindness he strengthens his throne.
- ²⁹Young men feel proud of their strength,
but silver hair is the beauty of old people.
- ³⁰Blows and wounds cleanse away wickedness,
and a beating reaches the soul.

21 The LORD holds in His hands the king's mind; like canals of water, He diverts it any way He wants.

²A man thinks all his ways are right,

but the LORD weighs hearts.

³Doing what is right and fair is more pleasing to the LORD than sacrifice.

⁴A conceited look, a proud mind—the hallmark of the wicked is sin.

⁵The planning of an industrious man surely leads to plenty, but if you try to get it quick, you only get poor.

⁶Getting riches by lying is a fleeting vapor; such people are looking for death.

⁷The plundering done by the wicked will sweep them away because they refuse to do what is right.

⁸The way of a liarⁱ is crooked, but a pure man does what is right.

⁹Better live on the corner of a roof than share a home with a quarreling woman.

¹⁰The mind of a wicked person wants to do wrong and has no compassion on his fellow man.

¹¹When a scoffer is punished, a simple person gets wiser, and when a wise person is instructed, he gains knowledge.

¹²The Righteous One considers the thoughts of the wicked; He overthrows the wicked and ruins them.

¹³If you shut your ears to the crying of the poor, you too will call and get no answer.

¹⁴A secret gift calms anger, and a present slipped in the bosom calms great fury.

¹⁵The practice of justice delights the innocent but terrifies those who do wrong.

¹⁶Anyone who wanders off from the way of understanding will arrive at the assembly of the dead.

¹⁷If you love pleasure, you will be poor; if you love wine and oil, you will not get rich.

¹⁸The wicked will be made a ransom instead of the righteous, and the treacherous man will take the place of the good man.

¹⁹Better to live in a desert than with a quarreling and nagging woman.

²⁰There's costly treasure and oil in the home of the wise; but a foolish man devours it.

²¹If you eagerly seek to be righteous and kind, you will find life and honor.

²²A wise man can attack a city of warriors and push down the strong defenses they trust in.

²³Guard your mouth and your tongue, and you'll keep out of trouble.

²⁴A proud and conceited person is called a scoffer; there is arrogance and conceit in what he does.

²⁵The wants of a lazy person kill him because his hands refuse to work.

²⁶He is always feeling greedy; but a righteous person gives and doesn't hold back.

²⁷The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination especially if they bring it with some evil intent.

²⁸A lying witness will perish.

ⁱHeb obscure

- but a man who listens to advice
may speak.
- ²⁹A wicked person puts on a bold
face,
but a good person is sure of his
way.
- ³⁰No wisdom, no intelligence, and no
planning
can stand up against the LORD.
- ³¹Horses may be made ready for the
day of battle, but the victory be-
longs to the LORD.

22 A good name is more desir-
able than great wealth;
to be gracious is better than silver
or gold.

- ²A rich man and poor man meet—
the LORD made them both.
- ³A shrewd person foresees trouble
and avoids it,
but thoughtless people go ahead
and suffer for it.
- ⁴Humility and fearing the LORD
are rewarded with riches, honor,
and life.
- ⁵A crooked person has thorns and
snares ahead of him;
to protect yourself, keep far away
from them.
- ⁶Train a child in the way he should
go,
and even when he's old he will not
leave it.
- ⁷A rich person rules over poor
people,
and if you borrow you're a slave of
him who lends.
- ⁸If you sow injustice, you reap
disaster;
the rod of your own anger will do
you in.
- ⁹If you have a kindly eye, you'll be
blessed
because you share your food with
the poor.

- ¹⁰Drive out a scorner, and quarrel-
ing will leave;
disputing and abusing each other
will cease.
- ¹¹The LORDⁱ loves a man with a
pure heart.
If you talk with charm you'll have a
king as your friend.
- ¹²The LORD's eyes are watching
over knowledge, but He over-
turns those who talk disloyally.
- ¹³A lazy person says, "There's a lion
outside.
I'll be killed on the streets."
- ¹⁴The mouth of adulterous women
is a deep pit;
anyone with whom the LORD is
angry will fall into it.
- ¹⁵Foolishness is deeply ingrained in
a boy's mind;
a rod to chastise him will rid him of
it.
- ¹⁶One man oppresses the poor and
makes himself rich;
another gives to the rich and
makes himself poor.

Sayings of the Wise Men

- ¹⁷Listen and hear what wise men
say;
set your mind on the knowledge I
give you.
- ¹⁸It's pleasant if you keep it within
you
and have it firmly settled on your
lips.
- ¹⁹I'm telling you this today, yes you,
so that you will trust the LORD.
- ²⁰Didn't I write you formerly with
advice and knowledge,
- ²¹to teach you the very words of
truth,
so you can give a true report to him
who sent you?

ⁱWith Gk: Heb omits "The LORD"

²²Don't rob the weak because he's helpless
or tramp on the rights of the needy
at the gate.

²³because the LORD will defend them
and will rob the life of those who rob them.

²⁴Don't be a friend of one who has a temper,
and don't accompany a hothead.

²⁵or you will learn his ways
and get yourself into a trap.

²⁶Don't be among those who make pledges for others,
among those who guarantee other people's debts.

²⁷If you haven't got anything to pay it with,
why should your bed be taken from under you.

²⁸Don't push back the ancient boundary line
your ancestors set up.

²⁹You see a man who is efficient in his work;
he will serve kings;
he will not serve unknown people.

23 When you sit and eat with a ruler,
pay close attention to what is set before you.

¹If you're a big eater, put a knife at your throat.

²Don't go on craving his delicacies.
This is a food that deceives you.

³Don't wear yourself out to get rich.
Be smart enough to stop.

⁴Won't you only catch a glimpse of it before it is gone?
Wealth makes wings for itself,
like an eagle flying away into the sky.

⁵Don't eat the food of anyone who is stingy
or crave his delicacies,
⁶because he is like one who makes

provision for his own appetite.
"Eat and drink," he tells you,
but his heart isn't with you.

⁷You will vomit up the morsel you've eaten
and spoil your pleasant talk.

⁸Don't talk to a fool
because he will despise the wise things you say.

⁹Don't move back an ancient boundary line,
or trespass into the fields of orphans.

¹⁰because their Redeemer is strong;
He will take up their cause against you.

¹¹Allow your mind to be trained
and listen to intelligent words.

¹²Don't withhold discipline from a boy.
If you punish him with a stick he won't die.

¹³Take a stick to him yourself
and save him from the grave.

¹⁴My son, if you have a wise mind,
my mind will rejoice.

¹⁵My heart will be delighted when you say what is right.

¹⁶Don't let your mind envy sinners,
but always fear the LORD.

¹⁷Surely there's a future,
and your hope will not be disappointed.

¹⁸Listen, my son, and be wise,
and keep your mind going in the right direction.

¹⁹Don't keep company with those who drink too much wine
or eat too much meat for pleasure.

²⁰because a drunkard and a glutton will get poor,
and being in a stupor will dress you in rags.

²¹Listen to your father—you are his son,
and don't despise your mother when she's old.

²²Buy truth and don't sell it;

- acquire wisdom, training, and understanding.
- ²⁴A righteous man's father can surely rejoice;
one who has a wise son will take delight in him.
- ²⁵May your father be happy,
and the mother whose child you are be glad.
- ²⁶My son, give me your heart;
may your eyes take delight in my ways.
- ²⁷A prostitute is a deep ditch,
and an immoral woman a narrow well.
- ²⁸She's like a robber, lying in ambush;
she makes more and more men unfaithful.
- ²⁹Who has woe? Who has misery?
Who has quarrels and who is groaning?
Who gets wounded without a reason?
Whose eyesight is blurred?
- ³⁰Those who linger over their wine;
those who keep coming to taste mixed wine.
- ³¹Don't look at wine when it is red,
when it sparkles in the cup and goes down smoothly.
- ³²Finally it bites like a snake
and stings like an adder.
- ³³Your eyes will see strange sights,
and your mind will say confused things.
- ³⁴You will be like one lying down in
the middle of the sea
or lying down on top of a mast:
- ³⁵"They strike me, but I don't feel any pain.
They beat me, and I don't know it.
As soon as I wake up
I'm going to look for another drink."

- 24** Don't envy evil men or wish you were with them,
²because they're busy planning crime,
and what they say brings misery to others.
- ³Wisdom builds a house,
and understanding establishes it;
⁴knowledge fills the rooms with everything precious and pleasant.
- ⁵A wise man is better than a strong man,
an intelligent man superior to one who has physical strength.
- ⁶With the right strategy you can fight a war,
and plenty of advisers mean victory.
- ⁷Wisdom is beyond a fool;
he can't open his mouth at the gate.
- ⁸Anyone who plans to do wrong becomes known as a schemer.
⁹The purpose of a fool is sin.
A scoffer gets hated by everyone.
- ¹⁰If you faint when trouble comes,
you have too little strength.
- ¹¹Rescue the captives from death,
and spare those who are staggering from slaughter.
- ¹²If you say, "Look, this isn't our business,"
won't He who weighs hearts consider it?
And He who guards your life—
won't He know it,
and won't He pay back everyone according to what he does?
- ¹³Eat honey, my son, because it is good;
honey that flows from the comb tastes sweet.
- ¹⁴And realize that is what wisdom is to your soul.
If you have found it, you have a future,

23
31 Eph 5:18
24
12 Mt 16:27;
Ro 2:6;
2 Tim 4:14;
Rv 2:23;
20:12;
22:12

and your hope will not be disappointed.

¹⁵O wicked man, don't lie in ambush at the home of the righteous; don't rob his barn.

¹⁶A righteous person may fall seven times and get up again; but when wicked people fall, it is disaster.

¹⁷Don't be happy when your enemies fall, and don't feel glad when they go down.

¹⁸Or the LORD may see you and not like it, and turn His anger away from the wicked.

¹⁹Don't fret over evildoers or envy wicked people,

²⁰because an evil man has no future, and the lamp of the wicked will go out.

²¹Fear the LORD, my son, and the king; don't mix with those who insist on change.

²²because disaster will come on them suddenly, and who knows what misery both may bring on them.

²³These are also the sayings of the wise men:
It isn't good to show partiality in court.

²⁴If anyone says to the guilty, "You are innocent," people will curse him and nations will abhor him.

²⁵Things will go well for those who convict the guilty and they will have prosperity.

²⁶Giving an honest answer is like a kiss on the lips.

²⁷Give attention to your work outside and make provision for yourself in the field, and after that build your house.

²⁸Don't testify against your neighbor without a reason, nor deceive anyone with your lips.

²⁹Don't say, "I'll do to him as he did to me; I'll pay back a man according to what he did to me."

³⁰I passed by the field of a lazy man and the vineyard of a dullard.

³¹It was all overgrown with thorns, and the ground was covered with weeds, and its stone wall was torn down.

³²When I saw this, I considered it well; I saw it and learned my lesson.

³³"A little more sleep, a little more slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest" —

³⁴then your poverty will come like a vagabond, and your lack like that of a volunteer soldier.

25 These also are Solomon's proverbs which were copied by the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah:

¹It is God's glory to hide a thing, but the glory of kings to search it out.

²Like the high heaven and the deep earth, the mind of kings can't be searched.

³Take dross away from the silver and the vessel will shine for the smith.

⁴Take away a wicked man from serving a king, and his throne will be made secure by justice.

⁵Don't glorify yourself before a king or stand in the place that belongs to the nobles.

⁶It is better to be told, "Come up here,"

²¹ 1 Pt 2:17
²⁵
⁷ Lk 14:10

- than to be put down before a prince.
- ⁹Don't be in a hurry to drag into court what you have witnessed, for what will you do in the end if your neighbor disgraces you.
- ¹⁰When you argue your case with your neighbor, don't tell another person's secret,
- ¹¹or, when he hears about it he will denounce you, and you will not be able to undo the slander.
- ¹²A word spoken at the right time is like golden apples in a silver background.
- ¹³Like a gold ring and a necklace of fine gold is a wise criticism to the ear of one who listens.
- ¹⁴Like the coolness of snow on a harvest day is a trustworthy messenger to those who send him; he refreshes his master.
- ¹⁵Like misty clouds and a wind without rain is a man who brags about a gift he doesn't give.
- ¹⁶With patience you can persuade a judge, and kind words can break bones.
- ¹⁷When you find honey, eat only as much as you need; if you get too much you may vomit it.
- ¹⁸Step infrequently into your neighbor's house, or he'll see too much of you and hate you.
- ¹⁹A man who lies in testifying against his neighbor is like a club, a sword, and a sharp arrow.
- ²⁰Trusting a treacherous person when you're in trouble is like having a crumbling tooth and a lame foot.

- ²¹Like taking off a coat in cold weather and like vinegar on soda is the singing of songs to one in a bad mood.
- ²²If your enemy is hungry, give him something to eat. If he's thirsty, give him a drink, because you will put fiery coals on his head, and the LORD will reward you.
- ²³As the north wind produces rain, a whispering tongue brings angry looks.
- ²⁴Better live in a corner of the roof than share a home with a quarreling woman.
- ²⁵Like cold water to one famishing from thirst is good news from far away.
- ²⁶Like a spring trampled by animals and a polluted well is a righteous person who yields to the wicked.
- ²⁷Eating too much honey isn't good, and searching for honor is a burden.
- ²⁸Like a city broken into, like a city without a wall is a man without self-control.

26 Like snow in summer and rain in the harvest, so honor doesn't fit a fool.

- ¹Like a flitting sparrow and a darting swallow, so a curse without a reason doesn't come true.
- ²A whip for a horse, a bridle for a donkey, and a rod for the back of fools.
- ³Don't answer a fool according to his foolishness, or you too will be like him.
- ⁴Answer a fool according to his foolishness, or he will think he's wise.
- ⁵To send a message by a fool

21-22 Ro
12:20

- is to cut off one's own feet and get abused.
- ⁷Like a lame man's legs, hanging useless,
so is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
- ⁸Like tying a stone in a sling,
so is one who gives honor to a fool.
- ⁹Like a thorn going into a drunkard's hand,
so is a proverb in the mouth of fools.
- ¹⁰Many are the wounds of all who pass by
when one hires a fool or a drunkard.
- ¹¹Like a dog going back to his vomit,
so is a fool repeating his foolishness.
- ¹²Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes?
There's more hope for a fool than for him.
- ¹³A lazy person says, "There's a lion on the road;
there's a lion loose in the streets."
²⁶
^{11 2 Pt 227}
- ¹⁴As a door turns in its sockets,
so a lazy man turns on his bed.
- ¹⁵A lazy person buries his hand in the dish,
but it wears him out to bring it back to his mouth.
- ¹⁶A lazy person is wiser in his own eyes
than seven who answer intelligently.
- ¹⁷You may as well pull a dog's ears
as to mix in a quarrel that isn't yours.
- ¹⁸Like a crazy person shooting firebrands and deadly arrows,
¹⁹is a man who cheats his neighbor and says, "I was only joking!"
- ²⁰Without wood a fire goes out,
and without slandering a quarrel dies down.
- ²¹Like fuel for hot coals and wood for a fire,
a quarrelsome man rekindles a dispute.
- ²²The words of a gossip are greedily swallowed
and they go down deeply into a person's being.
- ²³Smooth talk concealing an evil heart
is like pottery covered with glaze.
- ²⁴One filled with hate disguises it with his lips,
but inside he harbors deceit.
- ²⁵When he talks charmingly, don't trust him,
because he has seven abominations in his mind.
- ²⁶His hatred is deceitfully hidden,
but his wickedness will show up in the community.
- ²⁷If you dig a pit, you may fall into it;
if you roll a stone, it may come back on you.
- ²⁸A lying tongue hates its victims,
and a flattering mouth causes ruin.
- 27** Don't brag about tomorrow because you don't know what a day may bring.
- ²Another person should praise you and not your own mouth,
a stranger, and not your own lips.
- ³A stone is heavy and sand weighs much, but a fool's annoyance is heavier than both.
- ⁴Anger is cruel and fury a torrent,
but who can stand before jealousy?
- ⁵Open criticism is better than hidden love.
- ⁶Well meant are the wounds made by a friend,
but an enemy's kisses are too much to bear.
- ⁷When you've had plenty to eat, you despise honey,
but when you're hungry even what is bitter tastes sweet.

- ⁸Like a bird wandering from her nest,
so is a man wandering from his home.
- ⁹Perfume and incense may delight the heart,
but look, the sweetness of a friend is an aromatic forest.
- ¹⁰Don't forsake your friend or your father's friend.
Don't go to your brother's home only when you're in trouble.
A neighbor living nearby is better than a brother far away.
- ¹¹Be wise, my son, and make me glad,
so I can answer anyone who insults me.
- ¹²A shrewd person foresees trouble and avoids it,
but thoughtless people go ahead and suffer for it.
- ¹³Take the garment of one who guarantees a foreigner's debt,
and hold the man responsible who makes a pledge in behalf of a stranger.
- ¹⁴When anyone gets up early in the morning and blesses his friend in a loud voice,
the friend may consider it a curse.
- ¹⁵A constant dripping on a rainy day and a nagging wife are alike.
- ¹⁶The one who can control her can control the wind;
and pick up olive oil with his right hand.
- ¹⁷As iron sharpens iron,
so one man sharpens the wits of another.
- ¹⁸Anyone who takes care of a figtree can eat its fruit,
so anyone who protects his master is honored.
- ¹⁹As you can see your face reflected in water,
so you can see yourself reflected in the heart of another man.
- ²⁰The grave and destruction are never satisfied,
and a man's eyes are never satisfied.
- ²¹Silver is refined in a melting-pot and gold in a furnace,
but flattery is the way a man is tested.
- ²²Crush a fool in a mortar,
into pieces with a pestle,
and even then his nonsense won't leave him.
- ²³Know how your flock is,
and pay good attention to your herds,
- ²⁴for possessions aren't forever,
and a crown certainly isn't for all the ages.
- ²⁵When hay is stored away, tender grass can be seen,
and vegetables are gathered from the hills.
- ²⁶Lambs will provide you with clothes,
and the money you get for he-goats will buy a field.
- ²⁷There will be enough goats' milk to feed you and your family
and it will keep your maids alive.

28 The wicked flee when no-
body chases them,
but the righteous feel safe as a
young lion.

²When a country is in revolt, it has
many rulers,
but only with a man of intelligence
and knowledge will it last long.

³A wicked man oppressing the poor
is like a sweeping rain that leaves
no food.

⁴Those who forsake the law praise
the wicked,
but those who keep the law opposu
them.

⁵Wicked men don't know right from
wrong,
but those who seek the LORD's

- help have discretion.
 6 Better be poor and innocent than rich and dishonest.
 7 An intelligent son does as he is instructed, but a friend of gluttons disgraces his father.
 8 One who gets wealthy by taking interest and making loans will gather it only to benefit him who is kind to the poor.
 9 If anyone refuses to listen to divine instruction, even his prayer is an abomination.
 10 If anyone leads good people astray, he will fall into his own pit, but the innocent will inherit prosperity.
 11 A rich man may think he is wise, but a poor man with understanding can see through him.
 12 When the righteous triumph, everything is fine, but when the wicked rise, people hide.
 13 If you cover your wrong, you will not succeed, but if you confess it and forsake it, you will be treated mercifully.
 14 You will be blessed if you always stand in awe, but if you get stubborn, you will get into trouble.
 15 A wicked man ruling over poor people is like a roaring lion and a prowling bear.
 16 A ruler without understanding is a great oppressor, but those who hate plunder live long.
 17 A man guilty of murder will take refuge in a pit, but nobody should help him.
- 18 If you live honestly, you will be safe, but if you're dishonest, you will fall into a pit.^k
 19 If you work your ground, you'll have plenty to eat; but if you chase after illusions, you'll get plenty of nothing.
 20 A trustworthy man has many blessings, but one who is in a hurry to get rich will not stay innocent.
 21 It's bad to show special favors to anyone; a man will do wrong even for a bite of food.
 22 A greedy person is in a hurry to get rich, not realizing that want is about to overtake him.
 23 Criticize a man, and afterwards he'll be kindlier than if you had flattered him.
 24 Anyone who robs his father and his mother and says, "It isn't wrong," might as well be an anarchist.
 25 A greedy person stirs up trouble, but one who trusts the LORD will prosper.
 26 If you trust your own mind, you're a fool, but if you live wisely, you will survive.
 27 If you give to the poor, you lack nothing, but if you shut your eyes (to their need), you will get many a curse.
 28 When the wicked rise, men hide, but when they perish, the righteous flourish.
- 29** One who is corrected and gets stubborn, will be ruined suddenly and there will be no cure.

^kOr. "fall suddenly"; Heb "in one"

- ²When there are many righteous,
people are happy,
but when a wicked person rules,
people groan.
- ³If you love wisdom, you make your
father happy,
but one who keeps company with
prostitutes wastes his wealth.
- ⁴By justice a king strengthens a
country,
but one who is deceitful tears it
down.
- ⁵A man who flatters his neighbor
spreads a net for his feet.
- ⁶To an evil man sin is a snare,
but a righteous person overcomes
it and is glad.
- ⁷A person who knows what is right
champions the cause of the
weak;
a wicked person has no under-
standing of this.
- ⁸Scoffers put a city in an uproar,
but wise men turn away anger.
- ⁹When a wise person argues with a
fool,
the fool may rage or laugh without
fear.
- ¹⁰Bloodthirsty men hate an innocent
person,
but good people seek to live like
him.¹
- ¹¹A fool expresses all his emotion,
but a wise person holds it back.
- ¹²If a ruler listens to lies,
all his servants will be wicked.
- ¹³A poor man and an oppressor have
this in common—
the LORD gives light to the eyes of
both.
- ¹⁴When a king honestly provides
justice for the poor,
his throne will be secure forever.
- ¹⁵Disciplining a boy with a stick
produces wisdom,
but when he has his own way, he
brings disgrace on his mother.
- ¹⁶Where there are many wicked,
crime increases,
but the righteous will see their
downfall.
- ¹⁷Correct your son, and he will give
you peace of mind
and delight your soul.
- ¹⁸Where there is no divine revela-
tion, a people run wild,
but a people who keep the law are
happy.
- ¹⁹You can't correct a slave with
words,
though he may understand, he
won't respond.
- ²⁰Do you see someone who is quick to
talk?
There is more hope for a fool than
for him.
- ²¹If you pamper your slave from the
time he's a child,
he will be ungrateful.^m
- ²²An angry person starts a fight,
and a hot-head does a lot of wrong.
- ²³A man's pride will bring him low,
but a man with a lowly spirit will
get honor.
- ²⁴Anyone who's partner with a thief
hates himself;
he is put on oath but won't give
evidence.
- ²⁵A man's fear lays a trap for him,
but one who trusts the LORD is
protected.
- ²⁶Many want a ruler to be kind to
them,
but justice comes from the LORD.
- ²⁷Righteous people hate those who
do wrong,
and the wicked hate those who do
right.
- 30** This revelation was spoken
by Agur, Jakeh's son. The
man said:

¹Heb "seek his life" ^mThe word for "ungrateful" is of uncertain meaning.

- I'm strong, O God; I'm strong. O God, and able.
- ²Though I'm only an animal and scarcely a man.
- ³haven't I gotten wisdom and don't I know the Holy One?
- ⁴Who has gone up to heaven and come down?
Who has grabbed the wind in His hand?
Who has wrapped up water in a garment?
Who has set up the boundaries of the earth?
What is His name, or His son's name, since you must know?
- ⁵Everything God said has proved to be true.
He's a Shield to those who come to Him for protection.
- ⁶Don't add anything to what He says or He will correct you, and you will be found a liar.
- ⁷I have asked you for two things.
Don't keep them from me before I die.
- ⁸Keep far away from me bad talk and lies.
Don't give me poverty or riches.
Feed me with the food I need.
- ⁹Or I may feel satisfied and deny You,
saying, "Who is the LORD?"
Or I may get poor and steal,
and profane the name of my God.
- ¹⁰Don't slander a slave to his master,
or he will curse you, and you will have to pay for it.
- ¹¹There is a generation who curse their fathers
and don't bless their mother.
- ¹²There are those who think they are pure
but aren't washed from their filth.
- ¹³There are those who have proud looks
and a haughty appearance.
- ¹⁴There are those whose teeth are like swords
and whose jaws are like knives
to devour the poor from the earth
and the needy from the land.
- ¹⁵The blood-sucker has two daughters—Give and Give.
- There are three things that are never satisfied,
yes, four that never say, "Enough":
- ¹⁶the grave, a barren womb,
a land in need of water,
and a fire that doesn't say, "Enough."
- ¹⁷An eye that mocks a father and scorns a mother
will be picked out by crows in the valley
and eaten by vultures.
- ¹⁸Three things are too wonderful for me
and four things I can't understand:
- ¹⁹How an eagle makes his way through the sky,
how a snake makes his way on a rock,
how a ship makes its way in the middle of the sea,
and how a man makes his way with a virgin.
- ²⁰This is the way of an adulterous woman:
She eats, wipes her mouth,
and says, "I've done nothing wrong."
- ²¹The earth trembles under three things
and can't bear up under four:

- ²²A slave getting to be king,
a fool being filled with food.
- ²³a shunned woman getting married,
and a maid taking the place of her
mistress.
- ²⁴There are four things on earth that
are small,
but they are very wise:
- ²⁵The ants are a species that isn't
strong,
but they prepare their food in sum-
mer.
- ²⁶Rock-badgers aren't a mighty
species,
but they make their home on a cliff.
- ²⁷The locusts have no king,
but all of them march in ranks.
- ²⁸You can take a lizard in your
hands,
and yet he's found in royal
palaces.
- ²⁹There are three things that move
with stately steps,
yes, four that stride with dignity:
- ³⁰A lion, the mightiest among ani-
mals, turning back from no one;
- ³¹a war horse^m or a he-goat,
and a king at the head of his
army.^o
- ³²If you are so foolish as to honor
yourself
or if you scheme evil, you had bet-
ter put your hand on your mouth;
- ³³for just as churning milk produces
curds,
and squeezing a nose produces
blood,
so stirring up anger produces a
fight.

31 The sayings of King Lemuel,
a revelation which his mother
taught him:

^mMeaning obscure. Some read "greyhound," others "a strutting cock"

^oMeaning also obscure

- ²What, O my son? What, O son of
my womb?
What (should I say) son of my
vows?
- ³Don't give your strength to
women
or your power to those who ruin
kings.
- ⁴It is not for kings, O Lemuel,
not for kings to drink wine,
nor for rulers to love liquor.
- ⁵By drinking, they may forget what
is right
and deny justice to all the poor.
- ⁶Give liquor to those who are per-
ishing
and wine to those who feel bitter.
- ⁷When such a person drinks,
he forgets his poverty
and doesn't think of his misery
anymore.
- ⁸Speak out for those who can't
speak,
for the rights of those who are
doomed.
- ⁹Talk up, render fair decisions,
and defend the rights of poor and
needy people.

*The Ideal Wife—An Alfabetic
Poem*

Aleph

- ¹⁰Who can find a good wife?
She is far more precious than
jewels.

Beth

- ¹¹Her husband trusts her,
and he doesn't lack compensation.

Gimel

- ¹²She helps him and doesn't harm
him
as long as she lives.

Daleth

- ¹³She plans to get wool and flax
and works with willing hands.

He

¹⁴She is like a merchant ship,
bringing food from far away.

Waw

¹⁵She gets up when it is still dark
and gives food to her family
and assigns jobs to her maids.

Zain

¹⁶She considers a field and buys it;
with what her hands have pro-
duced she plants a vineyard.

Heth

¹⁷She puts on strength like a gar-
ment
and goes to work with her arms.

Teth

¹⁸She sees she's making a fine profit;
so her lamp burns late at night.

Yod

¹⁹She puts her hands on the distaff
and with them holds a spindle.

Kaph

²⁰She opens her hands to the poor
and stretches them out to the
needy.

Lamed

²¹She doesn't fear for her family
when it snows
because her whole family has
double clothing.

Mem

²²She makes quilts for herself;
her clothes are linen and purple.

Nun

²³Her husband is known at the gates
when he sits with the elders of the
country.

Samek

²⁴She makes linen garments and
sells them;
she delivers sashes to the mer-
chant.

Ain

²⁵She dresses in strength and
nobility;
and she smiles at the future.

Pe

²⁶She speaks with wisdom, and on
her tongue there is kindly in-
struction.

Sade

²⁷She watches well the conduct of
her family
and she doesn't eat the food of
idleness.

Qoph

²⁸Her children stand up and call her
blessed;
her husband too, sings her praises:

Resh

²⁹"Many women have done fine
work,
but you have done better than all
of them."

Shin

³⁰Charm deceives, and beauty van-
ishes,
but a woman who fears the LORD,
she is to be praised.

Tau

³¹Give her credit for what she has
done,
and let her deeds praise her at the
gates.

ECCLESIASTES

1 The words of the preacher, David's son, the king in Jerusalem. ²Vanity of vanities! says the preacher, vanity of vanities! Everything is vanity. ³What does a man get for all the hard work he's doing under the sun?

⁴One generation goes and another comes while the earth stands forever. ⁵The sun comes up and the sun goes down, eager to get back to the place where it comes up again. ⁶The wind blows south and turns north, going around and around, the wind blows and makes its rounds. ⁷All the streams flow into the sea, but the sea is never full. The streams return again to the place from where they have been flowing. ⁸Everything is a bore, more than anyone can tell, more than any eye can see, more than any ear can hear.

⁹What has been will be, and what has been done will be done. There is nothing new under the sun. ¹⁰Is there anything about which you can say, "Look, this is new"? It has been there already long before us. ¹¹Nothing in the past is remembered, and also in the future nothing will be remembered by those who come later.

The Search for Meaning

¹²I, the preacher, have been king of Israel in Jerusalem. ¹³I used my wisdom to study, search and explore everything done under the sun. It's a sorry task God has given human beings to weary themselves with. ¹⁴I have seen everything that is done under the sun. It's all vani-

ty, like trying to catch the wind. ¹⁵You can't straighten out what is twisted, and you can't count what is not there.

¹⁶I said to myself: I have attained more wisdom than anyone who was in charge of Jerusalem before me. My mind has amassed wisdom and knowledge. ¹⁷I've studied to master wisdom as well as madness and foolishness. I'm convinced this also is like trying to catch the wind. ¹⁸If you have a lot of wisdom, you have a lot of irritation, and the more knowledge, the more grief you have.

Pleasure

2 I said to myself I'll try pleasure and enjoy myself. But that also was vanity. ²I said about laughter, it doesn't make any sense, and about pleasure, what does it accomplish? ³I tried to find out what happened when I stimulate my body with wine (my mind being wisely in control); and I also took hold of foolishness till I could see what is best for human beings to do under the sun during the short time of their life.

Wealth

⁴I accomplished some great things. I built houses for myself and planted vineyards for myself. ⁵I made gardens and parks for myself and planted in them every kind of fruit tree. ⁶I made pools to water a park of growing trees. ⁷I bought men and women slaves and others were born in my house. I also owned many cows and sheep, more than any who had been before me in

Jerusalem. ⁸I also gathered for myself silver and gold, the treasures of kings and provinces and trained men and women singers. I enjoyed the pleasures men have with concubines.

⁹So I got to be great and richer than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. I also kept my wisdom. ¹⁰I didn't keep from my eyes anything they wanted or refuse to let my heart have any pleasure since my heart found pleasure in my work. That was what I got for all my work.

¹¹But when I turned to look at everything I made and all the work I did, it was all vanity, like trying to catch the wind, with nothing gained under the sun.

Wisdom

¹²So I turned to look at wisdom madness, and foolishness. What, for instance, can the man do who comes after the king? Only what has already been done. ¹³But I saw that wisdom is better than foolishness as light is better than the dark. ¹⁴A wise man has eyes in his head, but a fool walks in the dark. But I also realized that both come to the same end. ¹⁵I was thinking: The same thing that happens to a fool happens to me; what then is the good of my being wiser? So I concluded this too is vanity. ¹⁶People don't continue to remember a wise man or a fool: in the coming days both will be forgotten. The wise man must die just like the fool!

¹⁷So I hated life. I felt bad about everything accomplished under the sun. Everything is vanity, like trying to catch the wind.

¹⁸And I hated everything I had worked for under the sun. I have to leave it to the man who comes after

me. ¹⁹And who knows if he will be wise or foolish? He will take control of everything under the sun for which I worked and used my skill. This also is vanity.

²⁰Then I started to despair of everything I worked for under the sun. ²¹Here is a man who has worked hard with intelligence, knowledge, and skill only to turn it over to one who didn't work for it and so it belongs to him. This also is vanity and very bad.

²²What does a man get for all his work and striving with which he wearies himself under the sun? ²³All his life is painful, and his work is troublesome. Even at night his mind can't rest. This also is vanity.

²⁴There is nothing better among men than eating, drinking, and finding satisfaction in your work. I also saw that this comes from God's hand. ²⁵Without God, who can eat and enjoy himself? ²⁶To anyone who pleases Him He gives wisdom, knowledge, and pleasure. But to one who lives in sin He gives the job of gathering and collecting wealth only to turn it over to one who pleases God. This also is vanity, like trying to catch the wind.

A Time for Everything

3 There is an appointed time for everything and a right time for everything we want to do under the sun:

- ¹a time to give birth and a time to die,
- a time to plant and a time to tear out what is planted,
- ²a time to kill and a time to heal,
- a time to wreck and a time to build,
- ⁴a time to cry and a time to laugh,
- a time to mourn and a time to dance.

⁹a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,

a time to hug and a time to keep from hugging.

¹⁰a time to search and a time to lose,

a time to keep and a time to throw away.

¹¹a time to tear and a time to sew,

a time to be silent and a time to talk.

¹²a time to love and a time to hate,

a time for war and a time for peace.

¹³What does a worker get for wearing himself out? ¹⁴I have seen the tasks God has given human beings to accomplish.

¹⁵He has made everything beautiful in its time. He also has put a sense of eternity in their hearts, but men can't comprehend what God really does from the beginning to the end. ¹⁶I know there's nothing better for them than to enjoy life and do good. ¹⁷Then too if everyone eats and drinks and sees something good in all his hard work—this is God's gift. ¹⁸I know everything God does is forever. Nothing can be added to it, and nothing can be taken from it. God does this so that people will fear Him. ¹⁹What is now happened before and what will be has already been long ago. God examines things that have vanished.

²⁰Then I saw under the sun—in the place of justice there is wrong, and in the place of righteousness there is wickedness. ²¹I thought God will judge the righteous and the wicked because there is a time for all that is purposed and every work that is accomplished. ²²I thought about the affairs of people, God is going to sift them to show them they are like animals to each other.

²³What happens to people hap-

pens to animals; the same happens to both. One dies like the other. All have the same breath. A man is no better than an animal since all is vanity. ²⁴All go to the same place. All come from the ground, and all go back to the ground. ²⁵Does anyone know if the spirit in human beings goes upward and the spirit of an animal goes down into the ground?

²⁶I saw there is nothing better for a person than to enjoy his work because that is his lot. Who will get him to see what will happen after him?

Justice in Society

4 Again I thought of all the people who are oppressed under the sun; there are the tears of the oppressed with nobody to comfort them. The oppressors have power over them, and there's nobody to comfort them. ²I congratulate the dead who are already dead rather than the living who are still alive. ³But better off than both of them is one who hasn't yet existed and hasn't seen the evil that is done under the sun.

⁴Then I saw that all the hard work and all the skillful effort comes from jealous competition. This too is a vanity and is like chasing the wind. ⁵A fool folds his hands and consumes his own flesh. ⁶but a handful of rest is better than both fists full of hard work and trying to catch the wind.

⁷Then I saw another kind of vanity under the sun. ⁸It's one being alone and nobody else with him, no son or brother, and still there is no end to all the hard work he does. His eyes aren't satisfied with riches—
“For whom am I working so hard and denying myself good things?”

This too is vanity and a bad business.

"Two are better than one because they get a fine reward for their work. "If one falls, the other can help his friend get up. But woe to one who is alone when he falls and has nobody to help him up. "Again, if two lie down together, they are warm, but how can one keep warm? "And suppose somebody overpowers one who is alone, two can oppose him. A triple cord isn't quickly broken.

"A poor and wise boy is better than an old and foolish king who won't take advice anymore. "The boy was born poor and came out of prison to rule in his kingdom. "I saw how all those living and walking under the sun sided with the boy who became successor to the throne. "It was an endless crowd that he was leading. But those who came later weren't happy with him. This too is vanity, like trying to catch the wind.

5 Watch your step when you go to God's temple. It is better to listen than bring the sacrifice of fools who in their ignorance do wrong.

Don't be in a hurry to talk. "Your mind shouldn't be quick to express itself before God because God is in heaven and you're on the earth. That is why you should be brief in what you say. "Dreaming comes from much worry, and foolish talk from many words.

"When you vow to God, don't delay to pay it because he doesn't like fools. Pay what you vow. "Better not vow than vow and not pay it. "Don't let your mouth get you into sin or say before the angel, "It was a mistake." Why should God get

angry with what you say and destroy what you've done?

"Where there are many dreams, there is also much empty talk. But fear God.

"If in a province you see the poor oppressed and robbed of what is just and right, don't be surprised about it, because a high official has one higher watching him, and both have higher ones over them. "They'll claim that the produce of the land is for everybody and the king is to be served by the field.

Love of Money

"If you love money, you won't be satisfied with money and if you love property, you will gain nothing. This too is vanity. "When goods increase there are more people to consume them. What advantage does their owner have except to look at them?

"If you work, sleep is sweet whether you eat little or much, but a rich person's stomach is too full to let him sleep.

"There is a painful evil I've seen under the sun: riches hoarded by their owner only to harm him. "and those riches are lost in a bad venture. Then he has a son with nothing to give him. "As he came from his mother's womb—naked—just as he came he will go back, and nothing he can carry in his hands will he take with him for his hard work. "This also is a painful evil: just as he came so he will go away. What profit was there in wearing himself out for wind and in spending "all his life in frustration, with plenty of grief, sickness, and resentment?

"Now what I have seen to be good, yes, excellent, is to eat and drink and enjoy good things with all

your hard work under the sun because that is your lot in these few days God has given you to live. ¹⁹Yes, every man to whom God gives wealth and riches and enables to eat some of it and to take away his share, and enjoy himself in his hard work—he has God's gift. ²⁰He won't keep thinking how short his life is because God makes him work hard with a happy heart.

6 There is an evil I've seen under the sun, and it lies heavy on man. ¹God gives someone riches, wealth, and honor so that he doesn't lack anything he wants, but God doesn't enable him to enjoy any of it—a stranger enjoys it. This is vanity and a painful evil.

²Suppose a person has a hundred children and lives many years; however many the years may be, if he isn't satisfied with good things and doesn't even get buried, better that such a one, I say, be born dead. ³The stillborn comes in with vanity and goes away in the dark, and darkness hides his name. ⁴and he never sees or knows the sun. This one has rest and not the other.

⁵Even if he lives a thousand years twice over without seeing prosperity—don't all go to the same place?

⁶All a man works for is his mouth, and even then his appetite isn't satisfied.

⁷What advantage does a wise man have over a fool, or what advantage has a poor man who knows how to walk before the living? ⁸It is better to look with the eyes than to give vent to one's appetite. This too is vanity, like trying to catch the wind.

⁹Whatever is was named long ago and its destiny was known. A

human being can't struggle with One mightier than himself.

¹⁰The more words, the more vain they are—how can that help a man? ¹¹Who knows what is good for a man in his life, in the few vain days of his living? He spends them like a shadow. Who will tell a man what comes after him under the sun?

Advice

7 A good name is more pleasant than costly perfume, and the day you die is more pleasant than the day you're born. ²It's better to go to a funeral than to a banquet because that's where everybody ends up, and everyone living should take it to heart. ³Grief is better than laughing because a sad face makes a merry heart. ⁴The mind of the wise thinks about that funeral, but the mind of fools is interested in having fun. ⁵Better to listen to the sharp criticism of a wise person than to fools singing your praise. ⁶A fool's laughing is like the crackling of thorns under a pot; it too is vanity.

⁷A wise man oppressing others becomes a fool; and a bribe corrupts the mind.

⁸The end of a thing is better than its beginning. Better be patient than proud.

⁹Don't be quick to get angry; anger rests in the bosom of fools. ¹⁰Don't ask, "What has happened? The early days were better than these!" It isn't wise to ask that.

¹¹Wisdom enhances an inheritance, being an advantage to all who see the sun. ¹²Wisdom protects us as money protects us. The advantage of wisdom is that it gives life to those who have it.

¹³Consider what God has done—

who can make straight what He has made crooked?

¹⁴Be happy when you're prosperous but when bad times come realize that God made the one as well as the other. His purpose is to prevent man from finding out what will happen next.

The Golden Middle

¹⁵I have seen all kinds of things in my days of vanity: there is a righteous person perishing in spite of being righteous, and there is a wicked person living in spite of being wicked.

¹⁶Don't be too virtuous and act too wise—why should you ruin yourself? ¹⁷Don't be too wicked to the point of being a fool—why should you die before your time? ¹⁸It's good to hold on to the one and not let go of the other because the fear of God makes both ways successful.

¹⁹Wisdom will help a wise person more than ten rulers in a city.

²⁰Certainly there's nobody so righteous on earth that he only does good and never sins.

²¹Also don't pay attention to everything that is said—then you won't hear your servant cursing you. ²²Your conscience knows that many times you have cursed others.

²³All this I tested by wisdom. I said, "I'm going to be wise," but it was out of my reach. ²⁴Wisdom is far away and very deep—who can find out what it is? ²⁵I turned my mind to learn and search for wisdom and meaning only to find out that it is foolish to be wicked and such foolishness is crazy.

²⁶More bitter than death I find the woman whose heart is snares and nets, and whose arms are chains. If you're pleasing to God, you'll escape her; if you sin, she'll catch you.

²⁷See, this I've discovered, says the preacher as I add one thing to another to find meaning. ²⁸that what I search for again and again I can't find. Among a thousand I found one man who had it, but in all these I didn't find a woman.

²⁹Look, only this I found: God made people simple, but they have discovered many inventions.

Obligations of King and Subjects

8 Who is like a wise man? And who knows how to explain things? A man's wisdom makes his face shine and changes his grim look. ²Be willing to do what the king orders, but because of his oath made to God you need not be terrified. ³When you leave his presence don't persist in anything evil though he does anything he likes. ⁴Since a king's word has such power, who can ask him. "What are you doing?" ⁵If you do what is ordered, you will have no trouble. And if you're wise, you will know when and how to do things; ⁶for everything there's a right time and a right way.

People worry a lot ⁷because they don't know what the future will bring; who can tell them how things will turn out? ⁸No man can control the wind or hold it back nor can any man hold back the day of his death. As a man can't get free from the draft in war so wickedness will not set free the one who is guilty of it.

It Isn't Right

¹I saw all this as I considered all the work done under the sun. There are times when one man lords over another to hurt him. ²Then I saw how the wicked approach. They come in and go about in the holy place and are honored in the city for

doing such things. This too is vanity.

¹¹When a sentence against a crime isn't quickly carried out, men are encouraged to do wrong. ¹²Although a sinner may do wrong a hundred times and live a long life, yet I know those who fear God will prosper because they fear Him. ¹³But all will not go well with the wicked nor will he really lengthen his life, because any man who doesn't fear God is like a shadow.

¹⁴There is something being done on earth that makes no sense. Some righteous persons suffer for what the wicked do, and some wicked persons get what the righteous deserve. I say this too is vanity.

¹⁵So I praise pleasure. There is nothing better for a man under the sun than to eat, drink, and enjoy himself; this will go with him while he labors every day God allows him to live under the sun.

¹⁶When I concentrated on knowing wisdom and seeing the work that is done on earth—a man may even do without sleep day and night—¹⁷then I realized that a man can't find out the meaning of all the work God requires under the sun. A man may search hard for it without finding it. Even though a wise man claims to know it, he isn't able to discover its meaning.

Anything May Happen

9 I thought about all this and came to understand that the righteous and the wise together with their work are in God's hands; whether they are loved or hated, people do not know what will confront them. ²Anything may happen to anybody. The same thing happens to you whether you're righteous or wicked, clean or unclean, whether

you sacrifice or don't. A good person is treated like a sinner, one who swears an oath like the one who is afraid of taking an oath. ³This is the bad part of everything done under the sun, that the same thing happens to everybody; and then also human minds are full of wickedness and madness both while they live and after they join the dead. ⁴But all who join the living have hope, because a living dog is better than a dead lion. ⁵The living know they will die, but the dead don't know anything. There is no more reward for them because they are forgotten. ⁶Their loving, hating, and envying is gone now, and never again will they have a part in anything done under the sun.

⁷Go, eat your food happily and drink your wine cheerfully because God has already approved of what you're doing. ⁸Always wear white clothes, and don't go without olive oil on your head. ⁹Enjoy living with the wife you love during all your vain life because He has allotted you under the sun only a few vain days. That is what you get in life for the hard work you do under the sun.

¹⁰Everything your hand finds to do, do it with your might because there is no work or planning, knowledge or skill in the grave where you're going.

¹¹Again I saw under the sun that the race isn't won by the swift nor the battle by heroes, the wise don't have food, the intelligent don't have riches, and the learned aren't treated kindly, but time and chance happens to all of them. ¹²But a man doesn't even know when his time comes. Like fish caught in a harmful net or birds caught in a snare,

human beings are trapped when disaster comes on them suddenly.

Wisdom Is Despised

¹I also have seen this bit of wisdom under the sun, and it made a deep impression on me. ²A small town had a few men in it, and a great king came to attack it. He surrounded it and built big siege-works against it. ³They found a poor wise man in it, and he by his wisdom saved the town, but nobody remembered that poor man. ⁴So I say, wisdom is better than strength, but the poor man's wisdom is despised, and nobody listens to what he says.

⁵What wise persons say quietly is heard more than the yelling of a ruler among fools. ⁶Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one error destroys much good.

More Advice

10 Dead flies make a perfumer's oil stink and ferment, so a little foolishness outweighs wisdom and honor. ²A wise man's mind turns to the right; a fool's mind turns to the left. ³When a fool goes walking, he lacks sense, and he tells everybody he's a fool.

⁴When a ruler gets angry with you, don't resign from your position, because composure solves great mistakes.

⁵There is an evil I've seen under the sun, an error often made by rulers. ⁶The foolish are often given high positions, and the rich left to sit in low places. ⁷I've seen slaves on horses, and lords walking on foot like slaves.

⁸If you dig a pit, you may fall into

^aOr "Cast your bread. . ."

it. If you break through a stone wall, a snake may bite you. ⁹If you quarry stones, you may get hurt; if you split wood, you may be injured.

¹⁰If an ax is dull and you don't sharpen it, you have to work much harder, while common sense can help you do better. ¹¹If a snake bites before it is charmed, then the charmer can't help.

¹²What a wise man says has a winning way, but what a fool says destroys him. ¹³He starts by talking foolishness and ends by saying crazy things that are harmful. ¹⁴A fool talks a lot when nobody knows what lies ahead; who can tell him what will happen after he's gone? ¹⁵A fool wears himself out with hard work because he doesn't even know the way to town.

¹⁶Woe to the country where the king is a boy and the high officials feast in the morning. ¹⁷Blessed the country where the king is a noble free-man and the officials eat at the right time to get strength and not to get drunk.

¹⁸Laziness makes the roof collapse, and taking it easy makes the house leak.

¹⁹People prepare a meal to enjoy themselves; wine makes life happy, and money gets you anything you want.

²⁰Don't curse the king even in your thoughts or the rich in your bedroom because a bird of the air may carry the news and a winged creature may report it.

Trust Him

11 Ship your grain^a on the water because after many

days you will get a return.^b ²Divide your property into seven parts,^c even eight, because you don't know what disaster there may be on earth.

³If the clouds are full of rain, they will pour it out on the earth; and if a tree falls south or north, the tree will lie where it fell.

⁴If you go on watching the wind, you won't sow; if you go on looking at the clouds, you won't harvest.

⁵As you don't know how the spirit comes or the body grows in a pregnant womb, so you don't know God's work who makes everything.

⁶In the morning sow the seed, and don't let your hand rest till evening, because you don't know which of your sowing will succeed, this or that or both of them equally well.

⁷Light is sweet, and it is good for eyes to see the sun. ⁸If a man lives many years, he should enjoy all of them, but let him remember how there will be many dark days when life will be vain.

Remember Your Creator Early in Life

⁹Enjoy yourself, young man, while you're young, and let your heart make you happy while you're still young and vigorous. Follow the ways of your heart and what your eyes can see, but realize that for all these things God will make you give an account. ¹⁰Rid your mind of trouble and your body of evil because both childhood and prime of life are vanity.

^bOr "you will find it"

^cOr "Give a share to seven . . ."

^dHere the body is pictured as a house: guardians—arms: strong men—legs: grinders—teeth: those who look out of the windows—eyes: doors to the street—ears turning deaf: blossoming almond tree—head of white hair: grasshopper—old person.

12 Think of your Creator, while you're still young and vigorous—before the days of trouble come and the years catch up with you when you will say, "I have no pleasure anymore";

²before the sun turns dark, and the light, and the moon, and the stars; and the clouds return with rain—³the time when the guardians of the house^d will tremble, strong men will grow stooped, and the grinders will stop because they are few, and those who look out of the windows will not see light; ⁴the doors to the street will be shut when the sound of the mill is low; you will awaken when the birds begin singing but their melodies will be muffled; ⁵you will also be afraid of steep places and of dangers along the road. The almond tree will blossom, and the grasshopper will drag itself along; the caperberry bush will produce fruit but man will go to his everlasting home, and mourners will go around in the streets; ⁶before the silver cord is snapped and the golden bowl is broken and the pitcher is smashed over the spring and the wheel is shattered at the cistern—⁷then the dust goes back to the ground as it was, and the spirit goes back to God who gave it.

⁸"Just vanity!" says the preacher. "Everything is vanity!"

What Is Most Important?

⁹The preacher was wise. More than that, he taught the people his

knowledge. He thought it over carefully, searched for it, and arranged it in many proverbs. ¹⁰The preacher tried to find delightful words, written honestly and telling the truth.

¹¹What wise men say is like spurs, points driven home like nails; they are collected sayings; they come from one Shepherd.

¹²Be warned, my son, against anything more than these. The making of books is endless, and much study wears you out physically.

¹³Finally, having heard it all—fear God, and keep His commandments for this applies to everybody, ¹⁴because God will bring into judgment everything that is done, also every secret thing, whether it is good or bad.

SONG OF SONGS

BY SOLOMON

1 The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

²She^a

Let him kiss me with kisses of his mouth.

Your love is better than wine;

³sweeter than the fragrance of your anointing oils.

Your name is an oil poured out; that is why virgins love you.

⁴Draw me after you. Let us run.

The king brought me into his inner rooms.

Friends

We are glad and happy for you.

We will praise your love more than wine.

It is right to love you.

⁵She

I am dark but beautiful, daughters of Jerusalem, like Kedar's tents, like Solomon's curtains.

⁶Don't stare at me, because I'm so dark;

for the sun has tanned me.

My mother's sons were angry with me

and made me look after the vineyards.

But I haven't kept my own vineyard.

⁷Tell me, you whom I love, where are you feeding your flock?

Where do you have it lie down at noon?

Why should I be like a veiled woman
by the flocks of your companions?
Why?

⁸He

If you don't know, most beautiful of the women,

follow the tracks of the sheep, and feed your little goats near the shepherds' tents.

⁹My dear, I think you're like a mare harnessed to Pharaoh's chariot.

¹⁰Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments,

your neck with strings of pearls.

¹¹We'll make golden necklaces for you with silver studs.

¹²She

While the king is at his table, my perfume gives out its fragrance.

¹³The one I love is to me a bag of myrrh

that lies at night between my breasts.

¹⁴My lover is to me a cluster of henna flowers in the vineyards of Engedi.

¹⁵He

Oh, you are beautiful, my love, so beautiful!

Your eyes are doves.

¹⁶She

How beautiful you are, my lover.

^aThe persons speaking are in most cases indicated by the Hebrew masculine and feminine forms.

oh, so charming!
 And our couch is fresh.
¹⁷The beams of our houses are of cedar;
 our rafters are made of cypress.

2 I am a rose of Sharon,
 a lily of the valleys.

²He
 Like a lily among the thistles,
 so is my friend among the girls.

³She
 Like an apricot tree among the trees of the forest,
 so is my lover among the young men.

In his shadow I delight to sit,
 and his fruit tastes sweet to me.

⁴He brings me into the wine house,
 and looks at me with love.

⁵He strengthened me with raisins.

He refreshed me with apricots
 because I was weak with love.

⁶His left hand is under my head,
 and his right hand embraces me.

⁷He
 Daughters of Jerusalem, I make you promise solemnly,
 by the gazelles and the hinds in the field,
 not to wake or stir up love
 till it is willing.

⁸She
 I hear the one I love.
 Look, there he comes
 leaping on the mountains,
 skipping on the hills.
⁹My loved one is like a gazelle or a young deer.
 Look, there he stands behind our wall,
 looking through the windows,

peering through the lattices.

¹⁰The one I love said to me,

"Up, my love,
 my beautiful one,
 and come away.

¹¹Look, the winter is past,
 the rain is over and gone.

¹²The flowers appear on the ground,
 the time of singing has come,
 and the cooing of the dove is heard in our country.

¹³The green figs ripen.
 The grapevines blossom and give out a fragrance.
 Up, my love,
 my beautiful one,
 and come away.

¹⁴My dove in the clefts of the rock,
 in the hiding-place of the cliff,
 let me see you and hear your voice.

Your voice is sweet, and you look lovely."

¹⁵She
 Catch foxes for us,
 little foxes, that ruin vineyards,
 for our vineyards are in bloom.—

¹⁶My lover is mine, and I am his;
 he tends sheep among the lilies.

¹⁷While the day brings a cooling breeze and the shadows flee,
 turn, O my lover,
 go about like a gazelle or a young deer
 on the craggy mountains.

3 She
 At night on my bed
 I looked for him whom my heart loves.
 I looked for him
 but couldn't find him.
²I will get up now and roam the city;

in the streets and on the broad
ways

I will look for him whom my
heart loves.

I looked for him
but didn't find him.

³The watchmen going around in
the city found me.

"Did you see him whom my heart
loves?"

⁴I had hardly left them
when I found him whom my
heart loves.

I took hold of him and wouldn't
let him go

till I brought him to my mother's
home

into the inner room of her who
conceived me.

⁵He

Daughters of Jerusalem, I make
you promise

by the gazelles and the hinds in
the field

not to wake or stir up love
till it is willing.

⁶Friends

Who is this woman coming up
from the wilderness

with billows of smoke
rising from burning myrrh and

incense
made of all the merchants' pow-
ders?

⁷Look, Solomon's sedan chair!

Sixty soldiers are around it,

⁸all heroes of Israel, all of them
armed with swords,
trained to fight,

each with his sword at his thigh
against the dreaded dangers at
night.

⁹King Solomon made himself a
sedan chair

from the wood of Lebanon.

¹⁰He made its posts of silver,

its back of gold.

its seat done in purple;

the inside is lovingly prepared
by the daughters of Jerusalem.

¹¹Daughters of Zion,

come out:

Look at King Solomon!

Look at the crown!

His mother crowned him with
it

on his wedding day when he was
so happy.

4

He

Oh, you are beautiful, my love,
so beautiful! Your eyes are
doves

looking from within your veil.

Your hair is like a flock of goats
moving down the hills of Gilead.

²Your teeth are like a flock of
shorn sheep that come up
from the washing;

all of them bear twins,
and none has lost its young.

³Your lips are like a crimson
thread,

and when you talk, your mouth
is lovely.

Your temple within your veil
is like a slice of pomegranate.

⁴Your neck is like David's tower
built for weapons
with a thousand round shields
hung on it,

all the warriors' shields.

⁵Your two breasts are like two
fawns,

a gazelle's twins feeding among
the lilies.

⁶While the day brings a cooling
breeze

and the shadows flee,

I will go to the mountain of
myrrh

and the hill of incense.

⁷You are altogether beautiful, my love,
and there is no blemish in you.

⁸Come with me from Lebanon, my bride,
come with me from Lebanon,
look out from the top of anti-lebanon,
from the top of Senir and Hermon,
from where lions dwell,
from the mountains where panthers roam.

⁹You captured my heart, my sister,
my bride, you stole my heart
with one glance of your eyes,
with one chain of your necklace.

¹⁰How beautiful are your breasts,
my sister, my bride!
How much better are your breasts than wine,
and the fragrance of your oil
than any spices!

¹¹Your lips, my bride, drop honey;
honey and milk are under your tongue.
And your garments are fragrant
like Lebanon.

¹²A locked garden is my sister, my bride,
a locked spring, a sealed fountain.

¹³Your plants are a pleasure-garden
of pomegranates
with excellent fruits,
henna flowers with nard,
"nard and crocus,
calamus and cinnamon with all
kinds of incense trees,
myrrh and aloes, with all the
best spices;

¹⁴a garden spring, a well of living water,
and streams flowing from Lebanon.

¹⁵She
Awake, northwind,

and come, southwind,
blow on my garden,
let its perfumes spread out.
Let my lover come into his garden
and eat the fruit precious to him.

5 He
I come into my garden, my sister,
my bride,
I pluck my myrrh with my balsam,
I eat my honeycomb with my honey,
I drink my wine with my milk.

Friends
Eat, friends, drink,
and drink deeply, lovers.

²She
I sleep but my heart is awake.
Listen! My lover is knocking.

He
Open to me, my sister, my love,
my dove, my perfect one,
for my head is wet with dew,
my hair with the drops of the night.

³She
I have taken off my tunic;
why should I put it on?
I washed my feet;
why should I soil them?
⁴My lover put his hand through
the hole in the door,
and I was deeply stirred for him.
⁵I got up to open for my lover,
and my hands dripped with myrrh,
and myrrh flowed from my fingers
on the handles of the bar.
⁶I opened for my lover,
but my lover had turned away
and was gone.

I almost died when he turned
away.

I looked for him but didn't find
him.

I called him, but he didn't an-
swer me.

⁷The watchmen going around in
the city found me.

They struck me and wounded
me.

Those who watch on the walls
took my garment from me.

⁸Daughters of Jerusalem, I
charge you solemnly:

If you find my lover,
what will you tell him?

Tell him that I'm love sick.

⁹Friends

What is your lover more than
any other lover,
most beautiful of women?

What is your lover more than
any other lover
that you charge us so solemnly?

¹⁰She

The one I love is dazzling but
ruddy,
outstanding among ten thou-
sand.

¹¹His head is the finest gold,
his locks are wavy,
black as a raven.

¹²His eyes are like doves by brooks
of water,
bathing in milk in a full setting.

¹³His cheeks are like a bed of
spices,
mounds of fragrant spices.
His lips are lilies that drop liquid
myrrh.

¹⁴His hands are rods of gold,
set in emerald.

His belly is a plaque of ivory
covered with sapphires.

¹⁵His legs are marble pillars
set on bases of pure gold.

He looks like Lebanon,
excellent as cedars.

¹⁶His speech is richly sweet,
and he is in every way a delight.
This is the one I love,
this is my friend,
daughters of Jerusalem.

6 Friends

Where did your lover go,
most beautiful of the women?
Which way did your lover turn?
We'll help you look for him.

¹She

My lover went down to his gar-
den,
to the beds of spices
to feed in the gardens
and gather lilies.

²I belong to the one I love,
and my lover who feeds among
the lilies belongs to me.

³He

You are beautiful, my love, like
Tirzah,
lovely like Jerusalem,
awe-inspiring like an army with
banners.

⁴Turn your eyes away from me;
they overpower me.
Your hair is like a flock of goats
coming down from Gilead.

⁵Your teeth are like a flock of
ewes

coming up from the washing;
all of them bear twins,
and none has lost its young.

⁶Your temple within your veil
is like a slice of pomegranate.

⁷There may be sixty queens,
eighty concubines, and virgins
without number.

⁸but my dove, my perfect one, is
unique,
her mother's only daughter.

she is kind to the one who gave her birth.

The daughters saw her and called her blessed; the queens and concubines, and they praised her.

¹⁰Who is she that looks like the dawn, beautiful as the white moon, bright as the hot sun, and awe-inspiring as an army with banners?

¹¹I went down to the walnut garden to look at the blossoms in the valley, to see if the grapevine had budded and the pomegranates were in bloom.

¹²I was not aware my longing had made me like the chariots of my noble people.

¹³Friends

Turn, turn, O girl from Shulam, turn, turn, and let us look at you.

He

Why do you look at the girl from Shulam as if she were a dancer from Mahanaim?

7 How beautiful are your feet in their sandals.

O daughter of a prince! The curves of your thighs are like jewels,

the work of an artist's hands.

²Your navel is a round bowl; may it not be without spiced wine.

Your belly is a heap of wheat, enclosed in lilies.

³Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle.

⁴Your neck is like an ivory tower. Your eyes are pools in Heshbon by the gate of Bath-rabbim. Your nose is like a tower in Lebanon looking toward Damascus.

⁵Your head is on you like Carmel. And the tresses hanging from your head are like purple drapes. your flowing locks could captivate a king.

⁶How beautiful and how sweet you are, O love, daughter of delights.

⁷You stand up like a palm tree with your breasts like date clusters.

⁸I thought I will go up the palm tree and take hold of its clusters. And your breasts will be like clusters of the vine,

and your breath like apricots.

⁹And your mouth like the best wine—

She

—that goes smoothly to my lover, flowing softly over the lips and teeth.

¹⁰I belong to my lover, and he longs for me.

¹¹Come, my love, let us go out into the country, spend the night among the villages,

¹²let us go out early to the vineyards,

and see if the vines have budded, the grape blossoms have opened,

the pomegranates are in bloom.

There I will give you my love.

¹³The love apples give out a fragrance.

At our door are all kinds of
choice fruits,
new and old ones too
that I laid up for you, my lover.

8 I wish you were my own brother,
one who nursed at my mother's
breasts.

I would find you outside, kiss
you,
and nobody could despise me.

¹I would lead you
and bring you into my mother's
home

and you would teach me.
I would give you some spiced
wine to drink,

some juice pressed out of my
pomegranates.

²His left hand is under my head,
and his right hand embraces me.

³Daughters of Jerusalem, I
charge you solemnly
not to wake up or stir up love
till it is willing.

⁴Friends

Who is she that comes up from
the wilderness
leaning on her lover?

She

Under the apricot tree I aroused
you.

There your mother painfully
gave birth to you;
there she who bore you was in
pain.

⁵Make me like a seal on your
heart,
like a reminder bracelet
on your arm.

Love is strong as death,
its zeal as unyielding as the
grave.

Its flames are flames of fire,
a flame of the LORD. ⁶Many
waters can't put out love
or rivers drown it.

If a man would give
all the riches he had in his house
for love,
he would be scorned.

⁷Friends

We have a little sister,
and she has no breasts.
What should we do for our sister
when she will be spoken for?

⁸If she were a wall,
we would build a silver battle-
ment on her.

But if she were a door,
we would shut it in with cedar
boards.

⁹She

I am a wall, and my breasts are
like towers.

As he looked at me, I became a
happy woman.

¹⁰Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-
hamon.

He put keepers in charge of the
vineyards

that each should bring for its
fruit
a thousand shekels of silver.

¹¹I look after my vineyard which
belongs to me.

The thousand shekels are yours,
Solomon,

and two hundred for those who
watch its fruit.

¹²He

O girl who lives in my garden,
while my companions are listen-
ing,

let me hear your voice.

¹³She

Away quickly, my lover,
and be like a gazelle or a young
deer
on the mountains of spices.

ISAIAH

1 The vision that Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw about Judah at the time of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

¹Hear, heaven, and listen, earth!
The LORD is speaking:
I raised children and gave them
a high position.

but they rebelled against Me.

²An ox knows his owner,
and a donkey his master's crib,
but Israel doesn't know;
My people don't understand.

³O sinful nation, people with a
heavy load of guilt,
offspring doing evil,
children corrupting yourselves,
you have forsaken the LORD,
despised the Holy One of Israel,
and turned back to strange
ways.

⁴Why will you be beaten still
more?

Why must you continue to go
astray?

The whole head is sick,
and the whole heart is ill.

⁵From the sole of the foot to the
head there is nothing healthy
in you.

only open cuts, bruises, and
fresh wounds.

They have had no compress or
bandage,
nor have they been softened
with oil.

⁶Your country is a barren waste,
your cities are burned down.
Before your eyes foreigners de-

vour what grows on your
ground.

So it is a barren waste,
a land destroyed by foreigners.

⁷Zion's daughter is left like a hut
in a vineyard,
a shelter in a cucumber field,
a town under siege.

⁸If the LORD of armies hadn't left
a remnant of us escape,
we would have become like
Sodom and Gomorrah.

Get Rid of Your Sin

⁹Hear what the LORD says, you
rulers of Sodom:
listen to the word^a of our God,
you people of Gomorrah:

¹⁰Of what use to Me are your
many sacrifices?
asks the LORD.

I've had enough burnt offerings
of rams
and enough fat from fattened
calves.

And I don't delight in the blood
of bulls, lambs, and he-goats.

¹¹When you come to appear be-
fore Me,
who asks for this trampling of
My courts?

¹²Don't bring any more worthless
food offerings.

I abhor the incense,
your festivals on the first of the
month,
your Sabbaths and calling of as-
semblies.

I can't stand idolatrous cults
and festive meetings.

¹³I hate your festivals on the first

¹
⁹ Ro 9:29
⁹⁻¹⁰ Ro 11:8

^aOr the instruction

of the month and at other appointed times.

They've become a burden to Me, and I'm tired of putting up with them.

¹⁵So when you spread out your hands,

I will cover My eyes so I won't see you.

Even when you pray a lot, I will not listen—your hands are full of blood.

¹⁶Wash, get clean!

Put out of My sight the evil you're doing.

Stop doing evil. ¹⁷Learn to do good,

try to be fair in judging, straighten out the oppressor,

bring justice to orphans, and defend widows.

¹⁸Oh, come, let us reason with one another! says the LORD.

Though your sins have become like scarlet cloth,

they will turn white as snow.

Though they are red like crimson,

they will become like wool.

¹⁹If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the good things of the land.

²⁰But if you refuse and rebel,

you will eat famine food.^b

The LORD has said it.

Jerusalem's Future

²¹Oh, how the faithful city has become a prostitute!

Once her courts were just, and righteousness lived there, but now—murderers.

²²Your silver has turned to dross; your wine is mixed with water.

²³Your rulers are rebels, friends of thieves.

Everyone loves a bribe and runs after gifts.

They are unjust to orphans, and widows can't come before them to be defended.

²⁴This is why the Lord, the LORD of armies, the Mighty One of Israel, says:

I will get satisfaction from My enemies;

I will avenge Myself on My foes.

²⁵I will again lay My hand on you, turn away your dross as with potash, and get rid of all your alloy.

²⁶I will again give you judges as you had them at first,

and advisers as in the beginning.

Then you will again be called the righteous city, a faithful town.

²⁷Zion will be saved by justice, and those who repent in her by righteousness.

²⁸Rebels and sinners will be destroyed together,

and those who forsake the LORD will be consumed,

²⁹for you will be ashamed of the sacred terebinths you liked

and blush for the garden shrines you chose;

³⁰you will be like a terebinth whose leaves fade

and like a garden without water.

³¹And the strong man will be like tow,

and his work will be sparks.

Both will burn together,

and nobody will put out the fire.

Peace on Earth

2 This is what Isaiah, the son of Amoz, saw about Judah and Jerusalem.

¹In the last time the mountain of the LORD's temple

^bThat is, the wild fruit of the locust tree

will be established at the top of
the mountains
and be raised above the hills,
and all the nations will flow in
streams to it.

³Then many people will go and
say,

"Come, let us go up to the
LORD's mountain,

to the temple of the God of Jacob,
and He will teach us His ways,
and we will live in them."

The LORD's instruction comes
from Zion

and His Word from Jerusalem.

⁴And He will judge between the
nations
and make decisions for many
people.

Then they will hammer their
swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning
hooks.

No nation will raise a sword
against another
or train for war anymore.

2
8 Rv 9 20
10 11-17-19
21 2 Th
1 9 10
20 Rv 9 20

The LORD's Coming

⁵Come, people of Jacob, let us
walk
in the light of the LORD.

⁶But You have rejected Your
people, Jacob's family,
for they are filled with the
people of the east
and fortune-tellers like the Phi-
listines
and join hands with foreign
people.

⁷Their country is filled with sil-
ver and gold,
and they have unlimited trea-
sures.

Their country is filled with
horses,
and they have an unlimited num-
ber of chariots.

⁸Their country is filled with idols:
They worship what their hands
have made

and their fingers have formed.

⁹So when a man bows down and
a human being humbles him-
self,

You should not forgive them.

¹⁰Go into a rock and hide in the
dust

from the terror of the LORD
and the glory of His majesty.

¹¹Proud-looking men will look
humble;

haughty men will bow down,
and on that day the LORD alone
will be raised high.

¹²The LORD of armies has a day
when He will rise up against
everyone who is proud and
high,

against everyone who lifts him-
self up when he is humbled.

¹³against all the high and lofty
cedars of Lebanon,
all the oaks of Bashan,

¹⁴all the high mountains,
all the hills that rise high,

¹⁵every high tower and every
inaccessible wall,

¹⁶all the great ships on the sea,
against everything that is de-
lightful to see.

¹⁷Then proud men will bow down,
and tall men will bend low,
and on that day the LORD alone
will be raised high.

¹⁸Then the idols will completely
disappear.

¹⁹Men will go into the caves of
rocks and holes in the ground
to get away from the LORD's
terror
and the glory of His majesty
when He rises to terrify the
earth.

²⁰On that day a man will throw to

the moles and bats
 the silver and gold idols he made
 to worship;
¹¹and he will go into the clefts of
 the rocks
 and the crevices among the
 crags
 to get away from the LORD's
 terror
 and the glory of His majesty
 when He rises to terrify the
 earth.
²²Leave man alone;
 he has only a breath in his
 nostrils.
 How can he be worth anything?

Judah Will Fall

3 You, see, the Lord, the LORD
 of armies,
 will take away from Jerusalem
 and Judah
 their staff and support,
 their whole staff of bread and of
 water:
²hero and soldier,
 judge and prophet,
 interpreter of omens and elder,
³captain and man in high position,
 counselor, skillful worker, and
 expert in charms.
⁴I will make boys their leaders,
 and they will govern them with
 caprice.
⁵The people will tyrannize one
 another,
 a man his neighbor;
 boys will treat old men violently,
 and the vulgar will abuse people
 of honor.
⁶A man will take hold of a rela-
 tive of his father's family:
 "You have a garment;
 be our ruler, and take charge of
 these ruins."
⁷Then he will protest and say,
 "I'm not a healer.

²¹ Ru 6 15
^{2 Th 1 9}

There's no food or even a gar-
 ment in my home.
 Don't make me a ruler of the
 people."
⁸Jerusalem has stumbled, and
 Judah has fallen
 because they talk and act
 against the LORD,
 defying Him in His glory as He
 looks at them.
⁹The look of their faces testifies
 against them.
 They tell about their sins like
 Sodom,
 without hiding them.
 Woe to them! They bring calam-
 ity on themselves.
¹⁰Tell the righteous all will be well
 with them:
 They will eat what their work
 produces.
¹¹Woe to the wicked! It will be bad
 for him:
 What he has done will be done
 to him.
¹²A child will boss my people.
 Women will rule over them.
 My people, those who should
 lead you straight lead you
 astray
 and confuse the way you should
 go.
¹³The LORD will get up to accuse
 the people
 and step forward to judge them.
¹⁴The LORD will go into court with
 the elders and leaders of His
 people:
 You devoured the vineyard!
 The goods taken from the poor
 are in your homes.
¹⁵How can you crush My people
 and grind the faces of the poor?
 asks the Lord, the LORD of
 armies.

Sinful Women

- ¹⁶The LORD also said:
Because Zion's daughters are
proud
and walk with stretched necks,
winking their eyes,
swinging along as they walk
and tinkling with their feet,
¹⁷the Lord will cause scabs on the
heads of Zion's daughters,
and the LORD will uncover their
sex organs.

¹⁸On that day the Lord will take
away the finery: anklets, head-
bands, moon charms, ¹⁹pendants,
bracelets, scarfs, ²⁰headdresses,
bangles, sashes, perfume boxes,
magic charms, ²¹seal rings, nose
rings, ²²festive garments, wrap-
pers, shawls, handbags, ²³mirrors,
undergarments, turbans, and fine
outer garments.

- ²⁴Then, instead of perfume there
will be a rotten smell,
instead of a sash a rope,
instead of braided hair a bald-
head,
instead of a rich dress sack-
cloth—
yes, shame instead of beauty.

²⁵The sword will cut down your
men
and your heroes in battle.

²⁶Her gates will weep and mourn,
and she will sit on the ground,
robbed of everything.

4 At that time
seven women will take hold of
one man and say,
"We'll eat our own food and
provide our own clothes.
Just let us be called by your
name—
take away our disgrace."

The Glory of the LORD on Zion

²At that time
the LORD's plant will become
beautiful and wonderful,
and the produce of the land will
be the pride and glory of those
who escaped in Israel.

³Then whoever is left in Zion and
still alive in Jerusalem will be called
His holy one, everyone who is
recorded for life in Jerusalem.
'When the Lord has washed away
the filth of Zion's daughters and
rinsed away the bloody guilt from
the middle of Jerusalem by the Spirit
of judgment and the Spirit of burn-
ing, ⁴then the LORD will create
over every dwelling on Mount Zion
and its meeting places a cloud of
smoke by day and a flaming fire
shining at night; yes, glory will be
over everything like a canopy ⁵and
a shelter for shade against the heat
by day and a place where you can
safely hide in a rainstorm.

4
3 Rv 13 8
17 8 20 12
15 21 27
5
1 2 Mt 21 33
Mk 12 1
Lk 20 9

The Song of the Vineyard

5 Let me sing about One I love,
a song of my loved One about
His vineyard:
My loved One had a vineyard on
a fertile hill.

²He dug it, cleared it of stones,
planted the finest vines in it,
built a watchtower in the middle
of it,
and cut a winepress into the
rock.

Then He waited for it to produce
grapes,
but it produced sour wild
grapes.

³Now, you people living in Jeru-
salem
and you men of Judah,
judge between Me and My vine-
yard.

⁴What should have been done for
 My vineyard that I didn't do?
 When I waited for it to produce
 grapes,
 why did it produce sour wild
 grapes?
⁵And now let Me tell you what I
 will do to My vineyard:
 I will tear away its hedge so it
 will be devoured,
 and tear down its wall so it will
 be trampled on.
⁶I will lay it waste,
 never to be pruned or hoed.
 It will grow up in thorns and
 thornbushes.
 And I'll order the clouds not to
 rain on it.
⁷The people of Israel are the
 vineyard of the LORD of
 armies,
 and the men of Judah are the
 planting He delighted in.
 He looked for justice and found
 bloodshed,
 for righteousness and found
 cries of distress.

Curses on Evildoers

⁸Woe to you who add house to
 house and field to field
 till there's room only for you to
 live in the country.
⁹I heard the LORD of armies
 swear:
 Many houses will be deserted—
 large and beautiful, and nobody
 living there.
¹⁰Ten acres of vineyard will pro-
 duce but a few gallons of
 wine,
 and ten bushels of seed will pro-
 duce a bushel of grain.
¹¹Woe to those who get up early to
 go after liquor,
 who sit up late inflamed by
 wine,

¹²at whose feasts there are lyre
 and lute,
 tambourine and flute, and wine;
 but they don't pay attention to
 what the LORD is doing
 or see what His hands are work-
 ing.
¹³Because they are ignorant,
 My people will go into exile,
 their honored men will be starv-
 ing,
 and the whole population will be
 parched with thirst.
¹⁴This is why death opens its
 throat wide
 and spreads its mouth open ever
 so wide,
 so that the people's glory, with
 all their noisy fun, will go
 down into it.
¹⁵And men will bow down and be
 humbled,
 and proud eyes will be brought
 low.
¹⁶The LORD of armies will stand
 high as Judge;
 the holy God will show Himself
 holy in righteousness.
¹⁷Then lambs will graze as in their
 own pasture,
 and among the ruins fattened
 animals will eat.
¹⁸Woe to those who pull along
 wickedness with cords of lies
 and sin with ropes of a cart
¹⁹and say, "He should hurry and
 do quickly what He's going to
 do
 so we may see it.
 What the Holy One of Israel is
 planning should soon happen
 so we can experience it."
²⁰Woe to those who call evil good
 and good evil,
 who make darkness light and
 light darkness,

who make bitter sweet and
sweet bitter!

¹Woe to those who think they are
wise
and consider themselves
shrewd.

²Woe to those who are heroes—
in drinking wine,
who are bold men—in mixing
drinks.

³Who for a bribe declare the
wicked righteous
and take away the rights of the
righteous.

⁴So, as tongues of fire burn up
stubble
and dry grass goes down in
flames,
so their root is like something
rotten,
and their blossoms go up in dust
because they have despised the
instruction of the LORD of
armies
and scorned the Word of the
Holy One of Israel.

⁵This is why the LORD is very
angry with His people
and has stretched out His fist
against them to strike them.
The hills trembled.

Their dead bodies lay like rub-
bish in the middle of the
street.

Despite all this, He will not stop
being angry
and will still stretch out His
hand to strike.

Assyrian Invasion

⁶He will set up a flag for a people
far away
and whistle for each of them
from the distant parts of the
world,
and they will come very fast.

^cseraphs

⁷None of them will get tired or
stumble,
slumber or sleep.
The belt on their waists will not
be loosened
nor the strings on their sandals
broken.

⁸Their arrows will be sharpened,
all their bows drawn.
Their horses' hoofs will be like
flint,
their chariot wheels like a whirl-
wind.

⁹Their roaring will be like a
lioness,
like the roar of a young lion
that growls and snatches its
prey
to take it to a place beyond
rescue.

¹⁰On that day they will growl at
the prey
like the roaring of the sea.
If someone looked at the land,
he would see only darkness and
distress,
black clouds making everything
dark.

The Call of Isaiah

6 In the year when Uzziah died,
I saw the LORD sitting on a high
and lofty throne, and His robe filled
the temple. ²Above Him stood
angels.^c Each had six wings, two to
cover his face, two to cover his feet,
and two to fly with. ³They kept
calling to one another:

"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of
armies!
His glory fills the whole world."

⁴The voices of those who called
shook the foundations under the

6
1 Rv 4:2, 3
9-10 5:1 7
13 6:16
7:10 15:17
15:8 19:4
20:11, 21:5
2:3 Rv 4:8

thresholds, and smoke filled the temple.

"Woe to me!" I said. "I'm destroyed, because I'm a man with unclean lips, living among people with unclean lips, and I've seen the King, the LORD of armies."

"Then one of the angels flew to me, and in his hand were tongs with which he had taken a glowing coal from the altar. He touched my mouth with it and said, "Now this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin is forgiven."

"Then I heard the Lord ask, "Whom should I send, and who will go for us?"

Then I said, "Here am I. Send me."

"He said to me, "Go and tell these people:

You may go on hearing but never understand,

and go on seeing but never know anything.

¹⁰Make the mind of these people dull,

deafen their hearing, shut their eyes

that they may not see with their eyes,

hear with their ears, understand with their minds,

and turn and be healed."

¹¹"How long, Lord?" I asked.

"Till the cities lie waste and nobody lives there.

Till there's nobody in the houses and the country is altogether in ruins.

¹²Till the LORD moves people far away

and a large area in the middle of the country is desolate.

¹³If there are still a tenth of the

people left in it, they too will be taken away. But like a terebinth or an oak when it's cut down, it will have a stump left— its stump will be a holy seed."

The Book of Immanuel

Syria and Israel Against Judah

7 During the time when Ahaz son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, was king of Judah, Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, the son of Remaliah and king of Israel, went to Jerusalem to fight against it, but they couldn't keep it up. ²When the dynasty of David was told, "The Arameans are camping in Ephraim," the hearts of the king and his people shook like the trees of the forest in the wind.

³Then the LORD told Isaiah: You and your son Shear-jashub,^d go out to meet Ahaz at the end of the canal from the upper pool, on the road to the Laundryman's Field, ⁴and tell him: Be careful, be calm, don't be afraid or discouraged by those two tails of smoking firebrands, the fury of Rezin and Syria, and Remaliah's son. ⁵Syria, Ephraim, and Remaliah's son have planned evil against you, saying, ⁶"Let us invade Judah, terrify them, break in on them to make them join with us, and set up Tabeel's son as king among them." ⁷That is why the Lord GOD says this:

It will not succeed or even happen.

⁸Damascus is the capital of Syria, and Rezin rules in Damascus.

And within sixty-five years Ephraim will be smashed

⁴ Rv 15:6
⁹⁻¹⁰ Mt 13:
14-15; Mk
4:12; Lk 8:
10; Jn 12:
40; Act
28:26-27

^dA-Remnant-Will-Return

so that it will no more be a people.

⁹Samaria is the capital of Ephraim, and Remaliah's son rules in Samaria.

If you don't believe, you won't have the strength to go on.

God-with-Us

¹⁰The LORD spoke again to Ahaz: ¹¹"Ask the LORD your God to give you a sign; it may be something as deep as the netherworld or as high as the sky."

¹²"I will not ask it," Ahaz answered. "I will not test the LORD."

¹³"Listen now, house of David," he said. "Is it too little for you to weary men that you must also weary my God? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: *Look, the virgin will conceive and have a Son, and His name will be Immanuel!*^e ¹⁵He will eat curds and honey that He may know how to shun evil and choose good.

¹⁶"Yes, before the boy will know how to shun evil and choose good, the country whose two kings terrify you will be deserted, ¹⁷and the LORD will bring days on you, your people, and your father's family such as never have been since Ephraim left Judah: the king of Assyria. ¹⁸On that day the LORD will whistle for the flies at the streams of the Nile delta in Egypt and for the bees in Assyria. ¹⁹and they will all come and settle in the steep wadis, in the holes in the rocks, on all the thornbushes and all the pastures. ²⁰Then with a razor, hired on the other side of the Euphrates, that is, the king of Assyria, the Lord will

shave the head and the pubic hair and will also take away the beard.

²¹Then a man will keep alive a young cow and two sheep or goats, ²²and because they will give plenty of milk, he will eat curds because everyone left in the land will eat curds and honey. ²³Then every place where there used to be a thousand vines, worth 1,000 shekels of silver, will become briers and thorns. ²⁴Men will come there with bows and arrows because the whole country will be briers and thorns. ²⁵And you will not go anywhere in the hills that used to be hoed with a hoe, because you will be afraid of the briers and thorns; it will be a place where oxen are let loose and sheep trample."

Isaiah's Son Born

⁷
¹⁴ Mt 1:23
¹⁵ Lk 1:31
¹⁶ Rev 21:3

8 The LORD said to me, "Get a large tablet and write on it so anyone can read it: 'Maher-shalal-hash-baz,'^f ²and I will have dependable witnesses testify, Uriah the priest and Zechariah, the son of Jeberechiah."

³I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and had a son. The LORD told me, "Call him Maher-shalal-hash-baz. ⁴Before the boy will know how to say 'my father' or 'my mother,' the wealth of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria will be carried away ahead of the king of Assyria."

The King of Assyria like a Flood

⁵The LORD spoke to me again:

⁶Because these people have rejected the gently flowing water of Shiloah and are delighted with Rezin and Remaliah's son,

^eGod-Is-with-Us ^fHasten-to-the-Spoils-Hurry-to-the-Prey

⁷the Lord will bring on them the waters of the Euphrates, mighty and deep, namely, the king of Assyria with all his glory, and it will overflow all its channels and go over all its banks.

⁸It will flow into Judah, flooding it as it passes on till it reaches up to the neck. When he spreads his wings, he will fill the breadth of your land, O Immanuel.

⁹Be provoked, people, and confused.

Listen, all you distant countries, listen and be confused.

¹⁰Make your plan and it will come to nothing, make your statement and it will not come true, for God-is-with-us.

8
8:10 Mt 1:23;
Rv 21:3
12:13 1 Pt 3
14:15
14:15 Lk 2:34;
Ro 9:32-33;
1 Pt 2:8
17-18 Heb
2:13

The Stumbling Stone

¹¹The LORD said this to me with a firm hand on me, warning me not to go the way of these people, and saying:

¹²Don't call everything conspiracy that these people call conspiracy; don't fear what they fear or let it terrify you.

¹³Keep the LORD of armies holy, and let Him be the One you fear and dread.

¹⁴Then He will be a holy temple, but also a stone both houses of Israel will stumble over and a rock they will fall over and a snare and a trap for those who live in Jerusalem.

¹⁵Many will stumble over them, fall, be broken, trapped, and caught.

¹⁶Tie up the testimony, and seal

the instructions among My disciples.

¹⁷I long for the LORD, who hides His face from the people of Jacob; I wait for Him.

¹⁸Here am I and the children the LORD has given Me to be signs and wonders in Israel from the LORD of armies, who lives on Mount Zion.

¹⁹If they tell you, "Go for help to the ghosts and knowing spirits that chirp and mutter" — shouldn't people go to their God for help? Should they ask the dead for the living?

²⁰Back to revelation and God's Word!

If anyone doesn't speak according to this Word, there is no light dawning for him.

Assyria to Humble Galilee

²¹They will wander through the country hard pressed and hungry, and being hungry, they will work themselves into a rage and curse their king and God. Whether they look up

²²or look down on the ground, there is trouble and darkness and gloom with anguish and scattered darkness—

9 but the land that is in anguish will not continue in gloom. At first He humbled the country of Zebulun and the country of Naphtali, but in the end He will bring glory to the Road by the Sea.

the land beside the Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles.

A Great Light Will Shine

²The people walking in the dark
will see a great light.

On those who live in the land of
gloom a light will shine.

³The nation You didn't make very
happy You will make great.
Then they will be glad before
You like those who celebrate
the harvest

or like those who delight in divid-
ing the spoils.

You will break the yoke that is a
burden on them.

⁴the rod with which their backs
are beaten,
and the stick with which the
tyrant drives them,
as at the time of Midian.

⁵Every warrior's boot tramping
with the noise of battle
and every garment rolled in
blood
will be burned as fuel in the fire.

⁶A Child will be born for us,
a Son will be given to us,
and the government will be on
His shoulder,
and He will be called Wonder-
ful, Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.

⁷His government will grow,
and there will be endless peace,
to establish His rule on David's
throne
and to uphold it with justice and
righteousness now and for-
ever.

The zeal of the LORD of armies
will do this.

The LORD's Message Against Jacob

⁸The LORD sends a message

against Jacob,
and it falls on Israel.

⁹All the people of Ephraim and
the people living in Samaria
know it.

Their proud and bold hearts
have said:

¹⁰"Bricks have fallen, but we'll
build with hewn stones.

Sycamores have been cut down,
but we'll replace them with
cedars."

¹¹So the LORD will give Rezin's
foes victory over him
and will spur on his enemies.

¹²Arameans from the east and
Philistines from the west,
and with open mouths they will
devour Israel.

Even after all this, He will not
stop being angry
and will still stretch out His
hand to strike.

¹³Yet the people will not turn to
Him who strikes them
or go to the LORD of armies for
help.

¹⁴So the LORD will cut off Israel's
head and tail,
the palm and reed in one day.

¹⁵The elder and the honored man
is the head;
the prophet who teaches lies is
the tail.

¹⁶The leaders of these people lead
them astray,
and those who are led by them
are destroyed.

¹⁷And so the Lord will not spare
their young men
or feel sorry for their orphans
and widows,
because they are all ungodly
and wrongdoers
and every mouth talks foolish-
ness.

Even after all this, He will not

9
1:2 Mt 4:15-
16, Lk 1:79
7 Lk 1:32-33

stop being angry
and will still stretch out His
hand to strike.

¹⁸Yes, wickedness burns like fire,
devouring briars and thorns;
it sets on fire the thickets in the
forest,
and they whirl upward in clouds
of smoke.

¹⁹The anger of the LORD of armies
consumes the country,
and the people are fuel for the
fire.
Nobody has pity for another.

²⁰One devours on the right and
still is hungry,
another on the left and isn't
satisfied;
each man eats the flesh of his
offspring.

²¹Manasseh devours Ephraim,
Ephraim Manasseh,
and both together attack Judah.
Even after all this, He will not
stop being angry
and will still stretch out His
hand to strike.

Social Injustice

10 Woe to those who make
wicked decrees
and prescribe misery

¹to deprive the poor of justice
and rob the needy of My people
of their right,
making widows their prey and
robbing orphans.

²What will you do when it is time
to punish
and destruction comes from
afar?

To whom will you run for help?
Where will you leave your
wealth?

³There will be nothing for you but
to crouch among prisoners

and fall with those who are
killed.

Even after all this, He will not
stop being angry
and will still stretch out His
hand to strike.

Against Assyria

⁴Woe to Assyria, the rod I use
when I'm angry,
the staff in My hand when I'm
furious.

⁵I send him against an ungodly
nation
and order him to attack a people
I'm angry with,
to take spoils and plunder
and trample on them as on mud
in the streets.

⁶But that's not what he intends to
do
or the plan he has in his mind;
he's determined to destroy and
cut off not a few nations.

⁷He asks, "Aren't all my princes
kings?"

⁸Isn't Calno like Carchemish?
Or Hamath like Arpad?
Or Samaria like Damascus?

⁹Since my hand has reached
against kingdoms with idols,
whose carved images are more
than those of Jerusalem and
Samaria.

¹⁰Since I've dealt with Samaria
and her idols,
shouldn't I do the same to Jeru-
salem and her idols?"

¹¹When the Lord has finished all
His work on Mount Zion and in Jeru-
salem, He will punish the proud king
of Assyria for what he's doing, for
his bragging and haughty look;
¹²when he says:

"By my own strong hand I did
this,
and by my wisdom I know how.

- I have taken away the boundaries of peoples and robbed them of what they stored away.
Like a bull I pushed them down from their thrones.
- ¹⁴My hand found the wealth of nations as one finds a nest.
As one gathers eggs that are left,
I gathered the whole world;
nobody moved a wing,
opened his mouth, or chirped."
- ¹⁵Should the ax brag against him who cuts with it?
Or a saw boast against him who saws with it?
It would be like a club swinging him who lifts it,
like a stick raising him who isn't wood.
- ¹⁶And so the Lord, the LORD of armies, will send leanness on his fat people,
and under his liver a fever will burn like fire.
- ¹⁷Israel's Light will become a fire and his Holy One a flame.
In one day it will burn up his thorns and briers.
- ¹⁸the glory of his forest and his orchard,
consuming soul and body.
It will be like a sick man wasting away.
- ¹⁹And the trees left in his forest will be so few
a boy could make a list of them.
- ²⁰At that time those who are left in Israel,
those of the family of Jacob who escaped,
will no more lean on him who struck them

but lean on the LORD,
who is really the Holy One of Israel.

- ²¹Those who are left, the survivors of Jacob,
will come back to the mighty God.
- ²²Although your people Israel will be like the sand of the sea,
only a remnant will return.

Destruction Decreed

A destruction is decreed, an overflowing of justice,

- ²³for the Lord, the LORD of armies, has resolved to destroy;

He is going to do it in the middle of the whole world.

- ²⁴This is why the Lord, the LORD of armies, says this:

My people who live in Zion,
don't be afraid of Assyria when he hits you with a club
and raises his rod against you as happened on the road from Egypt.

- ²⁵Very soon My anger will come to an end,
and My fury will be used up on the Assyrians.

- ²⁶Then the LORD of armies will swing a whip against them
as He struck down Midian at the Rock of Oreb
and as He raised His rod over the sea
and lifted it up on the road from Egypt.

- ²⁷At that time his burden will drop from your shoulder,
and his yoke will be torn away from your neck,
the yoke will be torn away on account of the fatness.

²²⁻²³ Ro 9
²⁷⁻²⁸

The Assyrian Invades

- He departs from Shamen⁸
²⁸and comes to Aiath;
 he passes through Migron
 and lays down his baggage at
 Michmash.
²⁹They go through the pass and
 lodge at Geba for the night.
 Ramah trembles; Saul's Gibeah
 flees.
³⁰Cry out with a shrill voice, Bath-
 gallim!
 Listen to it, Laish! Answer it,
 Anathoth!
³¹Madmenah flees; those who live
 at Gebim run to save them-
 selves.
³²Today he has yet to stop at Nob,
 to shake his fist at the mount of
 Zion's daughter,
 the hill of Jerusalem.
³³But look, the Lord, the LORD of
 armies,
 is cutting off his branches with a
 terrifying power.
 Those who stand tall are cut
 down;
 the lofty ones will fall down.
³⁴And with the ax He will cut
 down the bushes of the forest;
 the Mighty One will make
 Lebanon fall.

The Righteous King

- 11** A Shoot will come out of the
 stump of Jesse,
 and from his roots a Branch will
 produce fruit.
²The LORD's Spirit will rest on
 Him,
 the Spirit of wisdom and under-
 standing,
 the Spirit of counsel and might,
 the Spirit of knowledge and of
 fearing the LORD.

⁸Heb uncertain

- ³The fear of the LORD will pleas
 Him.
 He will not judge just by what
 He sees
 or decide by what He hears.
⁴He will be fair in judging the
 poor
 and treat the humble right
 when He makes decisions for
 them.
 He will strike the world with the
 rod of His mouth
 and kill the wicked with the
 breath of His lips.
⁵Righteousness will be the belt
 around His waist
 and faithfulness around His
 hips.
⁶A wolf will live with a lamb,
 a leopard will lie down with
 goat,
 a calf, a young lion, and a fa-
 tened animal will be together,
 and a little boy will lead them.
⁷A cow will feed with a bear;
 their young ones will lie down
 together;
 a lion will eat straw like a cow.
⁸A nursing child will play over
 the hole of a cobra,
 a weaned child put his hand
 over the opening of a viper.
⁹They will not hurt or destroy
 anyone on all My holy moun-
 tain,
 for the world will be full of the
 knowledge of the LORD
 like the waters covering the sea.

Exiles Will Return

- ¹⁰At that time Jesse's Descendant
 will stand
 as a flag signaling the people.
 The nations will come to Him for
 help;

11
 1 Ro 15 12
 Rv 5 5
 22 16
 2 1 Pt 4 14
 4 Jn 5 30
 Acts 17 21
 Rv 19 11
 15 2 Th 2 8
 5 Ep 6 14
 10 Ro 15 12
 Rv 5 5
 22 16

His resting place will be glorious.

- ¹¹At that time the Lord will again reach with power to get back those who are left of His people from Assyria, northern and southern Egypt, Ethiopia, Elam, Babylonia, Hamath, and the lands near the sea.
- ¹²He will raise a flag for the nations and gather the outcast people of Israel and bring together the scattered people of Judah from the four corners of the earth.
- ¹³Ephraim will not be jealous anymore, and Judah's enemies will be destroyed. Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah, and Judah will not trouble Ephraim.
- ¹⁴They will swoop down on the hilly frontier of the Philistines in the west; together they will plunder the people of the east. They will stretch out their hands to take Edom and Moab, and the people of Ammon will obey them.
- ¹⁵As the LORD divided the bay of the Egyptian sea, He will shake His fist against the Euphrates and with His scorching wind smash it into seven streams and have people walk over it in their sandals.
- ¹⁶So there will be a highway for those who are left of His people in Assyria

as there was for Israel when they came up from Egypt.

A Hymn of Praise

- 12** At that time you will say:
I will praise You, LORD.
Although You were angry with me,
You stopped being angry and comforted me.
- ²God is the One who saves me. I trust Him and am not afraid, for the LORD is my Fortress and my Defense.
He has saved me.
- ³Happily you will draw water from the saving fountains.
- ⁴On that day you will say: Thank the LORD.
Call on His name.
Tell the people what He has done.
Praise the majesty of His name.
- ⁵Sing to the LORD—He has done wonderful things.
The whole world should know about it.
- ⁶Call out loud and shout, you who live on Zion.
Great is the Holy One of Israel, who is among you.

Sentences Against the Nations

A Prophecy Against Babylon

- 13** This is God's sentence on Babylon that came to Isaiah, the son of Amoz, in a vision:
- ¹Put up a signal on a bare hill.
Call out loud to them.
Wave your hand for them to enter the Gates-of-the-Noblemen.
- ²I've ordered My priests, yes, I've called My warriors to act for Me in My anger,
My proud men sure of victory.
- ⁴Listen to the tumult in the hills;

it's like a big crowd.
 Listen to the noise of kingdoms;
 nations are gathering.
 The LORD of armies is getting
 an army ready for battle.

⁹They are coming from a distant
 country,
 from the end of the earth.
 The LORD with the weapons He
 uses in His anger
 is coming to destroy the whole
 world.

¹⁰Cry out loud—the day of the
 LORD is near,
 coming as destruction from the
 Almighty.

¹¹This is why all will hang their
 hands helplessly,
 and everybody's courage will
 melt away with fear.

¹²They will be terrified.
 Pangs and agony will take hold
 of them.
 They will writhe like a woman
 having a child.
 They will look shocked at one
 another with faces feverishly
 inflamed.

¹³You see, the day of the LORD is
 coming
 when without pity He will pour
 out His fury
 and blazing anger to destroy the
 earth
 and rid it of its sinners.

¹⁴The stars in the sky and their
 bright constellations will not
 shine anymore.
 When the sun rises, it will turn
 dark.
 And the moon won't shine any-
 more.

¹⁵I will punish the world for its
 wrong
 and the wicked for their guilt.
 I will put an end to the pride of
 the proud

and cut down the arrogant ways
 of tyrants.

¹²I will make a man scarcer than
 fine gold
 and a human being rarer than
 gold from Ophir.

¹³This is why I will make the skies
 tremble
 and the earth shake from its
 place
 at the anger of the LORD of
 armies
 on the day of His flaming fury.

¹⁴And they will be like a hunted
 gazelle
 and sheep that have nobody to
 gather them.
 Everyone will return to his own
 people
 and flee to his own country.

¹⁵Anyone who is found will be
 stabbed,
 and everyone who is captured
 will be cut down by the sword.

¹⁶Their children will be smashed
 while they watch them;
 their houses will be robbed and
 their wives raped.

¹⁷I'm going to stir up against them
 the Medes,
 who don't think much of silver or
 delight in gold.

¹⁸But their bows will smash young
 men.
 They'll have no love for babies in
 the womb
 or look at children with pity.

¹⁹Then Babylon, the gem of the
 kingdoms,
 the beautiful city the Chaldeans
 are so proud of,
 will be like Sodom and Gomor-
 rah when God destroyed them.

²⁰Nobody will ever live there
 or have his home there for gen-
 erations.
 No Arab will set up his tent,
 nor will shepherds let their

13
 10 Mt 24:29;
 Mk 13:24-
 25; Lk 21
 25; Rv 6
 12-13

flocks rest there.

¹¹But wild animals will lie down there.

Their homes will be full of howling creatures.

Ostriches will have their home there,

and shaggy goats will hop around.

¹²Jackals will howl in her palaces and serpents infest the mansions where they delighted themselves.

Her time is almost up; she'll not be given any more.

Triumph over Babylon

14 The LORD will feel sorry for Jacob and again choose Israel and give them rest in their own country. Foreigners will join them and unite with the people of Jacob. ²Many people will take them and bring them to their own place. The people of Israel will have them as their male and female servants on the LORD's land and will hold as captives those who held them captive and will rule over those who oppressed them.

¹On the day the LORD gives you rest from your pain and trouble and your hard slavery, 'you will mock the king of Babylon and say:

How has the tyrant stopped and his proud raging come to an end!^b

³The LORD has broken the staff of the wicked one, the scepter of the ruler

⁴who struck down people in fury with blows that didn't stop, who trampled on nations in anger,

persecuting them without restraint.

⁷The whole world rests quietly

and breaks into singing.

⁸Even the fir trees are glad about you,

and the cedars of Lebanon say,

"Since you lie there,

nobody has come to cut us down."

⁹The netherworld is excited about you,

to meet you when you come.

It has stirred up the shades of the dead for you,

those who had been leaders on earth.

It makes all who had been kings of the nations get up from their thrones.

¹⁰All of them greet you:

"You too lost your strength as we did,

and you have become like us.

¹¹Your pomp has been brought down to the grave

with the music of your lutes.

Maggot are spread as a bed under you,

and worms cover you."

¹²How you have fallen from heaven, shining star of the morning,

cut down to the ground, you who conquered nations!

¹³Once you thought, "I will go up to heaven

and set up my throne above God's stars.

I'll sit on the mountain of assembly far away in the north.

¹⁴I will go above the high clouds.

I'll be like the most high God."

¹⁵But really you are brought down to the grave,

to the deepest part of the pit.

¹⁶Those who see you stare at you;

they look at you closely and say:

"Isn't this the man who made the earth tremble and shook the kingdoms,

14
12 Rv 6:10,
9:1,
2 Pt 1:19
13, 15 Mt 11
23, Lk 10:15

^bDead Sea Scrolls; Gk; other versions

¹⁷who made the world a desert,
tore down its cities,
and didn't let his captives go
home?"

¹⁸All the kings of the nations, all of
them,
lie asleep in honor, each in his
tomb.

¹⁹But you are thrown out of your
burial place
like some hated thing,
like a garment of those killed,
pierced by a sword,
like a trampled corpse that goes
down to the stones in the pit.

²⁰You will not rejoice those kings,
for you destroyed your country
and killed your people.
The descendants of such evil-
doers will never be mentioned
again.

²¹Get ready to slaughter the sons
for the guilt of their fathers,
so that they will not rise and
possess the earth
and build cities all over the
earth.

²²I will attack them, says the
LORD of armies,
and cut off the name and
remnant of Babylon,
son and grandson, says the
LORD.

²³I will let the porcupine take it
over.
I will make it a marshy land,
says the LORD.
I will sweep it with a broom to
destroy it, says the LORD of
armies.

The LORD against Assyria and the Whole World

²⁴The LORD of armies has sworn:
As I planned it, so will it certainly
happen.
As I decided, so will it be.

²⁵I will smash Assyria in My
country,
trample him down on My hills,
so that his yoke will leave you
and his burden come off your
shoulder.

²⁶This is what I have planned to do
to the whole world:
this is the hand stretched out
against all the nations.

²⁷The LORD of armies has decided
it; who can undo it?
His hand is stretched out; who
can turn it back?

Against the Philistines

²⁸In the year when King Ahas
died, this statement came from God:

²⁹Don't be glad, you Philistines,
that the rod of the one who
struck you is broken.
From that snake's stock will
come an adder,
and his descendant will be a
flying fiery snake.

³⁰The poor will feed in My
pasture,
and the needy will lie down safely,
but I will starve your root to
death
and kill those of you who are
left.

³¹Howl, O gate.
Cry out, O city.
Melt away in terror, all you Phi-
listines.
Smoke is coming from the north,
and not one of his soldiers drops
out of the ranks.

³²What answer will be given to
that nation's ambassadors?
Tell them the LORD has laid the
foundation of Zion.
His people who have suffered
will find refuge there.

Against Moab

15 God's sentence on Moab:
 In the night that Ar is destroyed,
 Moab will be in ruins.
 In the night that Kir is destroyed,
 Moab will be in ruins.
¹The people will go up to their temple.
 Dibon will go up to the high places to weep.
 Moab will be wailing over Nebo and Medeba,
 all their heads made bald and every beard cut off.
¹In their streets they will tie on sackcloth.
 On their roofs and in their squares everybody will be wailing
 and melting away in tears.
⁴Heshbon and Elealeh will cry so loud
 their voices will be heard as far as Jahaz.
 This is why Moab's armed men cry out,
 because Moab is in despair.
⁵My heart cries out for Moab.
 Those who flee will go as far as Zoar
 at Eglath-selishiyah.
 Yes, they will go weeping up the ascent
 to Luhith.
 On the way down to Horonaim
 they will raise a cry over the destruction.
⁶The waters of Nimrim will be a barren desert;
 the grass will dry up, the fresh growth
 will fail, nothing green will be left.
⁷So the wealth they earned and stored
 they will have to carry over the Ravine
 of the Willows.
⁸The cry for help goes throughout

the land of Moab,
 their wailing as far as Eglaim,
 their howling as far as Beer-elim.

⁹Although the water of Dimon is full of blood,
 I will bring even more on Dimon;
 I will bring a lion on the Moabites
 who escape,
 on any who are left in the country.

16 The ruler of Moab will send lambs from Sela
 through the desert to the mount of Zion's daughter.

²Like fluttering birds from a scattered nest

Moab's daughters will be at the crossing places
 of the Arnon:

³"Give us advice, act as an arbitrator,

let your shadow shade us at high noon.

Hide our fugitives.

Don't betray those who are fleeing.

⁴Let the people who have been driven out of Moab
 live in your country.

Shield them from the destroyer."

The extortion will end.

The destruction will be over.

He who tramples on others will vanish from the earth.

⁵And a throne will be set up in love,

and there in David's tent will sit a judge,

faithfully pursuing justice and quick to do right.

⁶We have heard of Moab's pride.

He's very proud.

He's haughty, pompous, and forever bragging;

but his boasts aren't true.

⁷For this, Moab will wail over Moab.

Everyone will wail.

You will mourn for the raisin cakes of Kir-hareseth; you will be utterly crushed.

⁸Heshbon's terraced vineyards will languish,

as will Sibmah's vines,

though once their fine vines struck down the lords of the nations.

Once they reached as far as Jazer and spread out toward the desert.

Its branches crept out and crossed the sea.

⁹This is why I will weep as Jazer weeps, for Sibmah's vine.

Heshbon and Elealeh, I will flood you with my tears.

The shouting of battle will fall on your summer fruits and your harvest.

¹⁰Joy and delight will be taken away from this gardenland.

Nobody will sing in the vineyards,

nobody will shout, trampling out wine in the vats;

the shouting of the workers will cease.

¹¹This is why my heart moans for Moab like a lyre,

and my inner being for Kir-hareseth.

¹²It will become evident that Moab is wearing himself out on his high place;

he will come into his holy place to pray, but will fail.

¹³This is what the LORD said about Moab long ago. "And now the LORD says: "Within three years, like the years of a hired man,

Moab's glory will be despised; and in spite of his great crowd those who are left will be very few and without honor."

Against Damascus

17 God's sentence on Damascus:

See, Damascus will cease to be a city

and will become a heap of ruins.

²Her looted cities will be deserted

and be used for flocks to lie down with nobody to scare them.

³There will no longer be a bulwark to protect Ephraim,

for Damascus will no longer be a kingdom.

What is left of Aram

and the glory of Israel will be alike,

says the LORD of armies.

⁴On that day Jacob's glory will decrease,

and his fat body will get lean.

⁵It will be like a reaper gathering grain

with his arm cutting off the heads,

like one gleaned heads of grain in the valley of Rephaim—

⁶only gleanings will be left there. It will be like an olive tree that

is beaten with poles—

only two or three berries left at the top of the highest branch.

four or five on the branches of the fruitful tree,

says the LORD, the God of Israel.

⁷On that day a man will turn for help to his Maker,

and his eyes will be looking to the Holy One of Israel.

⁸No more will he turn for help to the altars his hands made

¹⁷
8 Rv 9:20

or look to the Asherah posts or incense altars his fingers made.

⁹On that day his fortress cities will be forsaken, like the wooded heights and summits people forsook for fear of the Israelites, and there will be a barren waste.

¹⁰It is because you forgot the God who saved you and didn't remember the Rock that sheltered you. So you planted the plants of the idol of Delight and set the vine slips of a strange god.

¹¹The day you planted them you fenced them in, and the next morning you made your seed sprout. But the crop will vanish on a day of grief and incurable pain.

The Fate of Assyria

¹²Listen! The noise of many people!

They make a noise like the thundering sea, and the people roar like the roaring of mighty waters.

¹³Yes, the people roar like the roaring of many waters. But when He rebukes them, they run far away and are driven like the chaff before the wind on the hills, like the whirling dust before the storm.

¹⁴Though terrifying in the evening, before morning they will be gone.

This is what will happen to those who plundered us and will be the lot of those who robbed us.

Against the Ethiopian Kings of Egypt

18 O land of the buzzing wings on the other side of the rivers of Ethiopia,

¹that sends ambassadors in papyrus boats on the waters of the Nile!

Go, you swift messengers, to a people tall and smooth, a people dreaded near and far, a nation strong and victorious, whose land rivers cut through.

²All you people in the world, living on the earth, look at the sign raised on the mountains, listen as the horn is blown.

³The LORD has told me this: I will watch quietly from where I live, like the sun shining on a meadow, like a cloud of dew in the heat of the harvest.

⁴Before the harvest, when blossoming is over and the bud gets to be a ripening grape, He will cut off the tendrils with pruning hooks and chop away the spreading branches,

⁵leaving them all for the vultures on the hills and for the beasts of the field. The vultures will linger on them through the summer, and all the beasts of the field will spend the winter on them.

⁷At that time gifts will be brought to the LORD of armies from a people tall and smooth, a people dreaded near and far, a nation strong and victorious, whose land rivers cut through—

brought to Mount Zion,
where the name of the LORD of
armies is.

Against Egypt

19 God's sentence on Egypt:
The LORD will come to Egypt
riding on a fast cloud.

Before Him the Egyptian idols
will tremble,
and their courage will melt
away.

¹I will stir up Egyptian against
Egyptian,
brother will fight against
brother,
neighbor against neighbor,
city against city, and kingdom
against kingdom.

²The Egyptians will lose courage.
I will confuse their plans.
They will look for help from their
idols,
their sorcerers, mediums, and
fortune-tellers.

³Then I will hand over the
Egyptians to a hard master,
and a cruel king will rule over
them, says the Lord, the LORD
of armies.

⁴Then the waters of the Nile will
vanish,
and the river will completely dry
up.

⁵The channels will stink.
Egypt's streams will thin down
and dry up.

The reeds and weeds will
wither.

⁶The rushes by the Nile in the
delta
and everything sown beside the
Nile
will wither, be blown away, and
be no more.

⁷Those who fish will weep,
and all who throw the hook into

the Nile will cry out loud.
Those who spread their nets on
the water will feel sick at
heart.

⁸Desperate will be those who
work with flax,
the people who comb and weave
cotton.

⁹The weavers will feel hopeless
and the workers sad.

¹⁰The leaders of Tanis are utterly
foolish.

Her wise men, advising
Pharaoh,
give senseless advice.

How can you tell Pharaoh,

"I'm a son of wise men, a son of
ancient kings"?

¹¹Where, now, are your wise men?
They should tell you now and let
you know

what the LORD of armies is
planning against Egypt.

¹²The leaders of Tanis have be-
come foolish,
and the leaders of Memphis are
deceived.

The chiefs of their tribes mis-
lead the Egyptians.

¹³The LORD pours into them a
dizzy spirit
so they will make the Egyptians
stagger in everything they do
as a drunkard staggers in his
vomit.

¹⁴There won't be anything any-
body can do for Egypt,
whether head or tail, palm or
reed.

¹⁵On that day Egyptians will be
like women. They will tremble and
be terrified because the LORD of
armies will shake His fist at them.

¹⁶Judah's country will be a terror to
Egypt. Everyone to whom this is
mentioned will be frightened by

19
2 Mt 24:7
Mt 13:8
Lk 21:10
11-12 1 Co
1:20

what the LORD of armies is planning against her.

"On that day there will be five cities in Egypt talking the language of Canaan and swearing loyalty to the LORD of armies. One of them will be called the City of the Sun. "That day there will be an altar for the LORD in the middle of Egypt and a pillar for the LORD near its border. "They will be a reminder and a witness to the LORD of armies in Egypt. So when they cry to the LORD on account of those who oppress them, He will send them a savior to defend and rescue them. "The LORD will show Himself to the Egyptians, so that the Egyptians will know the LORD that day and worship Him with sacrifices and food offerings and make vows to the LORD and carry out their vows. "Though the LORD struck Egypt, He will heal them. Whenever they come back to the LORD, He will listen to their prayers and heal them.

"On that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will come to Egypt and the Egyptians to Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians. "On that day Israel will join as a third party with Egypt and Assyria to be a blessing in the middle of the world. "The LORD of armies will bless them, saying: "Blessed are My people—the Egyptians, and those My hands have made—the Assyrians, and My possession—Israel."

No Alliance with Egypt

20 It happened in the year Sargon, king of Assyria, sent his commander-in-chief against Ashdod to fight and take it. "At that time

the LORD said to Isaiah, the son of Amoz: Go, take off the sackcloth you're wearing on your hips, and take off your sandals. And he did it, going naked and barefoot. "Then the LORD said: As My servant Isaiah went naked and barefoot three years as a reminder and a warning of what will happen to Egypt and Ethiopia. "so the king of Assyria will lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Ethiopia, young and old, naked, barefoot, and with their buttocks uncovered, to show Egypt's shame. "Then all will be terrified and feel ashamed because of Ethiopia, in whom they trusted, and of Egypt, of whom they were proud. "And those who live there near the sea will say that day, "If this is what happens to those we trusted and fled to, to get help and deliverance from the king of Assyria, how can we ever escape?"

Cyrus Will Take Babylon

21 God's sentence on the wilderness by the sea:

Like whirlwinds in the south sweeping on,

it will come from the wilderness, from a dreadful country.

"I am shown a stern vision:

The robber goes on robbing, and the destroyer goes on destroying.

Go up, Elam! Besiege them, Media!

I will put an end to all the groaning she has caused.

"This is why my body is full of anguish;

pains grip me like a woman having a child.

What I hear makes me squirm, and what I see terrifies me.

‘I’m bewildered and I shudder.
The evening twilight I long for
makes me tremble.

³They prepare the table,
spread the cloth to eat and
drink.

Get up, you princes,
grease your shields.

⁶The Lord says this to me:

“Go, have someone watch and
tell what he sees.

⁷When he sees pairs of horse-
men,
riders on donkeys,
riders on camels,
he should watch carefully, very
carefully.”

⁸The watchman calls:ⁱ

“Lord, I stand on the watch-
tower all day
and stand guard every night.

⁹See, there comes a troop of men,
horsemen in pairs.”

Then he said:

“*Babylon has fallen; it has fal-
len!*

And all the idols of her gods are
smashed to the ground.”

¹⁰O my threshed and winnowed
one!

I’m telling you what I hear from
the LORD of armies, the God
of Israel.

Against Edom

¹God’s sentence on Dumah [Edom]:
Someone is calling to me from
Seir,

“Watchman, what time of night
is it?

Watchman, what time of night is
it?”

¹²The watchman says,

“The morning is coming and the
night too.

If you must ask, ask; then come
again.”

Against Arabia

¹³God’s sentence on Arabia:

O caravans of Dedanites who
spend the nights
in the scrubland, in Arabia,

¹⁴bring water for the thirsty.

You who live in the country of
Tema,

bring bread to those who are
fleeing.

¹⁵They’re running away from the
swords, drawn swords,

bent bows, and the press of
battle.

Against Kedar

¹⁶The Lord says this to me: “Be-
fore a year is over, as a hired man
reckons years, all of Kedar’s glory
will be gone. ¹⁷And what is left of
the archers, Kedar’s warriors, will
be few, for the LORD, the God of
Israel, has spoken it.”

Against Jerusalem

22 God’s sentence on the Valley
of Vision:

What has happened to you now,
that all of you go up on the
housetops?

²Everybody is shouting;

it’s a noisy city, a wild town.

The sword didn’t kill those of
you who were killed,
and your dead didn’t die in bat-
tle.

³All your leaders fled together
and were captured without
shooting an arrow.

All of your soldiers were taken
prisoner

as they fled together far away.

⁴And so I say,

²¹
^{9 Rv 14:8.}
^{10:2}

ⁱAdopting the reading of I Qumran’s Dead Sea Scrolls Isaiah A

"Look away from me,
and let me cry bitterly.
Don't try to comfort me,
because my people will be de-
stroyed."

⁶The Lord, the LORD of armies,
has in store a day of panic,
a day of trampling and con-
fusion in the Valley of Vision,
a battering down of walls,
and a cry for help on the hills.

⁷Elam takes up her quivers,
Aram harnesses her chariot
horses,
and Kir uncovers her shields.

⁸Then your choicest valleys will
be full of chariots,
and the horsemen will stand
ready to attack the gate.

⁹Then the defense of Judah will
be removed.
On that day you will look for the
weapons in the House of the
Forest

¹⁰and see in how many places
David's wall is broken down.
You will collect the water in the
lower pool.

¹¹You will count the houses in
Jerusalem
and tear down the houses to
build walls that can't be
climbed.

¹²You will make a reservoir be-
tween the two walls
to hold the water of the old pool.
But you won't turn to the One
who is doing this
or look to Him who planned it
long ago.

¹³On that day the Lord, the LORD
of armies, will call you
to weep and cry, to make your-
selves bald
and fasten on sackcloth.

¹⁴But instead you will rejoice and
celebrate,
killing cattle and butchering
sheep.

You'll eat meat and drink wine
and say, "Let's eat and drink;
tomorrow we die."

¹⁵The LORD of armies told it in my
ears. Certainly this wrong will not
be forgiven you till you die, says the
Lord GOD of armies.

Against Shebna

¹⁶The Lord, the LORD of armies,
says this:

Go to this man Shebna,
manager of the palace, and say:

¹⁷What right do you have here,
and who are your relatives here
that you cut for yourself a tomb,
cutting it high up,
carving a resting-place for your-
self in the rock?

¹⁸Look, the LORD will take firm
hold of you
and violently hurl you away.

¹⁹He will roll you up thoroughly
and throw you like a ball into a
wide-open country.

There you will die,
there where your splendid
chariots are;
you are the disgrace of your
master's family.

²⁰I will push you from your place,
and you will be pulled down
from your position.

²¹On that day I will call my
servant Eliakim, Hilkiyah's son.

²²I will dress him in your robe
and fasten it with your sash.
I will give him your authority,
and he will be a father
to those who live in Jerusalem
and to the people of Judah.

²³And I will lay the key of David's

²²
^{15 1 Co 15 32}
^{22 Rv 3 7}

ⁱHeb man. The word for "man" is sometimes confused with "Aram"

house on his shoulder.
 When he opens a door, nobody
 can shut it.
 When he shuts it, nobody can
 open it.
²³And I will fasten him like a peg
 in a sure place,
 and he will be a throne of honor
 for his father's family.
²⁴And they will hang on him
 the whole weight of his father's
 family,
 sons and grandsons,
 all the least vessels,
 from bowls to jars of every kind.
²⁵On that day, says the LORD of
 armies,
 the peg fastened in a sure place
 will give way.
 It will be cut down and fall,
 and the load on it will be cut off,
 for the LORD has said so.

Against Tyre

23 God's sentence on Tyre:
 Howl, ships of Tarshish!
 Your port of entry is destroyed.
 They will get the news on
 Cyprus.
²Feel stunned, you who live near
 the sea,
 you businessmen of Sidon,
 you whose goods cross the sea.
³On the great sea the grain of the
 Nile,
 the harvest of the river,
 provides her an income.
 She has a profitable business
 among the nations.
⁴Feel desperate, Sidon,
 because the sea has spoken,
 the fortification by the sea is
 saying,
 "I've had no birthpains or given
 birth.
 I've raised no young men,

brought up no virgins.
⁵When the news reaches Egypt,
 they will squirm as they hear
 about Tyre.
⁶Cross over to Tarshish.
 Howl, you who live near the sea.
⁷Is this your happy city,
 founded long ago,
 whose feet carried her to settle
 in distant places?
⁸Who planned such a thing
 against Tyre,
 that regal city,
 whose businessmen are princes,
 whose traders are the honored
 men in the world?
⁹The LORD of armies planned it
 to pierce the pride of all their
 beautiful people,
 to humiliate all their honored
 men in the world.
¹⁰Overflow your country like the
 Nile, daughter of Tarshish.
 You no longer have a harbor.^k
¹¹He has stretched His hand over
 the sea
 to shake kingdoms.
 The LORD gives the order
 to destroy Canaan's fortifica-
 tions.
¹²He says, "You will not be so
 confidently happy anymore.
 O ravished virgin daughter of
 Sidon!
 Start out, cross to Cyprus;
 even there you will find no rest."
¹³Look at the land, the Chaldeans
 are there.
 The people are not fortunate.
 They were destined for ships,
 but the Chaldeans have set up
 siege towers
 to completely destroy their
 palaces
 and turn them to ruins.

²³
 8 Rv 18:23

^kIn other words, take up farming instead of shipping

¹⁴Cry out loud, ships of Tarshish, because your fortress will be plundered. ¹⁵On that day Tyre will be forgotten for 70 years. But in the life of a certain king, at the end of the 70 years, Tyre will fare like the prostitute in the song:

¹⁶Take your lyre,
go around in the city,
O forgotten prostitute!
Play well,
sing many songs
so you'll be remembered.

¹⁷At the end of 70 years the LORD will come to help Tyre, and she will go back to the pay she gets as a prostitute and go *lusting with all the world's kingdoms* on the earth. ¹⁸Then her profits and her pay will not be stored or hoarded but dedicated to the LORD, for her profits belong to those who worship the LORD, so they will have plenty to eat and fine clothes to wear.

¹⁷ Rv 17.2
¹⁸ 3.9
24
⁶ Rv 18.22

The Isaiah Apocalypse

The LORD to Punish the Earth

24 The LORD will strip the earth and lay it bare. He will tear up the ground and scatter the people living on it.

¹Priest and people will be treated alike,
a master like his slave,
a mistress like her maid,
a buyer like a seller,
a borrower like a lender,
a debtor like a creditor.

²The earth will be completely emptied and plundered, for the LORD has decreed this thing.

⁴The earth will dry up and wither.

The world will languish and wither.

The highest of earth's people will languish.

⁵The earth will lie polluted under those who live on it because they've broken the laws,
violated the statute,
and canceled the everlasting covenant.

⁶This is why a curse will consume the earth,
and those who live on it will be punished for their sin.
This is why those who live on it will die out,
and only a few people will be left.

⁷The new wine will dry up,
and the vine languish.
All the happy-hearted people will groan.

⁸Joyful tambourine playing will stop.
The noise of shouting people will die down.
The happy music of the lyre will stop.

⁹They'll sing no more as they drink wine.
Liquor will taste bitter to those who drink it.

¹⁰The city lying waste will be torn down.
Every house will be shut so that nobody can enter.

¹¹In the streets people will wail over their wine.
All joy has had its day,
and happiness is banished from the land.

¹²The city is left in ruins;
the gate is battered to pieces.

¹³This is what it will be like on the earth,
among the nations:

it will be like olives struck down,
like gleanings after the grapes
are picked.

¹⁴People will raise their voices
and sing loud;
in the west they will sing glee-
fully about the LORD's
majesty:

¹⁵So they will glorify the LORD in
the lands,
even the name of the LORD, the
God of Israel, in the lands by
the sea.

¹⁶From the most distant parts of
the world we'll hear songs:
"Glory to the Righteous One!"
But I kept saying,
"I'm troubled, I'm troubled!"
Woe to the traitors in their
treachery,
who continue in their treach-
ery."

¹⁷ ¹⁴ ²¹ ²⁴ ²⁵

¹⁷Terror, a pit, and a snare
will come on you who live in the
world.

¹⁸When anyone hears a terrifying
noise and runs away,
he'll fall into the pit.
When he climbs out of the pit,
he'll be caught in the snare.
The windows in the sky will be
opened,
and the foundations of the earth
will shake.

¹⁹The earth will be broken into
pieces;
the earth will rock back and
forth;
it will shake violently.

²⁰The earth will stagger like a
drunkard
and sway back and forth like a
hut in a garden.

Her rebellion lies so heavy on
her
she will fall and not get up
again.

²¹On that day the LORD will pun-
ish heaven's army in heaven
and the earth's kings on earth.

²²They'll be gathered like prison-
ers in a dungeon
and be shut up in prison.
And after a long time they'll be
punished.

²³Then the moon will turn pale,
and the sun will hide in shame
because the LORD of armies will
be King
on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem,
and before His elders He will be
glorious.

A Prayer

25 LORD, You are my God.
I glorify You, I praise Your
name,

for You have done wonders.
You have truly and faithfully
carried out
what You planned long ago.

²You make a city a heap,
a fortified city ruins,
and a foreign fortress ceases to
be a town
and will never be rebuilt.

³This is why strong people honor
You
and cities of terrifying nations
fear You.

⁴You are a stronghold for the
weak,
a protection for the poor when
they're in trouble,
a shelter against the rainstorm,
a shade against the heat.
For a tyrant's blast is like a
winter storm.

⁵like drought in a dry place:

¹Heb uncertain

You subdue the noise of foreigners,
the song of tyrants quiets down
like heat in the shade of a cloud.

The LORD's Banquet

⁶On this mountain the LORD of armies
will prepare for all people a banquet of rich foods,
a festival with wines kept on their sediment,
rich foods full of marrow,
wines kept on their sediment and filtered.

⁷On this mountain He will remove the veil of grief covering all people
and the web covering all nations.

⁸He will swallow up death forever.

and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces. 25
1 Co 15:54
Ro 7:17
21:4

He will remove the disgrace of His people from the whole world;

for the LORD has said so.

⁹On that day they will say:

"This is our God;

we look to Him to save us.

This is the LORD we wait for.

Let us be glad and delighted that He saved us."

¹⁰For the LORD's hand will rest on this mountain.

Moab will be trampled on in his place

as straw is trampled in the manure pit.

¹¹He will spread out his hands in the middle of it

as a swimmer spreads them to swim,

but He will humble his pride in spite of these movements of his hands.

¹²He will throw down your high

fortifications,
lay them low in the dust,
and level them to the ground.

Songs of Salvation

26 On that day this song will be sung in the country of Judah:

We have a strong city whose inner and outer walls are set up for deliverance.

²Open your gates so that a righteous nation,
a nation that stays faithful, may come in.

³You keep in peace the unshakable mind
because it trusts in You.

⁴Trust the LORD forever because the LORD is an everlasting Rock.

⁵Those who live high up He will bring low.

He will humble the inaccessible city,

leveling it to the ground and throwing it into the dust.

⁶The poor will trample on it with their feet,
and the needy will stamp on it.

⁷The path of the righteous is straight;

You clear a straight way for the righteous.

⁸Yes, in the way Your laws require

we wait eagerly for You, LORD.

We desire Your name and the memory of You.

⁹My soul longs for You at night.

Yes, my spirit in me eagerly looks for You.

When Your laws are in the world,

people living in it learn what is right.

¹⁰When a wicked person gets sympathy,

- he doesn't learn to be righteous.
He'll keep on doing wrong in a
righteous country
and will never see the LORD's
majesty.
- ¹¹LORD, Your hand is raised to
strike,
but they don't see it.
They should turn pale when they
see
how zealous You are for Your
people,
how the fire of Your anger will
devour them.
- ¹²LORD, You will make us prosper
since You are the One doing all
our works for us.
- ¹³LORD our God,
other masters besides You have
ruled over us,
but only You do we acknowledge
by Your name.
- ¹⁴The dead don't live,
and their ghosts don't rise;
You have punished and de-
stroyed them
and wiped out every remem-
brance of them.
- ¹⁵Add to the nation, LORD;
add to the nation.
Honor it.
Widen all the boundaries of the
country.
- ¹⁶LORD, in trouble the people miss
You.
They are oppressed by the whis-
per
that You might punish them.
- ¹⁷Like a pregnant woman ready to
give birth,
writhing and crying out in her
pains,
so we have been in Your pres-
ence, LORD.

26
11 Heb 10 27
Ru 13 5
20 9
20 Mt 6 6
Heb 10 37

- ¹⁸We carry a child and go into
labor,
but we give birth to wind.
We can't save our country,
and new people aren't born into
the world.
- ¹⁹But You dead will live;
their^m dead bodies will rise.
You who sleep in the ground,
wake up and sing,
for Your dew is the dew of the
fields,
and the earth will give birth to
those who were dead.
- ²⁰Come, my people, enter into your
rooms,
and shut the doors behind you.
Hide a brief moment
till He isn't angry anymore.
- ²¹You see, the LORD is coming out
of His place
to punish the people on earth for
their sins.
The earth will uncover the blood
spilled on her
and no longer cover her mur-
dered ones.

Leviathan

- 27** On that day
the LORD will punish
with His fierce sword, great and
strong,
Leviathan, the fleeing snake,
Leviathan, the winding snake,
and will kill the monster in the
sea.

The Delightful Vineyard

- ²On that day
there will be a delightful vine-
yard.
Sing about it.
³If the LORD am its Keeper.
I water it all the time
to keep its leaves from falling.

^mVersions: Heb my

I watch it day and night
 'but receive no wine.^a
 If it provided me with thorns and
 briars,
 I would fight them and burn
 them altogether.
⁹On the other hand, if they want
 My protection,
 they should make peace with
 Me.
 yes, they should make peace
 with Me.

Israel Pardoned

¹⁰In the coming days Jacob will
 take root.
 Israel will blossom and sprout
 and grow fruit that will fill the
 world.

¹¹Will the LORD strike them
 as He struck others who struck
 them?
 Will He kill as He killed the
 others?

¹²By driving them away
 and chasing them
 He has become their Adversary.
 By His fierce blast He will get
 rid of them
 when the east wind blows.

¹³In this way Jacob's wrong can be
 wiped out.

Here is what will happen to take
 away their sins:
 All the altar stones are to be-
 come powdered limestone;
 no Asherah posts or incense al-
 tars are to be left standing.

¹⁴The fortified city is alone,
 left deserted
 and forsaken like the wilder-
 ness.

There the calf will browse;
 there it will lie down
 and finish chewing its twigs.
¹⁵When its branches are with-
 ered,
 they will be broken off.
 The women will come and burn
 them.
 It is because these people don't
 understand.
 This is why He who made them
 will not feel sorry for them,
 and He who formed them
 will not be kind to them.

¹⁶On that day
 the LORD will thresh His grain
 from the flowing Euphrates
 to the ravine of Egypt.
 And you people of Israel
 will be gathered up one by one.

¹⁷On that day
 o loud trumpet will be blown.
 Then those who are wandering
 in Assyria
 and those who are driven away
 to Egypt
 will come and worship the LORD
 on the holy mountain in Jeru-
 salem.

Isaiah Preaches to the Leaders

The Drunkards of Samaria

28 Woe to the proud garland
 of the drunkards of Ephraim
 and to the fading flower of won-
 derful beauty
 that is on the head^o in the
 fertile valley
 where men lie dead drunk with
 wine.

¹The Lord has one who is strong
 and mighty.

^aa slight correction from Heb I have no anger

^oThis head is Samaria with its circle of towers on top of a hill rising in the middle of a fertile valley.

who is like a hailstorm, a destructive tempest,
like a storm with an overwhelming flood;
and he will violently strike them to the ground.

⁷The proud garland of the drunkards of Ephraim
will be trampled underfoot.

⁸And the fading flower of wonderful beauty
that is on the head in the fertile valley
will be like an early fig,
ripe before summer comes—you see it,
and as soon as you pick it,
you eat it.

⁹On that day the LORD of armies
will be a beautiful garland and a wonderful diadem
for His people who are left.

¹⁰He will be a spirit of justice
for him who sits as a judge,
and strength for those who throw back
the enemy at the gate.

28
11-12 1 Co
14 21
16 Ro 9 33
10 11 Ep
2 20 1 Pt
2 4 6 7

Against the Priests and Prophets

⁷These men also stagger with wine
and reel with liquor.
Priests and prophets totter from drink.

They are dazed with wine.
They go wrong with liquor.
They stagger when they see visions
and stumble when they judge.

⁸Every table is covered with filthy vomit;
there isn't a clean spot left.

⁹Whom does he think he's teaching?

Whom does he explain his message to?

Babies just weaned from milk
and taken from the breasts?

¹⁰There's rule upon rule,
rule upon rule,
line upon line,
line upon line,
here a little and there a little."

¹¹With odd-sounding speech and a strange language

He will talk to these people.

¹²He had said to them,

"This is the place to rest.

Give rest to those who are tired.
This is the place to be refreshed."

But they wouldn't listen.

¹³So what the LORD now says is to them

"just rule upon rule,

rule upon rule,

line upon line,

line upon line.

here a little and there a little."

As a result, when they leave,

they will fall backwards

and be hurt,

trapped, and captured.

Evil Rulers Versus the Cornerstone

¹⁴So listen to what the LORD says,
you mockers who rule these people in Jerusalem.

¹⁵You say, "We made a covenant with death
and an agreement with the grave.

When the overwhelming scourge passes through,
it will not come to us,

for we have made lies our refuge
and falsehood our shelter."

¹⁶This is why the Lord GOD says:

I am laying a stone in Zion,

a well-tested Stone,

a precious Cornerstone as a solid foundation.

Anyone who believes in Him, will not have to run away.

- ¹⁷I will make justice a measuring line
and righteousness a plumbline.
Then hail will sweep away your
refuge of lies,
and a flood of water will wash
away your shelter.
- ¹⁸Then your covenant with death
will be canceled;
your agreement with the grave
will not stand.
When the overwhelming scourge
passes through,
you will be beaten down by it.
- ¹⁹As often as it passes through,
it will snatch you.
Morning after morning it will
pass through,
day and night;
if you understood this news,
you would feel sheer terror.
- ²⁰The bed is too short to stretch
yourself,
the blanket too narrow to wrap
around you.
- ²¹The LORD will rise up as on
Mount Perazim.
He will rouse Himself as in the
valley of Gibeon
to do His work, strange as it is,
and to perform His task, surpris-
ing as it is.
- ²²Stop scoffing now,
or you'll have stronger chains
put on you.
*for I have heard the Lord GOD of
armies is determined
to destroy the whole country.*
- ²³Listen! Hear what I say.
Pay attention! Hear what I tell
you.
- ²⁴Does a farmer just go on plowing
when he should sow?
Does he only tear up and harrow
his ground?

^PHeb for right place is uncertain

^QAriel means an altar-hearth

- ²⁵When he has smoothed the sur-
face,
doesn't he scatter dill and sow
cummin,
plant wheat in rows
and put barley in the right
place^P
and spelt on the edges?
- ²⁶He is disciplined
and taught what is right by his
God.
- ²⁷Dill isn't threshed with a sledge,
and wagon wheels aren't rolled
over cummin,
but dill is beaten out with a rod
and cummin with a stick.
- ²⁸Grain for bread is beaten out,
but we don't thresh it forever.
When we roll our wagon wheels
over it,
we spread it out and don't crush
it.
- ²⁹This too comes from the LORD of
armies.
His plans are wonderful;
He brings about great results.

The Siege of Jerusalem

- 29** Woe to Ariel Ariel, ^Q
the city where David
camped.
Add a year or two,
let the festivals come around,
²and I will oppress Ariel
and produce moaning and be-
moaning
so she will become an altar-
hearth to Me.
- ³I will camp all around you,
besiege you with towers,
and put up ramparts against
you.
- ⁴When you are down,
you will speak from the ground,
and when you're low,

you'll utter a muffled sound
from the dust.

Your voice will come
like that of a ghost out of the
ground,
and what you say will come
peeping out of the soil.

⁵Yet the horde of foreigners
around you will become like
fine dust
and the horde of tyrants like
chaff blowing away.
It will happen suddenly, unex-
pectedly.

⁶The LORD of armies will visit
you with thunder,
earthquakes, and loud noise,
with a whirlwind, storm, and
devouring flames of fire.

⁷The horde of all the nations
fighting against Ariel,
all the wagons, the siege works
around her, and those who opp-
ress her
will be like a dream, a vision in
the night.

⁸It will be like a hungry man
dreaming he's eating
but waking up to find he's still
hungry,

or a thirsty man dreaming he's
drinking
but waking up to find he's faint
and parched with thirst.

So will be the horde of all the
nations
fighting against Mount Zion.

⁹Look at each other and be
shocked.

Look around in anxiety and be
blind.

Get drunk without wine
and stagger without liquor.

¹⁰For the LORD will pour out on
you
a spirit of a deep sleep.
He will shut your eyes, you
prophets,

and will cover your heads, you
seers.

¹¹And to you the visions of all this
will be like writing in a sealed scroll
that men give to one who can read.
"Please read this," they say.

"I can't read it," he answers.
"It's sealed."

¹²Then they give the scroll to one
who can't read. "Please read it,"
they say.

"I can't read," he answers.

¹³The Lord says:

*These people come near Me with
their mouths
and honor Me with their lips,
but their hearts are far away
from Me,
and their way of worshiping Me
is with rote precepts of men.*

¹⁴This is why I will again do some-
thing extraordinary to these
people,

adding marvel to marvel.
*The wisdom of their wise men
will perish,
and the intelligence of their in-
telligent men will vanish.*

¹⁵Woe to those who keep their
plans

hidden deeply from the LORD.
They do their work in the dark
and say, "Is there anyone who
sees us

or knows about us?"

¹⁶How wrong you are!

Is a potter to be treated like his
clay?

Should what is made say about
him who made it,

"He didn't make me"?

And what is formed say about
him who formed it,

"He doesn't understand"?

¹⁷In just a little while

29
10 Ro 11:4
11-12 Ru 5:1
13 Mt 15:8-9
Mt 7:6-7
Col 2:22
14 1 Co 1:19
16 Ro 9:20

will not Lebanon turn into a garden-land
and the garden-land be considered a forest?

¹⁸On that day the deaf will hear the words written in a scroll, and the blind coming out of their gloom and darkness will see.

¹⁹The humble will find a new joy in the LORD,
and the poorest of people will delight in the Holy One of Israel.

²⁰The tyrant will be gone, the scoffer will be no more, and all who look for ways to do wrong will be destroyed—

²¹those who accuse others of being sinners
and try to trap those who uphold justice in court
and with empty argument take away the rights of a righteous man.

¹⁸⁻¹⁹ Mt 11:5
Lk 7:22

²²The LORD, who freed Abraham, says this about the people of Jacob:

Jacob will no longer be ashamed; nor will Jacob's face turn pale.

²³When he or his children see what I've done among them, they will treat My name as holy and treat the Holy One of Jacob as holy and stand in awe of the God of Israel.

²⁴Then those whose spirits went astray will know and understand, and those who criticized will receive instruction.

Against Looking to Egypt for Protection

30 The LORD says:
Woe to the rebellious children.

They carry out plans but not Mine.

They weave alliances without My Spirit
in order to add sin to sin.

²Without asking Me, they leave to go down to Egypt to take refuge in Pharaoh's protection and shelter in Egypt's shadow.

³And so you will be disappointed with Pharaoh's protection, and you who took refuge in Egypt's shadow will be ashamed.

⁴His officials are at Tanis, and his ambassadors have reached Hanes.

⁵Everybody will be disappointed with a people who couldn't help them, who could give no benefit or help but only bring shame and disgrace.

⁶A statement about the animals in the Negev:

In the land of trouble and anguish

there is the lion and the lioness, the viper and the flying snake.

There they carry their riches on the backs of young donkeys and their treasures on camels' humps

to a people who can't help them.

⁷Egypt's help is worthless, futile. That's why I've called her the Boaster-Who-Only-Sits.

⁸Come now, write it on a tablet, and inscribe it on a scroll in their presence, so it will be there in the future, a witness forever—

⁹that they are a rebellious people and lying sons, children who refuse to listen to

- the LORD's instruction.
- ¹⁰They say to the seers, "Don't see,"
and to those who have visions,
"Don't have visions that tell us
what is right.
Tell us what we like.
See illusions."
¹¹Turn aside from the way, leave
the path.
Remove the Holy One of Israel
from our sight."
¹²So the Holy One of Israel says:
Because you despise this warn-
ing
and trust in oppression and
crookedness
and depend on them,
¹³this wrong will be to you
like a crack in a high wall ready
to fall,
bulging toward you,
and suddenly, suddenly it
crashes.
¹⁴Its crash is like breaking a pot-
ter's jar,
smashed without a concern for
it,
with not a piece big enough to
get fire from the hearth
or dip water from a pool.
¹⁵The Lord GOD, the Holy One of
Israel, says:
By returning and being at rest
you will be saved.
By being quiet and trusting you
will be strong.
But you refuse.
¹⁶"No," you answer,
"we'll flee on horses."
And so you will flee.
And, "we'll ride on fast horses."
And so your pursuers will be
fast too.
¹⁷A thousand will run away when
one threatens,
and you will run away when five
threaten,

till you are left alone
like a flagpole on the top of a
mountain
and like a signpost on a hill.
¹⁸But the LORD is waiting to be
kind to you.
This is why He rises to take pity
on you.
for the LORD is a just God.
Happy are all who look to Him
with confidence.

Prosperity to Come

¹⁹You people living in Zion and in
Jerusalem, you will not weep any-
more. The LORD will certainly be
kind to you. As soon as He hears
your cry, He will answer you.
²⁰The Lord may give you the bread of
trouble and the water of distress.
But He who is your Teacher will no
more be hidden from you; with your
own eyes you will see your Teacher.
²¹Whenever you have to turn right
or left, you will hear a voice behind
you tell you, "This is the way. Fol-
low it." ²²Then you will consider
unclean your idols covered with sil-
ver and your images overlaid with
gold. You will throw them away as
unclean things. "Out with you," you
will tell them.
²³The Lord will give you rain for
the seed you sow in the ground, and
the grain the ground produces will
be rich and nourishing. On that day
your cattle will graze in large pas-
tures. ²⁴The oxen and the donkeys
that cultivate the ground will eat a
mixed and tasty fodder that has
been winnowed with shovel and
fork. ²⁵On every lofty mountain
and every high hill there will be
brooks and streams of water on that
day of the great slaughter when
mighty men fall. ²⁶Then the light of
the moon will be like the light of
the sun, and the light of the sun seven

times as strong, like the light of seven days—on the day when the LORD will bandage His people's broken limbs and heal the wounds He made.

God Will Triumph

²⁷Look, the LORD's name is coming from far,

His anger burning and rising in thick smoke.

His mouth is full of fury,

His tongue like a devouring flame.

²⁸and His breath is like an overflowing stream

reaching to the neck.

He comes to sift the nations with a sieve that destroys,

to put in the jaws of the peoples a bridle to lead them astray.

²⁹But you will sing

as on the night of a holy festival, your hearts will be happy as one

with a flute on the way to the LORD's mountain,

to the Rock of Israel.

³⁰And the LORD will make His wonderful voice be heard

and show you His arm coming down with furious anger

and a devouring flame of fire, a cloudburst of rain and hail.

³¹The LORD's voice will terrify Assyria

when He strikes with His rod.

³²Each time the rod passes through with which the LORD punishes,

it will be to the beat of tambourines and lyres.

Battling with brandished arm, He will fight against them.

³³Tophet was long ago prepared, yes, it is made ready for the king,

made deep and wide and piled

high with plenty of burning logs.

The LORD's blast, like a torrent of sulfur,

will set it on fire.

Don't Trust in Egypt

31 Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help

and depend on horses,

and trust in chariots because they are many

and in war horses because they are very strong,

but who don't look to the Holy One of Israel

or go to the LORD for help.

²But He is wise too

and can bring disaster.

He doesn't cancel His threats

but rises against the people who join in wrongdoing

and against any who help those who do wrong.

³The Egyptians are human, not divine.

Their horses are flesh, not spirit.

When the LORD stretches out His hand,

the one who gives help will stumble,

and the one who receives help will fall,

and they will all perish together.

The LORD's Sword Against Assyria

⁴The LORD said to me:

As a lion or a young lion growls over his prey

when a crowd of shepherds is called out against him,

and isn't frightened by their shouting

or subdued by their noise,

so the LORD of armies will come down to fight

³⁰
³³ ¹⁹ ²⁰
²¹ ⁸

on Mount Zion and on its hill.

⁵As birds that hover,
so the LORD of armies will protect Jerusalem.

He will protect and rescue it,
spare it and save it.

⁶O people of Israel,
return to Him against whom you
have so deeply rebelled.

⁷On that day everyone will throw
away
the silver and gold idols
that your sinful hands have
made.

⁸Then a sword not wielded by a
man
will cut down Assyria;
a sword not wielded by a man
will devour them.
They will flee from the sword,
and their young men will become
slaves.

⁹In terror their commander will
leave,
but their officers will be too
filled with horror to escape.
The LORD says this, whose fire
is in Zion
and whose furnace is in Jeru-
salem.

The Fruits of a Righteous Rule

32 A king should rule righteously
and leaders rule with justice.

²Then each will be like a shelter
against the wind,
a place to hide in a rainstorm,
like streams of water on
parched ground,
like the shade of a great rock in
a weary land.

³Then the eyes of those who can
see will no more be closed,
and the ears of those who can
hear will listen.

⁴Then the minds of those who
have been rash will begin to

understand,
and the tongues of those who
stutter will flow with clear
speech.

⁵The scoundrel will no more be
called noble
or the cheat honorable.

⁶A scoundrel talks like one,
and his mind plans evil
so as to do ungodly things
and say perverse things to the
LORD;

he leaves the hungry without
food
and the thirsty without drink.

⁷The tricks of a villain are evil.
He makes wicked plans
to ruin the poor with lies
even when the poor man's cause
is just.

⁸But a noble person makes noble
plans
and stands for what is noble.

Against Sinful Women and a Promise of Salvation

⁹You careless women, get up,
listen to me.
Happy-go-lucky daughters,
hear what I say.

¹⁰In a little more than a year
you overconfident women will be
troubled
because the grape harvest will
fail
and no fruit be gathered.

¹¹Tremble, you careless women.
Be troubled, you overconfident
women.
Strip yourselves bare,
and fasten sackcloth on your
waists.

¹²Beat your breasts
as you mourn for the fields,
for the vines bearing grapes.

¹³For My people's land
where thorns and thornbushes
will grow.

for all the happy homes in a very happy city.

¹⁴The palace will be abandoned. The city, so full of people, will be deserted.

The fortified hill^r and the watchtower

will become a bare hill for a long time,

a delight for wild burros and a pasture for flocks—

¹⁵till the Spirit is poured on us from on high.

Then the wilderness will be an orchard.

and the orchard will be considered a forest.

¹⁶Then justice will live in the wilderness and righteousness be at home in the orchard.

¹⁷Then righteousness will produce peace, and the effect of righteousness will be a quiet confidence forever.

¹⁸My people will live in a peaceful place, in safe homes and quiet places of rest—

¹⁹even when hail cuts down the forest and the city sinks down very low.

²⁰You will be happy, sowing beside every body of water and letting the feet of the oxen and the burros roam freely.

Jerusalem to Be Rescued

33 Woe to You^s—you destroy and are not destroyed; you rob and are not robbed. When you have finished destroying, you will be destroyed.

When you are done robbing, you will be robbed.

²LORD, give us Your kind help; we wait confidently for You. Every morning be our strong arm;

save us when we're in trouble.

³When people hear the sound of an army, they run away; when You attack, nations scatter.

⁴Then Your people will take away the enemies' goods like grasshoppers, rushing over them like locusts.

⁵The LORD is supreme, for He lives on high.

He will fill Zion with justice and righteousness.

⁶He will provide security in your times,

plenty of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge.

Fearing the LORD will be their treasure.

⁷Listen, their brave men are crying outside;

envoys who tried to make peace are weeping bitterly.

⁸The highways lie waste—nobody travels anymore.

Treaties are broken;

witnesses are rejected;

he doesn't respect anybody.

⁹The country mourns and languishes.

Lebanon withers.

Sharon has become like a wilderness.

Bashan and Carmel are laid bare.

¹⁰"Now I will arise," says the LORD.

"Now I will get up.

Now I will exalt Myself.

^rHeb Ophel; the reference is to a citadel within the city ^sSennacherib

- ¹¹You are pregnant with hay;
you give birth to stubble.
The wind blowing against you
will devour you like fire.
- ¹²People will be burned to lime
like thorns cut down and set on
fire.
- ¹³You who are far off,
listen to what I have done,
and you who are near, acknowl-
edge My might."
- ¹⁴Then sinners in Zion will be
afraid.
Dread will grip the ungodly:
Who among us can live in a de-
vouring fire?
Who of us can live in everlasting
flames?
- ¹⁵If you live right and tell the
truth,
refuse to get rich by doing
wrong,
wave aside a bribe you could
take,
shut your ears and not listen to
plans of murder,
shut your eyes and not enjoy
seeing wrong.
- ¹⁶then you will live on the heights,
find shelter in a high and rocky
refuge,
you'll be provided with food,
and always have plenty of
water.
- ¹⁷Your eyes will see a king in his
beauty.
You will see a land stretching
into the distance.
- ¹⁸Your mind will be thinking of the
terror of the past:
*Where is the one who counted,
where is the one who weighed,
where is the one who counted
the precious gifts?*
- ¹⁹No longer will you see a savage
people,
a people with a speech your ears
can't grasp.

with a foreign tongue you can't
understand.

- ²⁰Look at Zion, the city we come to
for festivals.
Your eyes will now see Jeru-
salem
as a secure place,
a tent that won't be moved,
whose pegs will never be pulled
out
and none of whose ropes will be
broken.
- ²¹Truly, there the LORD will treat
us majestically
in a place surrounded by broad
rivers and streams.
No ship with oars will move on
it,
and no stately ship will sail on it.
- ²²for the LORD is our Judge,
the LORD is our Ruler,
the LORD is our King,
and He will save us.
- ²³If your ropes hang slack
and can't hold your mast firm in
its place
or keep the sails spread out,
then the wealth of goods taken
will be divided,
and even lame persons will
carry away plunder.
- ²⁴Nobody living there will say,
"I'm sick."
The people who live there will
have their sins forgiven.

Edom Will Be Punished

- 34** You nations, come near to
listen;
and you people, pay attention.
The earth should hear and all
who are in it,
the world and all it produces.
- ²The LORD is angry with all the
nations
and furious with all their
armies.

He will doom them to destruction
and appoint them to be slaughtered.

¹Those who are killed will be thrown out,
and the stink of their corpses will rise;
the hills will flow with their blood.

²All the armies of heaven will vanish.
The sky will be rolled up like a scroll,
and all its armies will fade
like leaves falling from a vine or fig tree.

³My sword will drink its fill from the sky.
You will see it descend to punish Edom,
the people I'm dooming to destruction.

⁴The LORD's sword is full of blood,
gorged with fat,
with the blood of lambs and goats,
with the fat of rams' kidneys—
the LORD will have a sacrifice in Bozrah,
a great slaughter in the country of Edom.

⁵And wild bulls will go down with them,
young bulls and strong bulls.
Their land will be soaked with blood,
their soil drenched with fat.

⁶The LORD will have a day of vengeance,
a year when He, Zion's Defender, pays back.

⁷[Edom's] streams will turn to pitch,
their soil to sulfur,
their country turn to burning pitch.

34
4 Mt 24 29
Mk 13 25
Lk 21 26
10 Rv 14 11
19 J
14 Rv 18 2

⁸It will not go out day or night,
and its smoke will go up forever.
It will lie waste from age to age.
Nobody will ever travel through it.

⁹Pelican and porcupine will take over the land,
and owl and crow will live there.
So He will stretch over it
a measuring line to destroy it,
and a plumb-line to lay it waste.

¹⁰Her nobles will no more call it a kingdom;
all her princes will be gone.

¹¹Thorns will grow in her palaces,
nettles and thistles in her fortresses.
It will be a haunt for jackals
and a pasture for ostriches.

¹²The desert animals will meet with the wolves.
One shaggy goat will call to another.
The demons of the night will settle there
and find a place where they can rest.

¹³There the tree snake will make her nest,
lay eggs and hatch them,
and gather her brood under her shadow.
Yes, there the vultures also will gather,
each with her mate.

¹⁴Search and read in the LORD's scroll.
Not one of these will be missing,
and none will lack her mate,
for the LORD has ordered it,
and His Spirit will gather them.

¹⁵By lot He will assign a place for each of them,
and with a measuring line His hand will divide it for them.
They will possess it forever
and live there throughout the ages.

God's Happy People

35 Let the wilderness and parched ground be glad, and let the desert be happy and blossom.

Like a rose ²they will blossom richly

and be glad with joy and singing. They will be given Lebanon's glory,

the splendid beauty of Carmel and Sharon.

They will see the glory of the LORD,

the majesty of our God.

³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the stumbling knees.

⁴Tell those who feel anxious: Have courage, don't be afraid.

Look, your God comes with vengeance:

God will pay back.

He will come and save you.

⁵Then the eyes of the blind will be opened,

and the ears of the deaf will be opened.

⁶Then the lame man will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb will sing.

For waters will gush in the wilderness, and streams will flow in the desert.

⁷The hot sand will become a pool and the thirsty ground become springs of water.

The places where jackals crouch will become thickets of reeds and rushes.

⁸A highway will be laid out; it will be called the Holy Way. No unclean person will travel on it.

It will be a road for the pilgrim; no fool will wander there.

⁹No lions will be there.

No wild animals will come up on it to devour you.

They will not be found there.

But the redeemed will be walking there.

¹⁰Those whom the LORD frees will come back.

They will come to Zion singing, crowned with everlasting joy.

They will find gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing will disappear.

Jerusalem Delivered

Sennacherib

36 In the 14th year of King Hezekiah, Sennacherib, king of Assyria, attacked all the fortified cities of Judah and was capturing them. ²Then the king of Assyria sent his first marshal with a large army from Lachish to King Hezekiah in Jerusalem, and he took his position at the canal of the upper pool on the road to the Laundryman's Field.

³Eliakim, Hilkiah's son, manager of the palace, and Shebna, the secretary, and Joah, Asaph's son, the recorder, went out to him. ⁴The marshal said to them, "Tell Hezekiah: The great king, the king of Assyria, asks, 'What makes you so confident?' ⁵Do you think mere words dropped from the lips can take the place of strategy and military might? Now whom do you trust so that you dare rebel against me?' ⁶You know you're trusting a staff, this broken reed—Egypt. If you lean on it, it runs into your hand and pierces it. This is what Pharaoh king of Egypt, is to all who trust him. ⁷But if you tell me, 'We're trusting the LORD our God,' isn't

35
3 Heb 12 12
5:6 Mt 11 5
Lk 7 22
Acis 26 18

He the One whose high places and altars Hezekiah got rid of, telling Judah and Jerusalem, "Worship at this altar"?"

"Come now, make a bet with my master, the king of Assyria: I'll give you two thousand horses if you can put riders on them. How can you turn back the attack of just one of the least of my master's officers while you trust Egypt for chariots and horses?

"And now, have I attacked this country to destroy it without the consent of the LORD? The LORD told me, 'Attack this country and destroy it.'"

"Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah told the marshal: "Please talk to your servants in Aramaic; we understand that. Don't talk to us in the Judean language as long as the men on the wall are listening."

"Did my master send me to tell these things only to your master and you?" the marshal asked. "Didn't he send me to the men sitting on the wall who might have to eat their own excrement and drink their own urine with you?"

"Then the marshal stood and shouted loud in the Judean language: "Listen to the great king, the king of Assyria. "The king says: 'Don't let Hezekiah deceive you. He can't save you. "Don't let Hezekiah get you to trust the LORD by saying, "The LORD will certainly save us, and this city will not be put in the hands of the king of Assyria." "Don't listen to Hezekiah, for the king of Assyria says: Make peace with me, come out and give yourselves up to me. Then everybody will eat from his own vine and fig tree, and everybody will drink water from his own cistern "till I come and take you away to a coun-

try like your own, a land with grain and wine, a land with bread and vineyards. "Don't let Hezekiah mislead you by telling you, "The LORD will save us." Did anyone of the gods of the nations save his country from the king of Assyria? "Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Did they save Samaria from my hands? "Was there anyone among all the gods of these countries who could save their country from my hands, that the LORD should now save Jerusalem from my hands?" "

"They were silent and didn't answer him, because the king had ordered, "Don't answer him."

"Then Eliakim, Hilkiah's son, who managed the palace, and Shebna, the secretary, and Joah, Asaph's son, the recorder, went in to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and told him what the marshal said.

The LORD rescues Jerusalem

37 When King Hezekiah heard about it, he tore his clothes, covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the LORD's temple. Then he sent Eliakim, the manager of his palace, Shebna, the secretary, with the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz.

"They told him, "Hezekiah says: 'Today we're in trouble, punished, and scorned because we should give birth to sons and haven't the strength to do it. 'Maybe the LORD your God heard what the marshal said whom his master, the king of Assyria, sent to defy the living God, and the LORD your God will punish him for what He heard him say. Pray for the rest of the people who are still left.' "

'So Hezekiah's men came to Isaiah. 'Isaiah answered them: 'Tell your master: The LORD says: 'Don't be afraid of what you heard when the Assyrian king's lackeys mocked Me. 'See, I'm putting such a spirit in him that when he hears a rumor he'll go home to his country, and I'll have a sword in his own country cut him down.' "

"The marshal went back and found the king of Assyria attacking Libnah. He had heard the king had left Lachish. "Then Sennacherib got news that Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, was coming out to fight him.

When he heard this, he again sent messengers to Hezekiah: ¹⁰"Tell Hezekiah, king of Judah: Don't let your God whom you trust cheat you by saying, 'Jerusalem will not be put in the hands of the king of Assyria.' ¹¹You heard what the kings of Assyria did to all the countries, how they totally destroyed them—can you be saved? ¹²Did the gods of the nations my fathers destroyed save them—Gozan, Haran, Rezep, and the people of Eden who live in Telassar? ¹³Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, and the king of Lahir, Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah?"

"Hezekiah took the letter from the messengers' hands, read it, and went up to the LORD's temple, and Hezekiah spread it out before the LORD. ¹⁵Hezekiah prayed to the LORD: ¹⁶"O LORD of armies, God of Israel, on Your throne above the angels,¹ You alone are the God over all the kingdoms of the world. You made heaven and earth. ¹⁷Listen, LORD, and hear. Open your

eyes, LORD, and see. Hear everything Sennacherib says, who has sent a man to defy the living God. ¹⁸It is true, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste every country ¹⁹and have put their gods into the fire, for they are no gods, only man-made things of wood and stone; so they have destroyed them. ²⁰And now, LORD our God, please save us from his hands, so that all the kingdoms in the world will know You alone are the LORD."

²¹Then Isaiah, the son of Amoz, sent someone to tell Hezekiah: The LORD, the God of Israel, says, "You prayed to Me about Sennacherib, king of Assyria." ²²This is what the LORD says about him:

Zion's virgin daughter despises you and laughs at you.

The daughter of Jerusalem shakes her head in contempt of you.

²³Whom are you defying and mocking?

Against whom are you shouting and looking so proud?

Against the Holy One of Israel!

²⁴Through your servants you defy the Lord and say,

"With my many chariots I'll ride up the high mountains, up the slopes of Lebanon.

I'll cut down its tallest cedars and finest cypresses and reach its most distant heights, its luxurious forests.

²⁵I'll dig wells and drink water.

With the tramping of my feet I'll dry up all the streams of Egypt."

²⁶Haven't you heard how I pre-

¹That is, the cherubim, which were a part of the golden lid on the sacred chest in the Most Holy Place in the temple.

pared this long ago,
planned it in the past?
Now I make it happen,
that you should make fortified
cities

crash into heaps of ruins.

²⁷And those who live there are
shorn of strength,
broken in spirit and in disgrace.
They become plants in the field,
like fresh, green grass on the
roofs,
scorched by the east wind.

²⁸I know when you get up and sit
down,

go out and come in,
and how you rage against Me.

²⁹Because you rage against Me
and I have heard your cocky
talk.

I will put My hook into your nose
and My bridle in your mouth
and make you go back the way
you came.

³⁰And this is how you can tell it is
true: This year you will eat what
grows by itself and the next year
what comes up by itself, but in the
third year sow and reap, plant vine-
yards, and eat what is produced.
³¹Then those who are left of the
people of Judah will again take root
in the ground and grow a crop
above ground. ³²From Jerusalem
will come the people who are left
and from Mount Zion those who
escaped. The zeal of the LORD of
armies will do this.

³³And so the LORD says about the
king of Assyria:

He will never get into this city,
shoot an arrow here,
march against it with shields,
or put up ramparts against it.

³⁴He will go back the way he came
without getting into this city,
says the LORD of armies.

³⁵I will shield this city

and save it for My own sake
and for the sake of My servant
David.

³⁶Then the LORD's angel went out
and killed 185,000 in the camp of the
Assyrians, and those who got up in
the morning saw all the dead bod-
ies.

³⁷Then Sennacherib, king of As-
syria, left and went home and lived
in Nineveh. ³⁸While he was wor-
shiping in the temple of his god
Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and
Sharezer killed him with their
swords and escaped to the country
of Ararat. His son Esarhaddon suc-
ceeded him as king.

Hezekiah's Illness

38 In those days Hezekiah got
sick and was about to die.
The prophet Isaiah, the son of
Amoz, came to him and said, "Here
is what the LORD says: Give final
instructions to your family, because
you're going to die and not get
well."

¹Hezekiah turned to the wall and
prayed to the LORD: "Please,
LORD, remember how I've lived be-
fore you faithfully and with com-
plete loyalty and have done what is
right before You." And he wept bit-
terly.

²Then the LORD spoke to Isaiah:
"Go and tell Hezekiah: The LORD,
the God of your ancestor David,
says: 'I have heard your prayer. I
have seen your tears. I am giving
you fifteen more years to live 'and
will save you and this city from the
king of Assyria and will protect this
city.' ³And this is how the LORD
will prove to you He will do what He
promises: ⁴'I will make the shadow
that has gone down on the stairway
of Ahaz' upper palace go back ten
steps.'" So the sun on the stairway

went back ten steps after it had gone down.^u

Hezekiah's Poem

⁹This is what Hezekiah, king of Judah, wrote after he was sick and got well again:

¹⁰At the highest point of my life
I was sure I was going down
through the gates of the grave
and losing the rest of my years.

¹¹I thought I would never again
see the LORD in the land of
the living
and no more look at a human
being when I'm with the dead.

¹²Like a shepherd's tent
my home was going to be pulled
down
and taken away from me.
I was about to roll up my life like
a weaver
as he cuts the cloth from the
loom.

From day to night
my life was about to come to an
end;

¹³then I cried for help till morning.
As if by a lion all my bones were
crushed.

From day to night
my life was about to come to an
end.

¹⁴I chattered like a swallow or a
crane.

I moaned like a pigeon.
My eyes are dim. O Most High.
O Lord, I'm in anguish.
You must take charge of my
trouble.

¹⁵What can I say?

He promised me, and He did it
for me.

Because of my bitter experience
I will walk humbly all my years.

¹⁶Lord, by these things men live,

and by all of them my spirit is
kept alive.

You make me healthy and alive.

¹⁷Now my bitter experience has
changed to health.

By Your love You have drawn
me

from the pit of destruction,
for You have thrown all my sins
behind Your back.

¹⁸Certainly the grave doesn't
thank You;

death doesn't praise You;
those who go down to the pit
have no hope of Your being
faithful.

¹⁹It's the living, the living that
praise You as I do today.

A father teaches his children
how faithful You are.

²⁰The LORD is going to save me,
so let us sing with stringed
instruments

before the LORD's temple as
long as we live.

²¹Isaiah told them, "Take a lump
of figs, and smear it on the boil, and
he will get well." ²²Hezekiah had
asked, "By what sign shall I know I
will go up to the LORD's temple?"

39 At that time Merodach-ba-
ladan, Baladan's son, the
king of Babylon, sent a letter and a
present to Hezekiah. He had heard
he had been sick and had regained
his strength. ²Hezekiah was so de-
lighted with them he showed them
his treasure-house, the silver, gold,
spices, fine oil, the house with his
weapons, and everything that could
be found among his treasures.
There wasn't a thing in his palace
or anywhere else under his control
that Hezekiah didn't show them.

³Then the prophet Isaiah came to

^uVerse 22 should be read after verse 8

King Hezekiah. "What did these men say?" he asked him. "And where did they come from?"

"They came to me from a distant country," Hezekiah answered, "from Babylon."

"What did they see in your palace?" he asked.

"They saw everything in my palace," Hezekiah answered. "There wasn't a thing in my treasures I didn't show them."

"Listen to what the LORD of armies says," Isaiah told Hezekiah. "The days will come when everything in your palace, what your fathers have stored up to this day, will be taken away to Babylon, and nothing will be left, says the LORD. 'Some of your own sons that will come from you, whose father you will be, will be taken away and be eunuchs serving in the palace of the king of Babylon.'"

"What you say, speaking for the LORD, is good," Hezekiah told Isaiah. He added, "Just so there is peace and security as long as I live."

*The Book of Comfort,
Consolation, and Promise*

Comfort for Exiles

40 "Comfort My people, comfort them" says your God.

²"Talk to the heart of Jerusalem, and announce to her her time of hard service is over, her wrong is paid for, and she has received from the LORD double for all her sins."

¹A voice cries in the wilderness:
"Prepare a way for the LORD;
make a straight highway in the

desert for our God.
"Every valley must be raised,
every mountain and hill be lowered.

The steep places must be made level,

the impassable ridges be made a plain.

⁵Then the LORD will show His glory,
and all people together will see it,
for the mouth of the LORD has said it."

⁶A voice called, "Preach!"
"What should I preach?" I asked.

"All people are grass,
and all their beauty like a flower
in the field.

⁷Grass dries up,
and a flower withers
when the LORD's breath blows
on it.

Yes, the people are grass.

⁸Grass dries up, and a flower withers,
but what our God says will stand
forever."

⁹Get up on a high mountain, Zion,
to tell the good news!
Call with a loud voice, Jeru-
salem,

to tell the good news!
Raise your voice without fear,
tell the cities of Judah:
"Here is your God!"

¹⁰See the Lord GOD coming as a
Mighty One
to rule with His strong arm.
See the reward He has with
Him,
and what He has won goes
ahead of Him.

¹¹Like a shepherd He takes care of
His flock;

40
3-5 Mt 3:3
Mt 1:3
Lk 2:30
3:4-6
Jn 1:23
6:9 Jn 1:10
11:1 Pt 1
24:25 Jn
12:15
10 Rv 14:8
27:7-12:20

He gathers the lambs in His arms
and carries them at His bosom.
He gently helps the mother sheep.

God, the All-Powerful

¹²Who has measured the sea in the palm of his hand
or measured the sky with the span of his hand?

Who has put the soil of the earth into a bushel,
weighed the mountains in a scale
and the hills in a balance?

¹³Who has directed the LORD's Spirit,
or who was His adviser to instruct Him?

¹⁴With whom did He consult to get understanding?

Who taught Him the right way?
Who taught Him knowledge
and showed Him how to understand?

¹⁵You see, the nations are a drop in a bucket
and are weighed like dust on the scales.

The islands are as light as a speck of dust.

¹⁶There's not enough wood in Lebanon for a fire
or enough animals for a burnt offering.

¹⁷All the nations are nothing before Him;
He considers them nothing at all and worthless.

¹⁸With whom will you compare God?

Or what picture can you make of Him?

¹⁹An idol statue?
A workman casts it,
a goldsmith covers it with gold,

a silversmith with chains of silver.

²⁰Or a man chooses precious wood that will not rot
and looks for a skillful carpenter to set up an idol that will not fall over.

²¹Don't you know?

Didn't you hear?

Haven't you been told from the beginning?

Don't you understand how the earth was made?

²²He is on His throne above the circle of the earth,
and those who live on it are like grasshoppers.

He stretches out the sky like a veil

and spreads it like a tent for people to live under it.

²³He reduces princes to nothing and makes the rulers of the earth worthless.

²⁴Hardly have they been planted, hardly have they been sown,
hardly has their stem taken root in the ground,

when He blows at them and they wither,

and a whirlwind takes them away like straw.

²⁵'Is there anyone you can compare Me with

and who is equal to Me?'

asks the Holy One.

²⁶Look up high and see!

Who made these?

Who brings out their army by number?

He calls them all by name.

Because He is so strong and powerful,

not one star is missing.

²⁷Jacob, why do you complain?

Israel, why do you say,

¹³ Ro 11:34
¹ Co 2:16

"What happens to me is hidden
from the LORD;
my God fails to treat me fairly"?

²⁸Don't you know?

Didn't you hear?

The everlasting God, the LORD
who made the whole earth,
doesn't get tired or weary.
Nobody can by searching find
out what He knows.

²⁹He gives strength to the weary
and provides vigor to those who
have none.

³⁰Young men get tired and weary;
in spite of their young vigor, they
may fall exhausted;

³¹but those who depend on the
LORD get new strength.

They lift up their wings like
eagles;

they run and don't get tired;
they walk and don't get weary.

A Conqueror Sent by the LORD

41 Be silent before Me, you
countries by the sea,
and let the people get new
strength.

Let them come near and speak.
Let us get together for a trial:

¹Who is this that rises in the east
with victory at his feet?

The nations surrender to him, he
brings down kings,
scattering them like dust with
his sword
and like straw by his bow.

²He pursues them and passes by
unhurt,

hardly touching the road with
his feet.

³Who did this and accomplished
it?

Who calls every generation from
the beginning?

It is I the LORD, the First and
the Last.

⁴The countries by the sea see him
and are afraid.

The most distant places in the
world tremble
as they come and go.

The Making of an Idol

⁶One man helps another
and says to him, "Have cour-
age!"

⁷The craftsman encourages the
goldsmith;

the one who smooths it with a
hammer encourages him who
strikes the anvil.

About the soldering he says,
"It's fine!"

And he fastens it with a nail so it
won't fall over.

Israel the Lord's Servant

⁸But you, *My servant Israel*,
Jacob, whom I have chosen,
descendants of Abraham whom
I love,

⁹whom I have taken hold of from
the ends of the earth
and called from its most distant
places,
telling you, "You are *My serv-
ant*,"

I have chosen you and not re-
jected you."

¹⁰Don't be afraid—I am with you.
Don't look around anxiously—I
am your God.

I will strengthen you;
yes, I will help you.

I will support you with My vic-
torious right hand.

¹¹Then all who are angry with you
will be disappointed and
ashamed.

All who fight with you
will be nothing and disappear.

¹²You will look for the men who
quarrel with you
and not find them.

The men who are at war with
you

41
8 Lk 1:54
Heb 2:16
Jn 2:23
9 Lk 1:54
10 Acts 18
9-10

will be nothing, yes, nothing at all.

¹³I, the LORD your God, hold you by the right hand and tell you: Don't be afraid; I will help you.

¹⁴Don't be afraid, Jacob, you worm; don't be afraid, Israel; I will help you, says the LORD who redeemed you, the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁵See, I make you a threshing sledge, sharp, new, with double-edged teeth. You will thresh the mountains, crush them to dust, and make the hills become like chaff.

¹⁶You will winnow them; the wind will carry them away, and the whirlwind will scatter them. But you will be glad in the LORD and boast in the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁷When the poor and needy are looking for water where there is none, when their tongues are parched with thirst, I the LORD will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.

¹⁸I will open rivers by the caravan tracks and springs down in the valleys. I will put lakes in the wilderness and springs of water in the parched land.

¹⁹In the wilderness I will plant cedars, acacias, myrtles, and wild olives. I will put in the desert cypresses, elms, and box trees together.

²⁰Then all people will see and know, take it to heart and understand that the LORD's hand did this, that the Holy One of Israel created it.

What Can Idols Do?

²¹Present your cause, says the LORD. Bring your strong arguments, says the King of Jacob.

²²Let these idols come and tell us what will happen. Let them tell us what happened in the past, so we may give it some thought and know how it turned out. Or let them announce to us what is coming

²³and tell us what is going to happen later. Then we'll know you are gods, yes, that you bless and harm people, and we'll be anxious and afraid.

²⁴But you are nothing, and you do nothing! It's detestable for anyone to select you!

²⁵But I stirred up one from the north, and he came; I roused one from the east, and he called on My name. He comes against rulers as if they were mud and is like a potter trampling on clay.

²⁶Which idol ever told us what would happen from the beginning so we might know? And what would be beforehand so we might say, "He was right"?

Of course, there's none that can tell us. There's really none that can inform us.

There's really none that can
even hear what you say.

²⁷I was the first to tell Zion,^v

"Look, just look at them."

I appointed somebody to tell
Jerusalem the news.

²⁸When I look at these idols,
there's none, none among them
who can advise a person.

When I ask them a question,
do they provide an answer?

²⁹You see, they are all nothing.
They do nothing, absolutely
nothing.

Their images are an empty wind!

A Song About the Servant of the LORD

42 Here is My Servant whom
I support;

*I have chosen Him, and I delight
in Him.*

I put My Spirit on Him.

*He will bring righteousness to
the nations.*

³*He will not cry or raise His voice
or call out loud in the street.*

⁴*He will not break off a broken
reed
or put out a dimly burning wick;
for truth He will bring justice.*

⁵*He will not fail or break down
till He has set up justice in the
world.*

*The lands by the sea are waiting
for Him to teach them.*

⁶*The LORD God made the heav-
ens and stretched them out.
He shaped the earth and what it
produces.*

*He gives life to the people who
are on it,
breath to those walking on it.*

And He says this:

⁷*"I the LORD have called You
for My righteous purpose*

and have taken hold of Your
hand.

I formed You
and have appointed You to be a
Covenant of the people,
a Light for the nations—

⁸*to give sight to the blind,
bring prisoners out of the dung-
eon*

and those who live in darkness
out of the prison.

⁹*I am the LORD;
that is My name.
I will not give My glory to anyone
else*

¹⁰*See how My former predictions
have come true.*

Now I'm announcing new things
and telling you about them be-
fore they spring into being.

A Battle Hymn

¹⁰*Sing a new song to the LORD.
Praise Him, all the earth,
all you who go down to the sea
and everything in the sea,
and all you who live in countries
by the sea.*

¹¹*Let the wilderness and its towns
raise their voices.
Let the villages where the people
of Kedar live
and those who live in Sela sing
loud.*

*Let them shout from the tops of
the mountains.*

¹²*Let them give glory to the LORD;
let the countries by the sea pub-
licly honor Him.*

¹³*The LORD marches out like a
soldier.*

*Like a warrior He stirs up His
fighting spirit.*

*He shouts, gives the battle cry,
and proves Himself mighty*

42
1-4 Mt 3:16-
17, 12:18-
21, 17:5,
Mk 1:10-11,
Lk 3:22,
4:18, 9:25,
Acts 3:13,
26, 4:27, 30,
2 Pt 1:17
5 Acts 17:
24-25
6 Mt 3:15,
Lk 2:32,
Acts 13:47,
26:23
7 Lk 4:18,
Acts 26:18
10 Rv 14:3

^vHeb uncertain

against His enemies.

¹⁴(He says:) I certainly have been silent a very long time.

I kept still and held back.

Now I will cry like a woman in childbirth.

I will breathe and pant violently.

¹⁵I will lay waste the mountains and hills

and wither all their vegetation.

I will make the rivers like pools and dry them up.

¹⁶I will make the blind walk on a road they don't know and lead them in paths they don't know.

I will turn darkness to light before them

and make the rugged places a plain.

These are the things I will do and not leave undone.

¹⁷Then those who trust in carved idols

and say to metal images, "You are our gods,"

will have to turn back,

feeling deeply ashamed of themselves.

Israel Blind and Deaf

¹⁸Listen, You deaf people!

You blind ones, open your eyes and see!

¹⁹Who is as blind as My servant or as deaf as the messenger I send?

Who is as blind as My envoy, as blind as the LORD's servant?

²⁰You have seen much but obey nothing.

Your ears were open, but you heard nothing.

²¹Because He wants what is right, the LORD delights to make His law great and wonderful.

²²Yet these people are robbed and plundered;

they are all trapped in dungeons and hidden in prisons.

They've become a prey with nobody to rescue them,

they've been plundered with nobody saying, "Give it back."

²³Is there any among you who will listen to this,

anyone who will pay attention and then obey?

²⁴Who makes Jacob a spoil and gives Israel to the robbers?

Isn't it the LORD?

Against Him they sinned;

His people refused to walk in His ways;

they refused to listen to His instruction.

²⁵So He poured on them His fury and the violence of war.

It wrapped them in flames, but they didn't understand.

It burned them, but they didn't take it to heart.

You Are Mine

43 But now the LORD who created you, Jacob, and He who formed you, Israel, says this:

Don't be afraid, for I have redeemed you.

I have called you by your name; you are Mine.

²When you go through deep waters, I am with you;

or through rivers, they will not drown you.

When you walk through fire, you will not be burned,

and the flames will not scorch you.

³I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel who saves you.

I give Egypt as a ransom for you, Ethiopia and Seba in exchange

for you.

⁴Because I consider you precious

and I honor and love you.
I am giving men in exchange for
you
and people for your life.

⁵Don't be afraid, I am with you.
I will bring your children from
the east
and gather you from the west.
⁶I will say to the north, "Give
them up."
and to the south, "Don't keep
them."

Bring My sons home from far
away
and My daughters from the most
distant places in the world,
⁷everyone called by My name,
whom I created and formed
and made to glorify Me.

I Am Your God

⁸Bring out those blind people who
still have eyes,
those deaf people who still have
ears.

⁹Let all nations be gathered to-
gether
and the peoples be assembled.
Who among them could have
announced this,
who among them could foretell
to us?

They should bring their wit-
nesses to prove they were
right.

Let the people hear them so they
will say, "It's true."

¹⁰You are My witnesses, says the
LORD,
you are My servant I have chos-
en
so that you can know and be-
lieve Me
and understand I am He.

No God was formed before Me,
and there will be none after Me.

¹¹I, I am the LORD,
and there's nobody beside Me

who can save.
¹²I announced that I would save.
It was I who made it known,
not a strange god among you.
You are My witnesses, says the
LORD,
and I am God.

¹³From this very day I am He,
and nobody can rescue anyone
from My hand.
When I do something, is there
anyone who can undo it?

¹⁴The LORD who redeems you, the
Holy One of Israel, says:
For your sake I will send to
Babylon
and bring down as fugitives all
the Chaldeans
in their boats in which they
shout.

¹⁵I the LORD am your Holy One,
your Creator, Israel, and your
King.

A New Exodus

¹⁶The LORD has said this,
He who makes a way through
the sea
and a path through mighty
waters.

¹⁷He brings out chariots and
horses,
an army with heroes,
and makes them lie down to-
gether so they can't get up;
they are extinguished, going out
like a wick.

¹⁸Forget what happened in the
past,
and turn away from the events
of long ago.

¹⁹Watch Me do a new thing.
It happens now, and will you not
experience it?
Yes, I'm going to make a way
through the wilderness
and paths through the desert.

²⁰The animals in the field will

43
4 Rv 7:9
5 Acts 18:9
10
19 Rv 21:5

honor Me,
including jackals and ostriches,
because I provide water in the
wilderness
and rivers in the desert for My
chosen people to drink.

²¹The people I formed for Myself
should praise Me.

²²But you didn't call on Me, Jacob,
or toil for Me, Israel.

²³You didn't bring Me lambs for
your burnt offerings
or honor Me with your sacri-
fices.

I didn't burden you with food
offerings
or trouble you to bring incense.

²⁴You didn't buy Me any sweet
cane with your money
or satisfy Me with the fat of your
sacrifices.

But you burdened Me with your
sins 20-21 1 Pt 2 9
and wearied Me with your guilt. 44
2 6 Rv 1 17
2 8 21 6
22 13

²⁵I, I am the One
who will wipe away your wrongs
for My own sake
and will not remember your sins
anymore.

²⁶Present yourself to Me;
let us argue the case;
speak for yourself to show you
are right.

²⁷Your first father sinned,
and your interpreters were un-
faithful to Me.

²⁸Your leaders have defiled My
holy place.^w
I put Jacob under a ban of de-
struction
and set up Israel to be abused.

Blessing on Israel's Descendants

44 But now listen, My servant
Jacob,
and Israel, whom I have chosen.

²The LORD who made you and
formed you in the womb,
He who will help you, says:
Don't be afraid. My servant
Jacob,

My good one whom I have chosen.

³Just as I pour water on thirsty
land and streams on dry land,
so I will pour My Spirit on your
children
and My blessing on your de-
scendants.

⁴They will spring up like tender
grass,
like poplars by streams of wa-
ter.

⁵Then one person will say, "I be-
long to the LORD."

Another will call himself by the
name of Jacob.

Another will inscribe on his
hand the LORD's name
and take the name of Israel.

No God Beside Me

⁶The LORD, the King of Israel,
and his Redeemer, the LORD of
armies, says:

I am the First, and I am the Last,
and there is no god besides Me.

⁷Who is like Me?

Let him be named,

announce, and lay in order be-
fore Me

what happened since I ap-
pointed an ancient people.

Then let them tell the future
and predict what is going to
happen!

⁸Don't be terrified or afraid.

Didn't I tell you long ago and
declare it?

So you are My witnesses.

Is there a God besides Me?

There is no Rock; I know of none.

^wGk: Heb I will defile the leaders of the holy place

⁹All who form idols are nothing,
and their precious idols are good
for nothing.

They are their own witnesses
that they see and know nothing,
so they will come to shame.

¹⁰But does anyone form a god or
pour an idol
to put it to no use?

¹¹But all its followers are disap-
pointed.

Those who made it are only men.
Let them all get together and
stand here.

And they will all be frightened
and ashamed.

¹²The smith shapes the iron with a
chisel. He works in hot coals and
shapes it with hammers, working it
with his strong arm. He gets hungry
and loses strength. If he doesn't
drink water, he may faint.

¹³The carpenter stretches a line. ^{23 Rv 12 12.}
He draws a shape with a marker. ^{18 20}
He shapes it with planes and makes
the outline with a compass. So he
makes it like the form of a man, like
a beautiful man, to have it sit in a
shrine. ¹⁴In order to cut down fine
wood for himself, he chose a conifer
tree or an oak and let it grow strong
among the trees of the forest. Or he
planted a cedar, and rain made it
grow. ¹⁵It's something for a man to
burn. And he takes some of it to get
warm. With some of it he makes a
fire to bake bread. He also makes a
god and worships it. He makes it an
image and bows down before it.

¹⁶A part of it he burns, on another
part he roasts meat that he eats,
satisfying his hunger. He sits by its
coals, gets warm, and says, "Ah! I
feel warm before the fire." ¹⁷What
is left he makes into a god, his idol.
He bows down to it, worships it, and
prays to it. "Save me," he says;
"you are my god."

¹⁸Such men don't know or under-
stand, because their eyes are shut,
so that they can't see, and their
minds, so that they can't under-
stand. ¹⁹Nobody gives it a second
thought. Nobody knows or under-
stands enough to think: "I burned
part of it. Yes, I baked bread on its
coals. I roasted meat and ate it. And
should I make the rest of it an abom-
inable thing and bow down to a
block of wood?" ²⁰Anybody who
feeds on ashes has a deluded heart
and is led astray. He can't save
himself or ask, "Isn't what I hold in
my right hand a delusion?"

²¹Remember these things, Jacob;
remember them, Israel, for you
are My servant.

I have formed you, you are My
servant.

Israel, you must not forget Me.

²²Like a cloud I wiped away your
wrongs;

and like a mist your sins.

Come back to Me, for I have
redeemed you.

²³Sing, heavens, for the LORD has
done it,

Shout, you deep places of the
earth.

Break into singing, mountains,
the forest and every tree in it,

for the LORD has redeemed
Jacob

and will show in Israel how
wonderful He is.

Cyrus to Do the Lord's Will

²⁴The LORD, who redeems you,
who formed you from the womb,
says:

I am the LORD, who made all
things.

I stretched out the heavens by
Myself.

I spread out the earth,

and there was no one with Me.

²⁵I make the signs of babblers
nothing
and make fools of those who tell
the future.

I make the wise men retreat
and prove their knowledge to be
foolish.

²⁶But I make the prophecies of My
servant come true
and carry out the plan of My
messengers.

I say of Jerusalem, "People will
live there,"

and of the cities of Judah, "They
will be rebuilt,
and their ruins I'll restore."

²⁷I say to the deep water, "Be dry,
and I will dry up your streams."

²⁸I say of Cyrus, "He is My shep-
herd
and will do everything I want
him to do,

saying of Jerusalem, 'It will be
rebuilt,'

and of the temple, 'Its founda-
tion will be laid.' "

25 1 Co 1:20
27 Mt 16:12
28 Acts 13:22
45
9 Ro 9:20

45 The LORD says to His
anointed, to Cyrus,
whom I hold by his right hand
to subdue nations before him
and disarm kings,
to open doors and gates before
him,

so they will not be shut:

²I will go ahead of you
and level the hills.

I will smash the bronze gates
and cut the iron bars.

³I will give you treasures that are
in dark places
and hidden hoards,

so that you will know that I the
LORD,

the God of Israel, am calling you
by your name.

⁴For the sake of My servant Jacob
and Israel, whom I have chosen,

I have called you by your name
and given you a title
although you don't know Me.

⁵I am the LORD, and there is no
other.

There is no god besides Me.
I strengthen you although you
don't know Me.

⁶so people from the east to the
west
may learn there is none besides
Me.

I am the LORD, and there is no
one else.

⁷I make light and create dark-
ness.

I make happiness and create ca-
lamity.

I the LORD do all these things.

⁸Send rain from above, O heav-
ens,
and pour down righteousness, O
skies.

Let the earth open and produce
salvation,
and let righteousness grow
there.

I the LORD have created it.

⁹Woe to him who argues with His
Maker
like a pot among other earthen-
ware pots.

*Should the clay ask him who
shapes it,*

"What are you making?"

Or, "Here's your product; it has
no handles"?

¹⁰Woe to him who asks a father,
"What kind of a child did you
have?"

Or a woman, "What kind of a
child did you give birth to?"

¹¹The LORD, the Holy One and
Creator of Israel, says:

Is it for you to ask Me about My
children

or give Me orders about My handiwork?
 12I made the earth and created the people on it. My hands and Mine alone stretched out the heavens, and I ordered all the stars to be there.
 13I will stir him^x up for My righteous purpose and make level all his paths. He will build My city and set My exiles free without a ransom or a bribe, says the LORD of armies.
 14The LORD says: The workers of Egypt, the merchants of Ethiopia, and the tall Sabaeans will come to you and be yours. They will follow you, coming to you in chains. They will bow down to you and plead with you:
 "Surely God is among you, and there is no other. There is absolutely no other god."
 15Surely You are a hidden God, the God of Israel, the Deliverer!"
 16Then they will be ashamed and disgraced, and those who make idols will go away together in disgrace.
 17But the LORD will save Israel with an everlasting salvation. Never again will you feel ashamed or disgraced.
 18The LORD made the heavens. He is God. He formed the earth and made it. He set it up. He did not create it to be a desert

but formed it for people to live there.
 And He says: I am the LORD, and there is no other.
 19I didn't speak secretly, in a dark corner of the world. I didn't tell Jacob's descendants, "Search for Me in vain." I the LORD say what is fair and tell what is right.
 20Gather and come, come together here, you who have escaped from the nations. They are ignorant who carry the wood of their idols and keep on praying to a god that can't save them.
 21Speak and present your case. Yes, consult together. Who announced this in the distant past and predicted it long ago? Wasn't it I, the LORD? And there is no other god besides Me. A righteous God who can save— there is no one besides Me.
 22Turn to Me to be saved, all you most distant parts of the world, because I am God, and there is no other.
 23I give an oath by My own Self; what I say is right and can't be changed: "Every knee will bow to Me, and every tongue will swear allegiance."
 24"Only in the LORD," one will say, "have I righteousness and strength." All who are angry with Him will come

14 1 Co 14 25
 Rv 3 9, 4
 10 5 14
 11 16, 19 4
 10, 22 8
 17 Heb 5 9
 21 Acts 15 18
 23 Ro 14 11
 Ph 2 10-11

^xCyrus

and be ashamed in His presence;

²⁵but in the LORD all of Israel's descendants will be righteous, and in Him will they glory.

I Will Carry You

46 Bel crouches, Nebo bends low. Their images are put on animals, on cattle;

they are lifted and carried as burdens on tired animals.

²They bend low and crouch down together.

They can't escape with the heavy burdens, so the gods themselves go away into captivity.

¹Listen to Me, people of Jacob and all who are left of Israel: I've carried you since you were born and lifted up from the womb.

⁴Even when you're old, I'll be the same, and when you're gray, I'll still carry you.

I made you and will continue to bear you.

I will carry you and save you.

The Incomparable LORD

⁵With whom will you compare Me?

Who is My equal?

With whom do you compare Me and say I am like him?

⁶Men pour gold from a bag and weigh silver in a scale, hire a goldsmith to make a god of it,

and bow down and worship it.

⁷They lift it up on their shoulders and carry it.

Then they set it down in its place.

There it stands without moving from its place.

When you call to it, it can't answer or save you from trouble.

⁸Keep this in mind and be firm.

Take it to heart, you rebels.

⁹Remember the former things that happened long ago, and realize I am God and there is no other.

I am God and there's no one like Me.

¹⁰When something begins to happen,

I tell how it will turn out and predict things long before they're done.

I say, "What I plan will be carried out,

and I do whatever I want."

¹¹From the east I call a bird of prey,

and from far away the man who is a part of My plan.

Exactly as I say it

I have it happen.

Just as I plan it I do it.

¹²Listen to Me, you stubborn men who are far from doing right.

¹³My righteousness is near and not far away.

I will not delay in saving you.

I will provide a rescue for Zion

and give *Israel* My glory.

Babylon Lamented

47 Go down and sit in the dust, virgin daughter of Babylon! Sit on the ground, not on a throne,

daughter of the Chaldeans; people will no more call you tender and pampered.

²Take millstones and grind flour.

Take off your veil.

Strip off the robe with the long train.

Bare your legs and wade through streams.

- ¹Your naked body will be uncovered,
your shameful parts will be seen.
I will take vengeance
and be kind to nobody.
- ²Our Redeemer, whose name is the LORD of armies, the Holy One of Israel, says:
- ³Sit in silence
and go into the dark,
daughter of the Chaldeans,
because nobody will again call you
the queen of kingdoms.
- ⁴When I was angry with My people
and made My possession an unholy thing
and put them in your hands,
you showed them no pity.
You put a very heavy yoke on old people.
- ⁵And you said, "I will be queen forever."
So you didn't take these things to heart
or keep in mind how they would end.
- ⁶Now listen to this, you who love pleasure,
live securely, and say to yourself,
"I'm the one, and there's nobody else.
*I'll not live as a widow
or suffer the loss of children.*"
- ⁷Both of these will happen to you suddenly, on one day:
You will lose your children and be a widow.
All this will happen to you
in spite of all your witchcraft
and your many enchantments.
- ⁸You feel safe in your wickedness
and say, "Nobody can see me."
Your wisdom and knowledge
have led you astray,
- so that you tell yourself,
"I'm the one, and there's nobody else."
- ⁹But there will happen to you a misfortune
you'll not know how to charm away.
And on you will fall a calamity
you'll not be able to ward off.
And ruin will swoop down on you suddenly
when you don't expect it.
- ¹⁰Stand there with your enchantments
and all the witchcraft you have worked with since you were young.
Perhaps you can still accomplish something.
Perhaps you can terrify others.
- ¹¹You're worn out from all your planning.
Now let those who map out the sky
and watch the stars
stand up and save you.
Let them predict from month to month
some of the things that will happen to you.
- ¹²You see, they are like straw,
and fire will burn them;
they can't save themselves from the flames.
There are no glowing coals to warm them,
no fire for them to sit before.
- ¹³This is what your astrologers are like,
with whom you toiled
and for whom you sold wares since you were young.
Each staggers off in his own direction,
and there's nobody left to save you.

47
8-9 Rv 18 7-8

I Predicted Events

48 Listen to this, people of Jacob:

You call yourselves by the name of Israel and have come from the fountain of Judah.

You swear by the LORD's name and confess the God of Israel but are not honest or right.

²You call yourselves after the holy city and depend on the God of Israel whose name is the LORD of armies.

³Long ago I predicted the things that have already happened. My mouth announced them, and I declared them. Suddenly I did them, and they happened.

⁴I knew you were stubborn. Your neck was an iron muscle and your forehead bronze.

⁵So I predicted events to you long ago and told you before they happened, so you couldn't say, "My idol did these things. My carved image and my cast image ordered them to happen."

⁶You've heard this and realize all of it, but you won't admit it. From now on I will tell you new things, kept from you and not known to you.

⁷They were created just now, not long ago, and you never heard of them before today, so you couldn't say, "I already know about them."

⁸No, you didn't hear or know

or open your ears to them long ago; for I know how very treacherous you've been and how you were known as a rebel since you were born.

⁹For My name's sake I will delay My anger, and for My glory I will restrain it for you and not destroy you.

¹⁰But I will refine you, but it will not be a refining of silver.

I will test you in a furnace of sorrow.

¹¹I am doing this for Myself, for Myself only. For how can My name be made unholy?

¹² ⁴⁸ I will not give My glory to anyone else.

¹²Listen to Me, Jacob, and Israel, whom I called. I am the One, I am the First; I'm also the Last.

¹³Yes, My hand laid the foundation of the earth, and My right hand spread out the heavens. When I call them, they stand up together.

¹⁴Come together, all of you, and listen.

Is there anyone among those (gods) who predicted these things?

The man whom the LORD loves will do what He wants him to do in Babylon, and his arm will be against the Chaldeans.

¹⁵I, I have spoken. Yes, I called him. I will bring him here, and he will

succeed.

- ¹⁶Come near Me, listen to this:
From the beginning I said nothing
in secret.
From the time it began to happen
I was there.
And now the Lord GOD has sent
Me with His Spirit.

- ¹⁷The LORD who redeems you,
Israel's Holy One, says:
I am the LORD your God.
I am teaching you to help you
and leading you where you
should go.

- ¹⁸I wish you had listened to what I
ordered you.
Then your happiness would flow
like a river,
your righteousness like the
waves of the sea.

- ¹⁹Your descendants would be like
the sand,
the children coming from you
like its grains.
Their name would not be cut off
or wiped out before Me.

- ²⁰Leave Babylon.
Hurry away from the Chal-
deans.
Shout for joy as you tell the news
and declare it.
Announce it to the most distant
parts of the world.
Say, "The LORD has redeemed
His servant Jacob."

- ²¹They were not thirsty when He
led them through the deserts.
He made water flow from a rock
for them.
He split a rock, and water
gushed out.

- ²²"But there is no peace for the
wicked," says the LORD.

A Servant Song

49 Listen to Me, you lands by
the sea;

pay attention, you people far
away.

When I was still in the womb,
the LORD colled Me.

Before My mother gave birth to
Me, He pronounced My name.

- ²He made My mouth like a sharp
sword
and hid Me in the shadow of His
hand.

He made Me a polished arrow
and hid Me in His quiver.

- ³He said to Me:
You are My Servant to Israel;
through You I will show My
glory.

⁴But I thought: *I have worked in
vain.*

I have spent My strength use-
lessly and for nothing.

But surely the LORD is ready to
do what is right for Me,
and God is ready to reward Me.

- ⁵And now says the LORD,
who formed Me in the womb to
be His Servant,
to bring Jacob back to Him
and to gather Israel to Him—
the LORD treated Me with hon-
or,
and My God has become My
Strength—

- ⁶He says: It is not enough that
You're My Servant
to raise the tribes of Jacob
and bring back those in Israel
who have been preserved—
I have also made You a *Light for
the nations*
that My salvation might reach to
the most distant parts of the
world.

The Lord Will Redeem

- ⁷The LORD, who redeems Israel
and is his Holy One,
says to Him whom people de-
spise and nations abhor,

48
20 Rv 18:4
49
1 Gr 1:15
2 Ep 6:17
Heb 4:12
Rv 1:15
4 Ph 2:16
6 Acts 13:47

to the Slave of tyrants:
 When kings see You, they will
 get up,
 and princes will bow down
 because the LORD,
 the Holy One of Israel, is faith-
 ful.

And He chose You.

⁸The LORD says: *When the time
 comes to be kind, I will answer
 You;
 when the time comes to save, I
 will help You.*

I will protect You
 and make You the Covenant of
 the people,
 to restore the country,
 to allot again the possessions
 that have been laid waste.

⁹I will say to prisoners,
 "Come out,"
 and to those who are in the dark,
 "Show yourselves."
 They will feed on all the moun-
 tains
 and find their pasture on all the
 bare hills.

¹⁰*They will not be hungry or thirst-
 y,
 nor will the hot wind or the sun
 strike them,
 because He who feels sorry for
 them
 will lead them
 and bring them to springs of
 water.*

¹¹I will put roads on all My hills,
 and My roads will be high.

¹²Look, some of them are coming
 from far away,
 others from the north and the
 west,
 and others from the land of
 Sinim.

¹³Sing, O heavens,
 be glad, O earth,
 and you hills, break into singing,

for the LORD comforts His peo-
 ple
 and is merciful to His own who
 are suffering.

¹⁴But Zion says, "The LORD has
 deserted me!

My Lord has forgotten me!"

¹⁵Can a woman forget the child
 she's nursing
 and not have compassion on the
 son who came from her
 womb?

Even if mothers should forget,
 I will not forget you.

¹⁶See, I have engraved you on the
 palms of My hands.
 Your walls are always before
 My mind.

¹⁷Those who come to rebuild you
 are faster than those who de-
 stroyed you;
 and those who laid you waste
 are leaving you.

¹⁸Look around and see.
 They are all gathering and com-
 ing to you.

As I live, says the LORD,
 you shall wear all of them like
 ornaments
 and fasten them on yourself as
 does a bride.

¹⁹Your country lies waste, deso-
 late, and in ruins,
 but it will now be too small for
 the people who want to live
 there.

Those who devoured you will be
 far away.

²⁰You will hear the children you
 lost tell you.

"This place is too small for me.
 Make room for me to live here."

²¹Then you will ask yourself,
 "Who fathered these children
 for me?"

I lost my children and was bar-
 ren

8 2 Co 5:2
 10 Rv 7:16-17
 12 Mt 8:11
 Lk 13:29
 13 Rv 12:12
 18:20
 18 Ro 14:11

when I went away into exile.
Who raised these?
I was left alone,
so where do they come from?"

²²The Lord GOD says:
See, I raise My hand to the na-
tions
and set up My signal to the peo-
ple,
so they will bring your sons in
their arms
and carry your daughters on
their shoulders.

²³Then kings will be your foster-
fathers,
and their queens will nurse you.
They will bow down before you
with their faces on the ground
and lick the dust of your feet.
Then you will realize I am the
LORD
and those who depend on Me
will not be disappointed.

²⁴But can spoil be taken from a
soldier
or a tyrant's captives be freed?

²⁵The LORD answers:
Yes, the soldier's spoil will be
taken away,
and the tyrant's captives will be
freed.
I will fight with those who fight
against you,
and I will save your children.

²⁶I will make those who oppress
you eat their own flesh,
and they will get drunk on their
own blood as on new wine.
Then everybody will know I the
LORD am saving you
and the Mighty One of Jacob is
redeeming you.

50 The LORD asks:
Is there a divorce paper with

which I divorced your moth-
er?

Or to which of My creditors
have I sold you?

No, for your sins you were sold,
and for your rebellion your
mother was sent away.

²⁷When I came, why was nobody
there?

When I called, why didn't any-
body answer?

Am I too weak to redeem you,
or have I no power to save?

You see, when I rebuke the sea, I
dry it up,

and I make rivers a desert.

The fish in them shrivel for lack
of water
and die of thirst.

²⁸I dress the heavens in black
and cover them with sackcloth.

The Servant of the LORD Speaks

⁴The Lord GOD gives Me the
speech of the learned,
so that I know how to talk to
encourage the weary.

Morning after morning He
wakes Me to hear,
so I will listen like a learner.

⁵The Lord GOD opened My ears,
and I didn't resist or turn away.

⁶I gave My back to the whip
and let men pluck the hair from
My face.

I haven't turned My cheek away
from those who insult Me and
spit on Me.

⁷The Lord GOD helps Me;
this is why I'm not overcome
with shame.

So I've set My face like a flint;
I know I'll not be shamed.

⁸because He is near who justifies
Me.

Does anyone want to argue with
Me?

Let us go to court together.

²³ Rev 3:9
50
⁶ Mt 26:67
²⁷ 30
^{MR} 10:34
15:19
^{Lk} 18:32-33
⁸ 9:Rp 8:33
³⁴ Heb
1:11

Will anyone oppose Me in this case?

Let him come near Me.

⁹The Lord GOD will help Me;

Who then will condemn Me?

They will all wear out like a garment

that a moth has eaten.

Obey the LORD's Servant

¹⁰Whoever among you fears the LORD

should obey when His Servant speaks.

He who walks in the dark without a light

should trust in the LORD's name and depend on his God.

¹¹Look, all of you who light a fire and arm yourselves with flaming torches,

walk into the flames of your fire and among the torches you have lit.

This comes to you from My hand:

You will lie down in a place of torment.

Look at Abraham

51 Listen to Me, you who search for what is right and seek the LORD.

Look at the rock you were hewn from

and the quarry you were dug from.

²Look at Abraham, your father, and Sarah, who gave birth to you.

He was only one when I called him,

but I blessed him and gave him many descendants.

³The LORD will comfort Zion and take pity on all her ruins; He will turn her wilderness into a paradise

and make her desert like the LORD's garden.

Joy and delight will be there, thanksgiving and the sound of singing.

I'm Ready to Save

⁴Listen to Me, My people,

and hear Me, My nation;

from Me the Law goes out,

and My justice as a light for the nations.

⁵I come quickly to do what is right.

I'm on My way to save.

My arm will judge the nations.

The lands by the sea will eagerly wait for Me

and put their trust in My arm.

⁶Look up to heaven,

and watch the earth below.

The heavens will disappear like smoke,

the earth wear out like a garment,

and those who live there will die like gnats.

But I will always save

and never be stopped from doing what is right.

⁷Listen to Me, you who know what is right.

a people who have My instruction in their hearts:

Don't be afraid of the taunts of mere men;

don't let them alarm you when they mock you.

⁸The moth will eat them like a garment;

it will devour them like wool.

But My righteousness will last forever,

and I'm ready to save the people of every generation.

⁵¹
6 Heb 1:11

The LORD's Arm Will Deliver

"Awake, awake, put on strength,
O arm of the LORD!

Awake as You did long ago for
the people in the old days.
Didn't You cut Rahab in pieces
and pierce the dragon?

¹⁰Didn't You dry up the sea, the
great deep,
making a road in the floor of the
sea
for Your redeemed people to
cross over?

¹¹So those whom the LORD has
ransomed will return
and come to Zion with singing
and crowned with endless joy.
Then they will be happy and
delighted;
sorrow and sighing will flee.

¹²I, I will comfort you.
Why should you be afraid of ¹⁷ ¹⁸ ¹⁹ ²⁰
mortal man,
of mere human beings who are
doomed like grass?

¹³Why should you forget the LORD
who made you,
who stretched out the heavens
and laid the foundations of the
earth?
Why should you always fear the
fury of the oppressor
when he gets ready to destroy
you?
Where is the oppressor's fury?

¹⁴His cowering prisoner will soon
be set free;
he will not die in a dungeon,
nor will he lack bread.

¹⁵I am the LORD your God,
who stirs up the sea
and makes its waves roar.
"The LORD of armies" is My
name.

¹⁶I put My words into your mouth

and covered you with the shad-
ow of My hand
when I stretched out the heav-
ens
and laid the foundations of the
earth
and said to Zion, "You are My
people."

Jerusalem, Wake Up!

¹⁷Wake up, wake up,
stand up, Jerusalem!
You drank from the LORD's
hand
the cup of His anger.

The bowl, the cup that made you
stagger—
you drank and drained it!

¹⁸Of all the sons she had
there was none to guide her.
Of all the sons she raised
there was none to take her hand.

¹⁹These two things happened to
you—
will anyone feel sorry for you?
Wreck and ruin, famine and the
sword—
will anyone comfort you?

²⁰Your sons lie unconscious at
every street corner,
like a gazelle in a net,
drunk with the LORD's anger,
with the rebuke of your God.

²¹So listen to this, you who suffer,
drunk as you are but not with
wine.

²²Your Master, the LORD, your
God who defends His people,
says:
Look, I'm going to take from your
hand

the cup that made you stagger,
the bowl, the cup of My fury;
you will never drink it again.

²³And I will put it in the hands of
those who made you suffer,
who told you, "Get down on the

ground that we may walk on you."

So you made your back like the ground
and like a street for them to walk on.

52 Wake up, wake up,
put on your strength, Zion!
Put on your beautiful robes,
Jerusalem, the holy city!
Never again will an uncircumcised
or unclean person come into you.
"Shake off the dust,
get up, captive Jerusalem.
Take the chains off your neck,
captive daughter of Zion!

"The LORD says: You were sold for nothing, and you will be bought back without money. "The Lord GOD says: In the beginning My people went down to Egypt to live there as strangers. Finally the Assyrians oppressed them. "And now what do I have here? asks the LORD. My people are taken without a price, and their rulers are mocked, says the LORD. And My name is reviled all day long. "But My people shall know My name, and on that day they will know I am the One who says, "I am ready!"

The Good News

"How beautiful on the hills
are the feet of the messenger
who brings the news
and announces peace,
who tells the good news of how
people are saved,
and tells Zion, "Your God is King!"

"Listen! Your watchmen are raising their voices
and singing together happily
because every eye sees how the
LORD will bring Zion back.

"Break into loud singing together,
ruins of Jerusalem!
The LORD comforts His people;
He redeems Jerusalem.

"The LORD has made bare His
holy arm
while all the nations are watching.

And all the distant parts of the
world will see
how our God saves.

"Go away, go away, leave this
place.

Don't touch anything unclean.
Get out of this place.

Cleanse yourselves, you who
carry the LORD's vessels.

"You'll not leave in a hurry
or go away by fleeing.
The LORD is going ahead of you,
and the God of Israel will protect
you from behind.

A Song About the Suffering Servant

"Look! My Servant will succeed.
He will rise, be lifted up, and
exalted very high.

"Many were amazed at Him,
for His appearance was more
disfigured than any man
and His form more than any human
being.

"So He will sprinkle many nations.
Kings will shut their mouths on
account of Him
because they have seen something
they haven't been told
and have witnessed something
they haven't heard before.

53 Who could believe what we
have heard?
And to whom has the LORD's
mighty working been revealed?

"He grew up before Him like a
shoot from a stock.

52
1 Rv 21:2
10:27
3 1 Pt 1:18
5 Ro 2:24
2 Pt 2:2
7 Acts 10:36
Ro 10:15
Ep 2:17
6:15
10 Lk 2:30
11 2 Co 5:17
Rv 18:4
15 Ro 15:21
53
1 Jn 12:38
Ro 10:16

like a sprout from a root in dry ground.

And when we saw Him, He had no form or beauty to make us want Him.

or pleasing looks to make us delight in Him.

⁹He was despised, forsaken by men,

a man of sorrows who knew suffering.

People covered their faces so as not to see Him.

He was despised, and we thought nothing of Him.

¹⁰But surely *He has taken on Himself our sickness*

and carried our sorrows,

but we observed that God had stricken, smitten, and afflicted Him.

¹¹And certainly He was pierced for our transgressions and crushed for our sins;

By His punishment, we were saved

and by His wounds we were healed.

¹²We have all gone astray like sheep.

Every one of us has gone his own way,

and the LORD has punished Him for the sins of us all.

¹³He was oppressed and mistreated without opening His mouth.

Like a lamb He was led away to be slaughtered.

Like a mother sheep is dumb before the men who cut off her wool,

so He doesn't open His mouth.

¹⁴After He was tried as a prisoner, He was then taken away.

Who in His time even considered that He was cut off from the

world of the living and struck down for His people's sins?

⁹They assigned Him a grave with criminals

and with a rich man in His death,

though He hadn't done any crime or said anything deceitful.

¹⁰Yet the LORD planned to crush Him

and slay Him.

After He has sacrificed Himself for guilt,

He will see those born to Him

and will enjoy a long life.

And so by Him the LORD will succeed in what He wants to do.

¹¹Because of the toil of His soul,

He will see the light^y and be satisfied.

By His experience My righteous Servant justifies many

by taking on Himself the heavy load of their guilt.

¹²Because of this I will give Him many people as His share;

and He will divide the spoil with the mighty

because He pours out His life in death,

lets Himself be counted with sinners,

while He takes on Himself the sins of many people and intercedes for the wrongdoers.

God's People Multiply

54 Rejoice, you barren woman who doesn't have any children. Break into cries of joy and shout, you who had no pains of childbirth, because the lonely woman has many more children

4 Mt 8 17
1 Pt 2 24
5:6 1 Pt 2
24 25
7:8 Acts 8
32-33 Rv
5:6 12 13 8
9 1 Pt 2 22
Rv 14 5
1 Jn 3 5
11 Ro 5 19
12 Ro 4 25
Eph 5 2 25
Ph 2 7-9
Mk 15 28
Lk 22 37
Heb 9 28
1 Pt 2 24
54
1 Gi 4 27

^yGk and Dead Sea Scrolls

than the one who has a husband,
says the LORD.

- ²Widen the place of your tent,
and stretch out the curtains of
your home without restricting
them;
make your cords longer, and
drive in your stakes firmly,
³for you will spread out right and
left,
and your descendants will take
control of the nations
and fill the deserted cities with
people.

God's Love for His People

⁴Don't be afraid—you will not be
disappointed.
And don't feel ashamed—you
don't have to give up hope.
You will forget the shameful
things of your youth
and not remember anymore how
you were insulted when you
were a widow.

⁵He who made you is your Hus-
band;
His name is the LORD of armies.
And the Holy One of Israel re-
deems you;
He is called the God of the whole
earth.

⁶The LORD calls you like a wife
who has been left alone and in
grief,
like the wife of one's youth when
she has been rejected,
says your God.

⁷I left you for just a little while,
but with great mercies I will
bring you back to Me.

⁸In a burst of anger I hid My face
from you for just a moment,
but with everlasting love I feel
sorry for you,
says the LORD who redeems
you.

⁹To Me this is like the days of
Noah.

As I swore that the waters of
Noah should not flood the
earth again,
so I swore not to be angry with
you or rebuke you.

¹⁰The mountains may move and
the hills waver,
but My love will never leave you,
and the covenant by which I
make you happy will never
waver.
says the LORD, who has compas-
sion on you.

New Jerusalem

¹¹You who are suffering, tossed by
the storm, and without com-
fort,
see, I will lay your stones in
colored cement
and your foundation with sap-
phires.

¹²I will make your pinnacles glit-
ter with rubies,
your gates with sparkling
stones,
and all your border walls with
precious stones.

¹³The LORD will teach all your
children,
and they will be very happy.

¹⁴You will be founded on right-
eousness
and removed from oppression,
so you need not be afraid:
destruction will not come near
you.

¹⁵If anyone attacks you,
it will not be My doing.
Anyone who does come against
you
will fall because of you.

¹⁶See, I've made the smith who
blows the glowing coals
and brings out a weapon to work
on it.

¹¹⁻¹² Rv
²¹⁻¹⁹
¹³ Jn 6:45

But I've also made a destroyer
ready to destroy it.

¹⁷No weapon forged against you
will succeed.

You will also condemn every
tongue that brings an accusa-
tion against you.

This is the heritage of the
LORD's servants:

I give them their righteousness,
says the LORD.

The Everlasting Covenant

55 *Oh, come to the water,
all you who are thirsty!*

You who have no money, come,
buy and eat.

Come and buy grain *without
money*,
and wine and milk that costs
nothing.

²Why are you spending money for
what isn't bread
and your earnings for what
doesn't satisfy?

If you will only listen to Me,
you will eat good things and en-
joy rich food.

³Hear and come to Me.
Listen and you will live!
I will make an everlasting cove-
nant with you—
*the mercies faithfully promised
to David!*

⁴Once I made him a witness to the
nations,
a prince and a commander of
the nations.

⁵So now you will command a na-
tion you don't know,
and a nation that doesn't know
you will run to you
on account of the LORD your
God
and the Holy One of Israel, for
He will glorify you.

Seek the Lord

⁶Seek the LORD while He can be
found,
call on Him while He is near.

⁷Every wicked man should give
up his way,
and every evil man what he's
thinking.

If he comes back to the LORD,
He will be merciful to him,
and to our God, He will forgive
him ever so much.

⁸My thoughts are not your
thoughts,
and your ways are not My ways,
says the LORD.

⁹As high as heaven is above the
earth,
so far are My ways above your
ways
and My thoughts above your
thoughts.

¹⁰As rain and snow come down
from heaven
and don't go back again but
water the ground
and make it produce and grow
and give seed to the sower and
bread to the eater,

¹¹so will My word be that I speak.
It will not return to Me empty
but it will accomplish what I
want
and achieve what I had in mind.

¹²You will go out with joy
and be led out in peace.
The mountains and the hills
will break into shouts of joy be-
fore you,
and all the trees in the field will
happily applaud.

¹³Where there was a thornbush, a
cypress will grow.
Where there was a brier, a myr-
tle will grow.
And this will honor the LORD

55
1 Rv 21:6
22:17
3 Heb 13:20
Acts 13:34
10 2 Co 9:10

and be an everlasting sign that will not be cut down.

All Peoples Welcome

56 The LORD says: Be just and do what is right,

for I am ready to save you and to show My righteousness.
 *Blessed is the man who does this and the human being who clings to it.

who keeps the Sabbath holy and his hands from doing anything wrong.

*Let no foreigner who joins the LORD say, "The LORD will surely cut me off from His people." Let no eunuch say, "Oh, I'm a dry tree!" *This is what the LORD says: as for the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, choose what I delight in, and cling to My covenant. *I will give them in My house and within My walls a monument and a name that is better than having sons and daughters. I will give them an everlasting name that will not be wiped out. *And the strangers who join the LORD to be His servants and bless the LORD's name, those who keep the Sabbath and cling to My covenant—
 *I will also bring them to My holy hill and make them happy in My house of prayer. They will bring their burnt offerings and their sacrifices to be accepted on My altar, for My temple will be called a house of prayer for all people.

*The Lord GOD, who gathers the scattered people of Israel, says this: I will gather others to them besides their own people who are already gathered.

Blind Leaders

*All you beasts of the field, come to devour,
 yes, all you beasts in the forest.

¹⁰Their watchmen are all blind and know nothing.

All of them are dumb dogs that can't bark, dreaming as they lie there, loving their slumber.

¹¹These dogs are very greedy and can't be satisfied. They are the shepherds, but they can't understand. All of them have turned away to go their own ways, every one of them being out for his own profit.

¹²"Come and we'll get wine and fill ourselves with liquor. It will be like this every day, a great life with more than enough."

57 But the righteous person is perishing.

and nobody cares about it. Kind men are swept away, and nobody understands.

Though the righteous man is swept away before the calamity,

¹he will come through safely. Everyone who has lived right will rest on his own bed.

²But you come here, you sons of a witch, you children of an adulterer, you who live in sexual sin.

³Of whom are you making fun? At whom are you making a face and sticking out your tongue? Aren't you the children of rebellion, born of a lie?

⁴You burn with lust among the oaks, under every green tree, butchering children in the valleys, among the rocks in the ravines.

⁵You live among the smooth

56
 S. RV. 2:17
 3:12
 J. MI. 21:13
 MA. 11:17
 LK. 19:46

stones in the ravine.
 These stones are your lot.
 Yes, to these you have poured
 out drink offerings
 and brought food offerings.
 Should I be satisfied with such
 things?

⁷On a high and lofty mountain
 you've made your bed.

Yes, there you went up and of-
 fered sacrifices.

⁸And behind doors and doorposts
 you set up your symbol.

You left Me and stripped,
 went up on your bed,

and spread it wide.

Then you made a bargain
 with some of those whose bed
 you loved

and whose organs you gazed at.

⁹You anointed yourself with oil
 for Molech

and put on plenty of perfume.

You sent your messengers far
 away

and made them descend to the
 netherworld.

¹⁰Though you got tired of so much
 traveling,

you didn't think it was hopeless.

You found fresh strength

and didn't faint.

¹¹Whom do you fear or dread
 that you should be unfaithful

and not remember Me

or take Me seriously?

Isn't it so that I was silent for a
 long time

and that's why you weren't
 afraid of Me?

¹²I'll tell you now how righteous
 you are:

the works you have done are
 useless to you.

¹³When you cry for help,

let the idols you collected save
 you.

A wind will lift all of them up,

and a breath will carry them
 away.

But whoever trusts in Me

will inherit the land

and possess My holy hill.

Comfort for the Humble

¹⁴It will be said:

Heap up, heap up dirt, and build
 a highway.

Prepare the way.

Take the stumbling blocks out of
 the way for My people.

¹⁵Here is what the high and lofty
 One says,

He who lives forever

and whose name is holy:

I live in a high and holy place

and am also with the crushed

and humble in spirit

to revive the spirit of the humble

and the hearts of those who are
 crushed.

¹⁶I will not quarrel or be angry
 forever,

for then the spirits, the living
 souls I made,

would faint before Me.

¹⁷I was angry because they were
 guilty of greed.

I struck them in anger and hid
 Myself;

but they still lived in their willful
 ways.

¹⁸I have seen their ways,

and I will heal them

and give them rest.

I will fully comfort them;

and those of them who mourn

¹⁹I will comfort with the fruit of
 My lips.

Peace, peace to those far and
 those near.

I will heal them, says the LORD.

²⁰But the wicked are restless like
 the sea;

it can't rest,

57
 15 Lk 1:49
 Mt 5:3
 Lk 6:70
 19 Acts 2:39
 Ep 2:13, 17

and its waters throw up mud
and slime.

²¹So the wicked have no peace,
says my God.

Which Fasting Pleases God?

58 Cry aloud. Don't hold back.
Raise your voice like a
trumpet.

And tell My people about their
rebellion
and Jacob's descendants about
their sins.

²From day to day they search for
Me
and want to know My ways
as if they were a nation that did
right
and didn't forsake the right
ways of its God.

They demand just laws from Me.
They want God to come near.

³"Why don't You see our fasting?
Why don't you realize how we
deny ourselves?"

Look, when you fast, you do
what you want;
you mistreat all your workers.

⁴Look, when you fast, you quarrel
and fight
and hit with a wicked fist.
The fasting you do now
will not get you a hearing above.

⁵Is this the kind of fasting I want,
when a man denies himself for a
day?

Is it to bow your head like a
bulrush
and make your bed of sackcloth
and ashes?

Do you call this fasting,
a day that pleases the LORD?

⁶Isn't this the fasting I choose:
to untie the ropes of wickedness,
undo the bands of the yoke,
let the oppressed go free;
yes, and tear off every yoke?

⁷Isn't it to share your food with
the hungry,
take poor, homeless people into
your house,
cover with clothes anyone you
see naked,
and not act uppish toward your
own kin?

⁸Then your light will break
through like the dawn,
and you will quickly be healed.
Your righteousness will go
ahead of you,
and the LORD's glory will pro-
tect you from behind.

⁹Then you will call, and the LORD
will answer.

You will look for help, and He
will say, "Here I am!"
Only get rid of that yoke,
that of pointing your finger and
saying wicked things.

¹⁰Give yourself to the hungry,
and satisfy the needy.
Then your light will rise in the
dark,
and your darkness will be as
bright as noon.

¹¹And the LORD will guide you
continually
and satisfy you even in times of
drought.
Your bodies will be vigorous.
You will be like a watered gar-
den
and a spring whose waters don't
fail.

¹²Some of you will rebuild the an-
cient ruins
and set up the foundations of
past generations.
You will be called "rebuilder of
broken walls
and restorer of paths where
people live."

The Sabbath

¹³Stop trampling on the Sabbath

⁵⁸
⁶ Lk 4:18
Acts 8:23

and doing as you please on My
holy day.

Call the Sabbath delightful
and the LORD's holy day honor-
able.

If you honor it by stopping your
own work,
not doing as you please, and not
gossiping.

¹⁴then you will be delighted in the
LORD.

and He will have you ride on the
high places of the earth
and feed you on the heritage of
your father Jacob.

The mouth of the LORD has said
it.

A Hymn

59 The LORD's hand is not too
short to save
or His ear too dull to hear.

¹But your iniquities have made a
barrier

between you and your God,
and your sins have made Him
hide His face
so He can't hear you.

²Your hands are stained with
blood

and your fingers with wrong.
Your lips tell lies,

and your tongues express
wickedness.

³Nobody summons another in a
righteous way

or pleads his case honestly.
People trust in empty things
and tell lies.

They conceive misery
and give birth to calamity.

⁴They hatch the eggs of snakes
and weave the webs of spiders.

If you eat some of their eggs,
you will die;

if you crush them,

an adder comes out.

⁵What they weave will not make

a garment.

and what they make will cover
nobody.

They do evil works,
and in their hands are crimes.

⁷Their feet run to do evil.

They hurry to pour out innocent
blood.

They plan to do wrong.

On the roads they travel
there is desolation, destruction,
and crime.

⁸They don't know the way of
peace.

Where they go, there is no jus-
tice.

They make crooked paths for
themselves,

and whoever walks there will
not know peace.

⁹This is why justice is far from us
and righteousness doesn't reach
us.

We look for light, but it is dark-
ness;

for brightness, but we walk in
gloom.

¹⁰We grope like blind men along a
wall.

We feel our way like people
without eyes.

At noon we stumble as if it were
twilight.

We are like dead men in a grave-
yard.

¹¹All of us growl like bears.

We moan like pigeons.

We wait for justice, but there's
none;

for a rescue, but it's far away.

¹²It is because our wrongs are
many before You;

our sins testify against us.

Our wrongs are with us;

we know how very guilty we are;

¹³being unfaithful and denying the
LORD,

turning our backs on our God,
speaking oppression and rebel-
lion.

telling lies that come from the
heart.

¹⁴So justice is turned back,
and righteousness stands far
away.

for truth has fallen in the street,
and honesty can't come in.

¹⁵Where there should be truth, it's
missing.

If anyone turns away from evil,
he makes himself a prey.

When the LORD sees it, He is
angry

that there is no justice.

¹⁶He sees that there's nobody—
He is surprised there's nobody
to help.

So His own arm gets Him the
victory.

and His righteousness supports
Him.

¹⁷He puts on righteousness like a
breastplate.

and a helmet of salvation on His
head.

He dresses in garments of ven-
geance:

He wraps Himself in zeal as in a
robe.

¹⁸He will pay them back according
to what they've done.

fury to His opponents and pun-
ishment to His enemies.

He will pay back the people who
live in the lands by the sea.

¹⁹When the people of the west will
fear the LORD's name,

and those in the east His glory,
for trouble will come like a flood

driven by the breath of the
LORD.

²⁰Then He will come to Zion as a
Redeemer

and to those in Jacob who turn
from wrong, says the LORD.

²¹This is My covenant with them,
says the LORD: My Spirit, who is on
you, and My words that I put in your
mouth will not leave your mouth or
the mouth of your descendants or
the mouth of the descendants of
your descendants, says the LORD,
from now on and forever.

Jerusalem Will Shine

60 Arise, shine, for your light
has come.

and the LORD's glory is shining
on you.

²Darkness still covers the earth
and thick darkness the people,
but the LORD will rise over you.

and His glory will appear over
you.

³Gentiles will come to your light,
and as you shine, kings will come

near.

⁴Lift your eyes and look around.
All of them gather and come to

you.

Your sons come from a distance,
your daughters faithfully at
their side.

⁵When you see it, you will be
radiant,

your heart trembling with pride
and glad to know the abundance

of the sea is turning to you
and the wealth of the nations is

coming to you.

⁶Many camels will cover your
land,

young camels of Midian and
Ephah.

All of those from Sheba
will come, bringing gold and in-
cense.

They will tell of the LORD's
wonderful deeds.

⁷All of Kedar's flocks will gather
and come to you;

Nebaioth's rams will serve you.
They will go up to be accepted

¹⁷ Ed 6:14; 17
1 Th 5:8
19 Mt 8:11
Lk 13:29
20-21 Mt 11
26-27
60
1-2 Rv 21
11:23
3 Rv 21:24
6 Mt 2:11

- on My altar.
And so I will glorify My beautiful temple.
- ⁸Who are these that fly like a cloud,
and like pigeons to their coops?
⁹Surely the people living by the sea are looking eagerly for Me,
and the ships of Tarshish are the first to bring My children from far away
with their silver and their gold for the name of the LORD your God
and for the Holy One of Israel because He glorifies you.
- ¹⁰Foreigners will rebuild your walls,
and their kings will serve you. For in my anger I struck you,
but in my kindness I pity you.
- ¹¹Your gates will always be open; day and night they will never close
that men may bring you the wealth of nations
with their kings leading the procession.
- ¹²The nation or kingdom that doesn't serve you will perish. Yes, those nations certainly will be ruined.
- ¹³Lebanon's glory will come to you—
the cypress, elm, and boxtree—to make My holy place beautiful. The place where My feet rest I will glorify.
- ¹⁴All who mistreat you will come bowing down before you. All who despise you will bend down to the soles of your feet. They will call you "the City of the LORD,
the Zion of the Holy One of Israel."
- ¹⁵Once you were forsaken and hated;
nobody passed through you. Instead of that I will make you one who is lofty forever,
a joy from age to age.
- ¹⁶You will suck the milk of nations and drink deeply from royal breasts.
Then you know I, the LORD, am the One who saves you,
the Mighty One of Jacob who redeems you.
- ¹⁷I will bring you gold instead of bronze.
I will bring you silver instead of iron,
bronze instead of wood,
iron instead of stones.
And I will give you a government of peace,
and your rulers will be righteous.
- ¹⁸No more will anyone hear of crime in your country
or of desolation and destruction in your borders,
but you will call your walls Salvation
and your gates Praise.
- ¹⁹No more will the sun be your light by day
or the moon shine by night to give you light,
but the LORD will be your everlasting Light;
your God will be your Glory.
- ²⁰Your sun will not go down
or your moon disappear,
for the LORD will be your everlasting Light,
and your mourning days will be over.
- ²¹Your people will all be righteous.
They will own the land forever. They will be a branch the LORD planted,

¹¹ Rv 21 25-26
¹⁴ Rv 3 9, 4 10, 5 14
¹¹ 16, 19 4, 10 22 8
¹⁹ Rv 21 11, 22 22 5

that His hands made to give Him glory.

²²The least will become a thousand, and the smallest a mighty nation.

At the right time I the LORD will quickly make it happen.

The Work of the Servant

61 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is on Me

because the LORD anointed Me to tell good news to those who are suffering.

He sends Me to bandage the brokenhearted,

to announce liberty to the captives

and freedom to the prisoners,

²to announce a year when the LORD will accept people and a day of vengeance for our God,

to comfort all who mourn in Zion,

³to put on them a crown for ashes,

oil of joy for mourning,

a mantle of praise for a drooping spirit.

They will be called "oaks of righteousness," planted by the LORD to glorify Him.

⁴They will rebuild the ancient ruins,

set up the desolated buildings of those who lived here long ago.

put up new cities on their ruins, and rebuild the places lying waste for generations.

⁵Foreigners will stand as shepherds of your flocks,

and strangers will plow your fields

and take care of your vines.

⁶You will be called "the priests of the LORD"

and named "the servants of our God."

You will eat the wealth of the nations

and glory in their splendor.

⁷You will get double for your shame.

Once they shouted, "Disgrace is your lot!"

For this you will have a double share in their land.

You will have everlasting joy.

⁸I the LORD love justice;

I hate robbery and crime.

I will honestly reward your work.

I will make an everlasting covenant with you.

⁹Your children will be known among the nations,

your descendants among the people.

All who see them will realize they are descendants the LORD has blessed.

¹⁰I will be very glad in the LORD, I will delight in my God,

for He has dressed me in the garments of salvation

and wrapped me in a robe of righteousness

as a bridegroom puts on a priestly turban

and a bride puts on her beautiful jewels.

¹¹As the ground produces its sprouts

and a garden makes the seed sown in it blossom,

so the Lord GOD will make righteousness and praise

blossom in the sight of all the nations.

61
1:2 Lk 4
18:19
Mt 5:4
6 Rv 1:6
5:10 20:6
10 Rv 21:2

Jerusalem—the LORD's Delight

62 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,

and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest
till her righteousness comes out
to be seen like a light
and her salvation burns as
bright as a torch.

²The nations will see your righteousness
and all the kings your glory.
You will be given a new name
that the LORD's mouth will determine.

³Then you will be a beautiful crown in the LORD's hand,
a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

⁴No more will people call you forsaken
or your country a barren waste,
but they will call you "I-Delight-in-Her"

and your country "Married,"
for the LORD delights in you,
and your country will have a Husband.

⁵As a young man marries a girl,
so your children will be bound to you by a vow.

As a bridegroom delights in his bride,
so your God will delight in you.

⁶On your walls, Jerusalem,
I will set watchmen
who will never be silent
all day and all night.
You who remind the LORD,
don't take any rest.

⁷Don't let Him have any rest
till He establishes Jerusalem
and makes it a city that is
praised in the world.

⁸The LORD swears by His right hand
and His mighty arm:

I will never again let your enemies eat your grain
or strangers drink the wine you work for.

⁹No, those who gathered it will eat it
and praise the LORD.
Those who gathered grapes will drink wine
in My holy courts.

¹⁰Go through, go through the gates,
prepare a way for the people.
Heap up and build a highway.
Clear away the stones.
Raise a flag for the people.

¹¹The LORD announces to the most distant part of the world:
Tell the daughter of Zion,
"Look, your salvation is coming.
See, His reward is with Him,
and what He has earned goes ahead of Him."

¹²They will be called the holy people whom the LORD redeemed,
and you will be called "Sought"
and "A-City-Not-Forsaken."

The LORD Appears to Judge

63 Who is this that comes from Edom,
bright in His garments from Bozrah,
this One so splendid in His dress,
bending forward with great strength?
"I am He who speaks for what is right,
mighty to save!"

²Why are Your clothes red
and Your garments like those of one tramping in the wine trough?

³"I have tramped alone in the winepress:

62
2 Rv 2:17;
3:12
11 Mt 21:5;
Jn 12:15;
Rv 22:12
12 1 Pt 2:9
63
3 Rv 14:20;
19:13, 15

not one of My people was with Me.

I trod on them in My anger
and tramped on them in My fury;
their lifeblood spurted on My
clothes;

so I soiled all My clothes.

*I have planned a day of ven-
geance;

the year when I redeem is here.

*I look, but there's nobody to help
Me.

I shudder, but there's nobody to
support Me.

So My own arm wins Me the
victory.

My fury supports Me.

*In My anger I stamp on people,
in My fury I smash them

and let their lifeblood flow down
to the ground."

The LORD's Goodness

*I will tell about the LORD's kind-
ness,

about the LORD's deeds that
should be praised,

according to everything the
LORD did for us,

His great good work for the peo-
ple of Israel,

which He did for them

according to His mercies and
great kindness.

*He said: Surely they are My
people,

children who will not be untrue
to Me.

So He was their Savior.

*In all their troubles

He was no enemy.

*but the Angel in whom He revealed
Himself saved them.*

Loving them and pitying them.

He redeemed them.

He took them up

and carried them all those days
of long ago.

¹⁰But they rebelled
and grieved His Holy Spirit.

So He turned to be their enemy
and fought against them.

¹¹Then His people remembered
the days of old and Moses:

Where is He who brought them
up out of the sea

with the shepherd of His flock?

Where is He who put within
them

His Holy Spirit,

¹²who performed with His won-
derful arm at the right hand of
Moses

and divided the water before
them

to make an everlasting name for
Himself.

¹³who led them through deep
waters without stumbling.

like a horse going through the
desert?

¹⁴Like cattle going down to the
valley,

the LORD's Spirit brought them
to their rest.

Yes, You led Your people

to make a wonderful name for
Yourself.

¹⁵Look down from heaven, and see
from Your holy and wonderful
home!

Where is Your zeal?

Where are Your mighty deeds.

the yearning of Your heart and
Your mercies?

Do not hold back.

¹⁶You are our Father.

Abraham doesn't know us.

and Israel doesn't pay attention
to us.

But You, LORD, are our Father.
Your name is "Our-Redeemer-
from-Everlasting."

¹⁷LORD, why do you let us wander
away from Your ways

and close our minds so we don't

¹⁰ Acts 7:51
¹¹ Heb 11:20

fear You?
Return for the sake of Your ser-
vants.

the tribes You own.

¹⁸Why do the wicked walk in Your
sanctuary?

Why do our enemies *trample* on
Your holy place?

¹⁹We have become like those You
never ruled over,

like those who never were called
by Your name.

64 I wish You would tear the
heavens apart and come
down.

Your presence would shake the
mountains

²as when fire burns up dry twigs
and makes water boil.

We want Your enemies to know
Your name.

Your presence makes the na-
tions tremble

³when You do fearful things we
don't expect.

Yes, if You would come down,
Your presence would shake the
mountains.

⁴No one has ever heard with his
ears

or seen with his eyes

any god except You who could
do things

for those who look to him with
confidence.

⁵You encourage those who de-
light in doing right

and remember You in Your
ways.

Though You were angry, we still
sinned—

we've continued long in sins,
and can we be saved?

⁶We've all become like an un-
clean person,

and all our righteousnesses are

like rags dirtied by menstrual
flow.

All of us fade like a leaf,
and our wrongs carry us away
like the wind.

⁷There's nobody calling on Your
name

or rousing himself to take hold of
You,

since You have hidden Your face
from us.

You have handed us over to the
tyranny of our wrongdoing.

⁸But now, LORD, You are our
Father.

We are the clay and You the
potter,

and all of us are the work of
Your hands.

⁹Don't be too angry, LORD,
and don't remember wrong for-
ever.

Now please consider, we are all
Your people.

¹⁰Your holy cities have become a
wilderness.

Zion has turned into a wilder-
ness.

Jerusalem is in ruins.

¹¹Our holy and wonderful temple,
where our fathers praised You,
is burned down,

and all our pleasant places are
in ruins.

¹²In spite of these things, LORD,
will You hold back?

Will You be silent and make us
suffer in the extreme?

Idolatry!

65 *I will be sought after by
those who didn't ask for Me.
I will let those find Me who
didn't look for Me.*

I say, Here I am, here I am!

*to a people who didn't call on My
name.*

²All day I stretch out My hands

18 Lk 21:24

Rv 11:2

64

4 1 Co 2:9

65

1 2 Ro 10

20:21

15 Rv 2:17

3:12

17 2 Pt 3:15

Rv 21:14

19 Rv 21:4

23 Ph 2:16

- to a rebellious people
 who are living in a way that isn't
 good
 and following their own plans.
- ¹¹These people regularly provoke
 Me to My face,
 sacrificing in gardens
 and burning incense on bricks.
¹²They live in tombs
 and spend their nights in caves.
 They eat hogs' meat
 and make broth of unclean food
 in their pots.
- ¹³They say, "Stay where you are.
 Don't touch me. I'm too holy for
 you."
 These are smoke in My nose,
 a smoldering fire.
- ¹⁴You see, it is written in front of
 Me:
 I will not be inactive but pay
 back.
 I will pay them back at once
¹⁵for their wrongs and their fa-
 thers' wrongs,
 says the LORD,
 because they sacrifice on the
 mountains
 and insult Me on the hills.
 So I will be the first to measure
 out their wages to them.
- ¹⁶The LORD says this:
 As juice is in a cluster of grapes
 and someone says, "Don't de-
 stroy it,
 because there's something good
 in it",
 this is what I'll do for My ser-
 vants
 in order not to destroy them all.
- ¹⁷I will bring out a Descendant
 from Jacob
 and from Judah One who will
 inherit My mountains.
 My chosen ones will inherit it,
 and My servants will live there.
- ¹⁸Sharon will be a fold for flocks,
 the valley of Achor a place for
 herds to lie down,
 for My people who search for
 Me.
- ¹⁹But you who forsake the LORD,
 forget My holy mountain,
 and prepare a table for the god
 of fortune
 and offer full cups of spiced
 wine to the goddess of desti-
 ny—
- ²⁰I will destine you to the sword,
 so that all of you will bow down
 to be slaughtered
 because I called and you didn't
 answer,
 I spoke and you didn't listen,
 and you did what I judge to be
 evil
 and chose what I don't like.
- ²¹And so the Lord GOD says this:
 My servants will eat,
 but you will be hungry.
 My servants will drink,
 but you will be thirsty.
 My servants will be glad,
 but you will be ashamed.
- ²²My servants will shout, feeling
 glad at heart,
 but you will cry, feeling sick at
 heart,
 and wail, feeling desperate.
- ²³My chosen ones will use as a
 curse
 the name you leave behind:
 "So may the Lord GOD kill you!"
 and He will call His servants by
 another name.
- ²⁴The one who blesses himself in
 the land
 will bless himself by the God of
 truth,
 and whoever utters an oath in
 the land
 will do so by the God of truth
 because the first troubles are
 forgotten
 and hidden from My eyes.

New Heavens and a New Earth

¹⁷I am going to create new heavens and a new earth.

Then you will not remember the first things

or think of them again.

¹⁸Rejoice and be glad forever about what I'm going to create, for I'm going to make Jerusalem a delight

and her people a joy.

¹⁹I will rejoice in Jerusalem and delight in My people.

No more will anybody hear in her a sound of weeping or a cry.

²⁰No more will You find there a baby living only a few days or an old man who doesn't live all his days,

for anyone dying at a hundred years old will still be a young man.

If a man is cursed as a sinner he may live to be only a hundred.

²¹They will build houses and live there.

They will plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

²²They will not build and have someone else live there or plant and have another eat it. But the life of My people will be like the life of a tree,

and My chosen ones will enjoy what their hands produce.

²³They will not work for nothing or have children only to see them taken by a terrible death,

for they will be descendants the LORD has blessed,

and their children will be with them.

²⁴Then it will happen that before they call I will answer,

and while they're still speaking I will listen.

²⁵The wolf and the lamb will feed together,

and the lion will eat straw like a cow.

And dust will be the food of a snake.

They will not harm or destroy anyone anywhere

on My holy mountain, says the LORD.

Where Does the LORD Dwell?

66 The LORD says: The heavens are My throne,

and the earth is My footstool.

Where is the temple you will build for Me,

and where is the place for Me to rest?

²My hand has made all these things,

and so all of them are Mine,² says the LORD.

I will pay attention to him who is humble and contrite in spirit,

who trembles when I speak.

³But they not only butcher bulls but also kill men.

They not only sacrifice sheep but break dogs' necks.

They not only offer food but also offer the blood of hogs.

They burn incense so the LORD will remember them,

but also bless idols.

Yes, they choose to go their own ways

and delight in their abominations.

⁴So I also choose to mistreat them and bring on them what terrifies them,

66
1 Mt 5:34-
35, 23:22
1-2 Acts 7
49-50

²Gk: Heb all of them have been

because I called and nobody answered;

I spoke and nobody listened.
But they did what I judge to be evil
and chose what I don't like.

⁹Listen to what the LORD says,
you who tremble when He speaks:

Your brothers, who hate you
and reject you for My sake, have said,

"Let the LORD show His glory,
and then we'll see your joy."
But they will be disappointed.

¹⁰Listen! There's a noise in the city.

It's a noise from the temple,
a noise of the LORD
paying back His enemies as they
deserve.

A Nation Born in a Day

¹Before she had birth pains,
she gave birth to a child;
before her pain came to her,
she delivered a boy.

²Who has heard of anything like this?

And who has seen such things?
Can a country give birth in one day?

Or a nation be born at one time?
When Zion had her pains,
she also gave birth to her children.

³Should I have the child break
from the womb
and not have it born? asks the LORD.

Or should I, who cause it to be born,
hold it back? asks your God.

⁴Rejoice with Jerusalem, delight
in her,
all you who love her.
Be glad with her,

all you who are mourning over her —

¹¹so that you may suck and be satisfied
with her comforting breast,
so that you may nurse to your heart's delight
at her rich bosom.

¹²The LORD says:
I am offering you
peace like a river
and the wealth of the nations
like an overflowing torrent.
You will nurse, be carried at the side,
and be fondled on the knees.

¹³Like a man whom his mother comforts,
so will I comfort you,
and you will be comforted in Jerusalem.

¹⁴When you see this, *you will be delighted,*
and your limbs will flourish like young grass.
Then it will be known that the LORD's hand is with His servants
but that He punishes His enemies.

¹⁵The LORD will come with fire
and with His chariots like a storm wind
to pay back in the fury of His anger.
His rebuke will be with *flames of fire.*

¹⁶The LORD will come to judge
with fire
and to punish all mankind with His sword;
and many will be struck by the LORD.

¹⁷That will be a sudden end of those
who go into gardens to sanctify
and purify themselves.

6 Rv 16 1 17
7 Rv 12 2 5
14 Jn 16 22
15 2 Th 1 8

one following the other to the middle,

eating hogs' meat, abominable things, and mice, says the LORD.

¹⁸In spite of what they do and plan, the time will come for Me to gather the nations of every language, and they will come and see My glory. ¹⁹I will put signs among them and send some of their survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Put ^a and Lud, Meshek, Rosh, ^bTubal, and Greece, and the coasts far away, who haven't heard any news of Me or seen My glory. They will tell about My glory among the nations. ²⁰And they will bring all your fellow Israelites from all the nations as an offering to the LORD. They will come on horses, in chariots, on litters, on mules and camels to My holy mountain, Jerusalem, says the

LORD, just as the people of Israel bring their offerings in clean pans to the LORD's temple. ²¹And I will make some of them priests and Levites, says the LORD.

²²As the new heavens
and the new earth I'm going to
make
will stand before Me, says the
LORD,
so will your children and your
name continue.

²³Then the first of every month
and every Sabbath
all mankind will come to worship
before Me, says the LORD.

²⁴Then they will go out
and look at the corpses of men
who rebelled against Me,
since *their worm will never die*
and *their fire will never go out*,
and every body will abhor them.

22 2 Pt 3 13
Rv 21 1
23 Rv 3 9 4 10
24 Mt 9 44
46 48

^aGk: Heb Pul

^bMeshek, Rosh, perhaps Gk: Heb who shoot the bow

THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH

1 This is the story of what Jeremiah, Hilkiyah's son, said and did. He was one of the priests at Anathoth in the country of Benjamin. ²God spoke to him at the time of Josiah, Amon's son, king of Judah, in the 13th year of his rule; ³also at the time of Jehoiakim, Josiah's son, king of Judah, and during the 11 years of Zedekiah, Josiah's son, king of Judah, till the fifth month, when the people of Jerusalem were taken into exile.

The Call of Jeremiah

¹The LORD told me:

²Before I formed you in the womb
I chose you,
and before you were born, I set
you aside for My holy purpose
and made you a prophet for the
nations.

³"O Lord GOD!" I said. "I don't know how to talk—I'm too young."

⁴"Don't say, 'I'm too young,' " the LORD told me. "You will go to all I will send you to, and say everything I order you to say. *"Don't be afraid of them—I'm with you to rescue you,"* said the LORD.

⁵Then the LORD stretched out His hand, touched my mouth, and said:

Now I'm putting My words in
your mouth.

⁶See, today I've appointed you
to be over the nations and kingdoms,
to pull out by the roots and tear
down,
destroy and overthrow—
to build and plant.

⁷Again the LORD spoke to me. "Jeremiah," He asked, "what do you see?"

"I see the branch of an almond tree,"^a I answered.

⁸"You see correctly," the LORD told me. "I'm watching^a over My word to make it come true."

⁹The LORD asked me a second time. "What do you see?"

"I see a boiling pot," I answered, "and its opening is turned away from the north."

¹⁰Then the LORD said:

From the north calamity will be
poured out
on all who live in the land.

¹¹I'm calling every clan and kingdom in the north.

They will come and each will set
up his throne
at the entrance of Jerusalem's
gates.

They will come against all the
walls around the city
and against all the cities of
Judah.

¹²I will declare how I will punish
them

for all their wickedness in leaving
Me
and sacrificing to other gods
and worshiping what their
hands have made.

¹³But you get ready for action.
Tell them everything I order you
to say.

Don't let them terrify you,
or I will terrify you in their presence.

1
5 Gt 1 15
7 Acts 26 17
8 Acts 18
9-10

^aA play on words: "almond tree" is spelled like the verb "to watch" in Hebrew

"Today I make you a fortified city,
an iron pillar, and a bronze wall
to stand against the whole country,
against Judah's kings and officials,
priests and people.

"They will fight against you
but will win no victory over you,
because I'm with you to rescue you.

This is what the LORD says.

You Turned from Loving Me

2 The LORD told me:
"Go and proclaim to Jerusalem:
The LORD says this:
I remember how kind you were
when you were young,
how you loved when you were a bride
and how you followed Me in the wilderness,

²
13 Rv 7 17
Jn 4 14

in an uncultivated land.
"Israel was the LORD's holy one,
the first part of the harvest.
All who devoured him were guilty:

calamity came on them,
says the LORD.

"Hear what the LORD says, Jacob's descendants
and all of Israel's families.

"The LORD asks:
What wrong did your fathers find in Me
that they went so far away from Me?

Following worthless things they became worthless.

"They didn't ask, "Where is the LORD
who brought us from Egypt
and led us through the wilderness,
through a land with deserts and pits,

a dry and dark land,
where nobody travels and nobody lives?"

"I brought you to a garden land
to eat its products and good things.

But when you went in,
you made My land unclean;
you made My heritage abominable.

"The priests didn't ask, "Where is the LORD?"

Those who interpret the Law didn't know Me.

The rulers sinned against Me,
and the prophets prophesied by Baal

and followed those who couldn't help them.

"That is why I still accuse you,
says the LORD,

and I will accuse your children's children.

"Go over to the coasts of Cyprus
and see,

and send to Kedar and examine carefully.

See if there has been anything like this:

"Has a nation ever changed its gods?

And they are not even gods!
Yet My people have given up their Glory
for something that can't help them!

"Let this amaze you, heavens,
shudder and wither away,
says the LORD.

"My people have done two wrongs:

They have left Me,
the *Spring of living water*,
to cut out cisterns for themselves,
broken cisterns that can't hold water.

- ¹⁴Is Israel a slave,
or was he born in slavery?
Why then has he become a
prey?
- ¹⁵Young lions have roared at him;
with a loud roar they have laid
waste his land.
His cities are burned so that
nobody lives there.
- ¹⁶Men of Noph and Tahpanhes
have broken your skull.
- ¹⁷Didn't you bring this on yourself
by leaving the LORD your God,
even when He was leading you
on the way?
- ¹⁸And now, what can you gain by
going to Egypt
to drink the water of the Nile?
What can you gain by going to
Assyria
to drink the water of the Eu-
phrates?
- ¹⁹Your own wickedness will cor-
rect you,
and your unfaithful ways will
punish you.
Realize then and see
how evil and bitter it is for you
to leave the LORD your God
and not fear Me,
says the LORD, the LORD of ar-
mies.
- ²⁰Long ago you broke off your yoke
and tore off the ropes that
bound you
and said, "I will not be a slave!"
On every high hill
and under every green tree
you lay down to be a prostitute.
- ²¹But when I planted you,
you were a noble vine
and a pure seed in every way.
How then could you turn into
weedy shoots
of a foreign vine for Me?

- ²²Even though you wash with soda
and use a large quantity of soap.
I still see you stained with guilt.
says the Lord GOD.
- ²³How can you say,
"I haven't defiled myself;
I haven't run after false gods?"
See how you behave in the val-
ley:^b
acknowledge what you're doing!
You young female camel,
swiftly running back and forth!
- ²⁴You wild female donkey used to
the wilderness,
in your lust snuffing the wind!
When you are in heat,
who can control you?
Anyone who looks for you
doesn't have to tire himself
but will find you in your mating
season.
- ²⁵Restrain yourself or your bare
feet will get hurt
and your throat will get thirsty!
But you say, "So what!
I'm in love with strangers
and will run after them."
- ²⁶As a thief feels ashamed when
he's caught,
so the people of Israel,
their kings and princes,
priests and prophets, feel
ashamed
- ²⁷because they say to wood,
"You're my father,"
and to stone, "You're my moth-
er."
They turn their backs to Me
instead of their faces.
But when they're in trouble,
they say, "Come and save us!"
- ²⁸But where are your gods you
made for yourselves?
They should come if they can

^bCompare 7:31

save you when you're in trouble.

Judah, you have as many gods as you have towns.

¹⁰The LORD asks:

Why do you find fault with Me when all of you rebel against Me?

¹⁰I struck down your children,

but it didn't do any good.

They took no warning from it.

Your sword

devours the prophets like a murderous lion.

¹¹You people of this age,

see what the LORD asks you:

Have I been a wilderness to Israel

or a dark land?

Why do My people say,

"We are free to wander around and will no more come to you"?

¹²Can a girl forget her ornaments

or a bride her sash?

Yet for countless days

My people have forgotten Me.

¹³How well you make plans

in search of love!

Even wicked women

learn from your ways.

¹⁴The blood of poor innocent people

was also found on your skirts;

people you didn't catch breaking in.

But about all this ¹⁵you say,

"I'm innocent; certainly He'll stop being angry with me."

Now I'm judging you for saying,

"I haven't sinned."

¹⁶How frivolous you are

about changing your ways.

Egypt will disappoint you as Assyria did;

¹⁷you will leave Egypt also with

your hands on your head because the LORD has rejected those you trust

and they will not help you succeed.

3 The LORD says:

If a man divorces his wife,

and she leaves him

and marries another man,

should he go back to her again?

Is not that woman^c thoroughly polluted?

Now if you live as a prostitute with many lovers,

should you come back to Me?

So says the LORD.

²Look up to the bare hills and see:

Is there any place where you didn't have sex relations?

You sat by the roads waiting for them

like an Arab in the wilderness,

and you polluted the land

with your prostitution and other vices.

³So the showers were held back,

and there has been no spring rain.

But you have a prostitute's forehead

and refuse to blush.

⁴Didn't you just now call to Me,

"My Father, You have been my Friend since youth?"

⁵You think: "He won't always be angry,

nor will His wrath go on forever!"

That is what you say,

but you go on doing wrong

and having your own way.

Turncoat and Traitor

⁶The LORD asked me in the days of King Josiah: Have you seen what turncoat Israel did, how she went

^cGk: Heb "that land"

on every high hill and under every green tree and was a prostitute there? ⁷I thought, after she has done all this to Me, she will come back to Me. But she didn't come back, and her treacherous sister Judah was watching her. ⁸Turncoat Israel committed adultery; so I sent her away and gave her her divorce papers; but then I saw that her treacherous sister Judah wasn't frightened, but she too went and prostituted herself there. ⁹Because she turned so frivolously to sexual lust, she polluted the land, committing adultery with stone and wood. ¹⁰Even after all this her treacherous sister Judah didn't come back to Me sincerely but only hypocritically. So says the LORD.

The LORD said to me: ¹¹Turncoat Israel has shown herself less guilty than treacherous Judah. ¹²Go, proclaim these things to the North, and say:

Turn, you turncoat Israel.
It is the LORD speaking.
I will not look angrily at you,
because I'm merciful,
says the LORD.

I will not be angry forever.

¹³Only realize how wrong you are:
You have rebelled against the
LORD your God
and wasted your life with
strangers under every green
tree

and haven't listened to Me,
says the LORD.

¹⁴Turn, you turncoat children,
says the LORD. I'm your husband
and will take you, one from a city
and two from a clan, and bring you
to Zion. ¹⁵I will give you shepherds
whom I approve, and they will lead
you with knowledge and under-
standing. ¹⁶In those days when you
grow to be many in the land, says

the LORD, they will not talk any-
more about the chest of the LORD's
covenant. *It will not occur to them.*
They will neither remember it nor
miss it nor make another. ¹⁷Then
they will call Jerusalem the throne
of the LORD. All the nations will
come together there in the name of
the LORD and they will not live
anymore according to the stubborn
impulses of their evil hearts. ¹⁸In
those days the people of Judah will
join the people of Israel, and to-
gether they will come from the north
to the land I gave their fathers as
their heritage.

¹⁹I thought: How I wished to treat
you as sons
and give you a pleasant land
and the most beautiful heritage
among the nations.
And I thought you would call Me
Father
and wouldn't leave Me.

²⁰But as an unfaithful wife leaves
her companion,
so you, Israel, have been un-
faithful to Me,
says the LORD.

²¹Listen! On the bare hills is heard
the weeping
and pleading of the people of
Israel
because they have lived wrong
and forgotten the LORD their
God.

²²Turn, you turncoat children,
and I will cure you from your
apostasy.

"Here we are!
We have come to You
because You are the LORD our
God.

²³Certainly the hills and the orgies
on the mountains deceived us!
Certainly only the LORD our God

¹⁶ ³Co 29

can save Israel!

²⁴“Since we were young,
this shameful idol has devoured
what our fathers worked for,
their flocks and herds, their
sons and daughters.

²⁵Let us lie in our shame and be
covered by our disgrace
because we and our fathers
have sinned against the LORD
our God
from our youth till now
and haven't listened to the
LORD our God.”

Come Back

4 If you will come back, Israel,
says the LORD,
come back to Me.
If you will get your abominable
things out of My sight
and not wander away
²but swear “as the LORD lives,”
in an honest, just, and righteous
way,
then the nations will bless them-
selves by Him
and glory in Him.
³The LORD says this to the men of
Judah and to Jerusalem:
Plow the unplowed field,
and don't sow among thorns.
⁴Circumcise yourselves to be the
LORD's,
and get rid of the lusts of your
hearts,
you men of Judah and people in
Jerusalem,
or My fury will blaze like a fire
and burn so that nobody can put
it out,
on account of the wrong you do.

A Calamity from the North

⁵Announce it in Judah
and tell it in Jerusalem,
and say: “Sound the trumpet in
the country!”

Call as loud as you can: “Gather
together and let us retreat in-
to the fortified cities!”

⁶Raise the flag to guide you to
Zion.

Find a safe place. Don't stand
still.

I'm going to bring a calamity
from the north
and a great destruction.

⁷A lion is coming out of his thicket
to destroy nations.

He starts to leave his place
to lay waste your country,
to turn your cities to ruins
so that nobody will live there.

⁸For that reason put on your
sackcloth,
mourn and cry
because the LORD's blazing
anger
hasn't turned away from us.

⁹On that day, says the LORD,
the king and the leaders will lose
their courage,
the priests will stand aghast,
and the prophets dazed with
horror.

¹⁰Someone will say: “Oh, Lord
GOD,
You certainly have deceived
these people and Jerusalem
by saying, ‘It will all be well with
you,’
when a sword is at their
throats.”

¹¹Then these people and Jeru-
salem will be told:

From the bare hills in the desert
a hot wind blows on My people,
not to winnow or to cleanse—

¹²a wind too strong for that—
it blows for Me.

Now I too will announce sen-
tences against them.

¹³You will see him come up like
clouds

and his chariots like a whirlwind,
with horses faster than eagles.
"Woe to us! We are ruined!"

¹⁴Jerusalem, wash the evil from
your heart
so that you may be saved.

How long will you harbor your
wicked plans within you?

¹⁵Listen! A messenger comes from
Dan,

bringing news of calamity from
the hills of Ephraim.

¹⁶Bring it to the attention of the
nations.

Tell about Jerusalem—
besiegers are coming from a distant
country
and raising their battle cry
against Judah's cities.

¹⁷Like watchmen guarding a field
they surround her
because she rebelled against
Me, says the LORD.

¹⁸Your ways and your doings
have brought this on you.
This is what comes of your
wickedness.

It is bitter.
It strikes at your heart.

¹⁹My stomach churns!
My heart throbs!
I can't keep quiet
because I hear a trumpet
blowing the alarm of war.

²⁰Crash follows crash:
the whole country is ruined.
My tents are suddenly wrecked,
their curtains torn in a moment.

²¹How long must I watch flags of
war
and listen to the blasts of trumpets?

²²It is because My people are
fools.
They don't know Me.

They are stupid children
and don't understand.
They are smart enough to do
wrong
but don't know how to do good.

²³I look at the earth—it is an
empty waste.
and at the sky—its lights are
gone.

²⁴I look at the mountains—they
are shaking,
and the hills are trembling.

²⁵I look, and there's nobody,
and every bird in the air has
fled.

²⁶I look and see the garden land is
a desert,
and all the towns are torn down
before the LORD and His blazing
fury.

²⁷The LORD says this:
The whole country will be
ruined,
and yet I will not put an end to it.

²⁸The earth will mourn over this,
and the skies above put on black
because I said it, planned it,
and haven't regretted it or
changed My mind.

²⁹The noise of the horses and
archers
will put the whole city to flight.
They will crawl into thickets
and climb up among the rocks.
Every city will be forsaken,
and nobody will live in them.

³⁰When you are ruined,
what are you going to do?
Dress in scarlet?
Put on golden ornaments?
Make your eyes gape wide by
painting them?
You will make yourself pretty
for nothing.
Lovers scorn you.
They want to kill you.

"I hear a cry as of a woman
giving birth,
a cry of anguish as of one having
her first child.
Zion's daughter is crying,
gasping for breath,
stretching out her hands—
"Woe is me!
I'm fainting before murderers!"

Why Should I Forgive?

5 Go around in the streets of Jeru-
salem,
look and see,
search in its streets;
if you can find a man,
if there's anyone doing right,
trying to be loyal,
then I will forgive her.

²Even though they say, "As the
LORD lives,"
the oath they take is a lie.

¹LORD, aren't You looking for
loyalty?
You strike them,
but they don't feel it.
You wipe them out,
but they refuse to be corrected.
They set their faces more firmly
than a rock.
They refuse to turn back.

⁴Then I thought,
surely these are poor people,
and foolish because they don't
know the LORD's way
and what their God demands.

⁵I will go to the important men
and talk to them
because they know the LORD's
way
and what their God demands.
But they too had broken off the
yoke
and torn its bands.

⁶That is why a lion from the
forest strikes them down,

a wolf from the wilderness tears
them to pieces,
and a leopard prowls around
their towns,
so that anybody going out will be
torn to pieces
for doing wrong to Me so many
times
and deserting Me so often.

⁷Why should I forgive you?
Your sons forsake Me.
They swear by what is no God.
When I satisfy their wants,
they commit adultery.
They go in crowds to the prosti-
tute's house.

⁸They are well-fed horses getting
lusty,
each neighing for his neighbor's
wife.

⁹Shouldn't I punish them for
these things?
asks the LORD.
Shouldn't I take vengeance
on a people like that?

¹⁰Go up among her vine rows
and destroy them,
but don't finish them off.
Cut off her branches
because they are not the
LORD's.

¹¹The people of Israel and Judah
are treacherous to Me, says the
LORD.

¹²They lie about the LORD
and say: "He doesn't exist;
no harm will come to us,
and we will not suffer from any
sword or famine.

¹³The prophets will prove to be
windbags.
The Word isn't in them,
so that is the way they will be
dealt with."

¹⁴That is why the LORD, the God
of armies, says this:

Because they^d talk like this.
I'm putting My words in your
mouth, Jeremiah.

like a fire to devour these
people.

They will be like brushwood.

¹⁵I'm going to bring on you, Israel,
a nation from far away, says the
LORD.

a nation that is strong,
a nation that dates far back;
you don't know its language
and can't understand what they
say.

¹⁶Their quiver is like an open
grave.

All of them are warriors.

¹⁷They will devour your harvest
and your food,

your sons and your daughters,
your flocks and your cattle,
your vines and your fig trees,
and will cut down with the
sword

⁵
14 Ps. 115
21 Mk. 8:18

the fortified cities you trust in.

¹⁸But even in those days, says the
LORD,

I will not completely finish you
off.

¹⁹When they^d ask, "Why did the
LORD our God do all this to
us?" then you should tell
them: As you forsook Me and
served strange gods in your
country, so you will serve
strangers in a country that
isn't yours.

²⁰Announce this to the people of
Jacob and tell Judah:

²¹Please listen to this,
you foolish and senseless people
who have eyes but can't see
and ears but can't hear.

²²Aren't you afraid of Me? asks
the LORD.

Don't you tremble before Me

who made the sand the border
of the sea.

a permanent barrier that it
can't pass over?

The waves may toss, but they
can't overcome it;
they may roar, but they can't
cross over it.

²³But these people have stubborn
and rebellious hearts.

They turn aside and wander
away.

²⁴They don't say in their hearts,

"Let us fear the LORD our God,
who gives rains in their season,
the fall rain and the spring rain.
He preserves for us
the weeks appointed for the har-
vest."

²⁵Your wickedness has disrupted
these things.

and your sins have kept nature's
blessings from you.

²⁶Wicked men are found among
My people.

They prowl around like bird
catchers.

They set traps and catch people.

²⁷Like a cage full of birds,

so their houses are full of dis-
honest goods.

That is how they become great
and rich.

²⁸They are fat and sleek.

Yes, they are superior in doing
wrong.

They don't defend orphans so
they can prosper.

They don't stand up for the
rights of the poor.

²⁹Shouldn't I punish them for this?
asks the LORD.

And shouldn't I avenge Myself
on a nation like that?

³⁰Something terrible and abomin-

^dHeb you

able is happening in the country:

¹¹Prophets, speaking for God, are telling lies.

Under their direction the priests make a profit.

and My people love to have it so. But what will you do when the end comes?

Blow the Trumpet

6 Flee to a safe place, people of Benjamin;

escape from Jerusalem.

Blow the trumpet in Tekoa and set up a signal on Bethcherem

because disaster and great destruction

is threatening us from the north.

⁷The daughter of Zion may be compared

to a tender pasture.

⁸Shepherds will come to her with their flocks.

pitch their tents on all parts of her.

each grazing his plot.

⁹Sanctify yourselves for war against her.

Come, let us attack at noon!

No! The day is passing,

and the late shadows are getting longer.

¹⁰Come, let us attack at night and destroy her palaces."

¹¹The LORD of armies says this:

Cut down her trees.

Heap up siege mounds against Jerusalem.

This city is to be punished.

There is nothing but oppression in her.

¹²As a well produces fresh water, so she produces fresh evil.

Crime and oppression is what

you hear in her.

All I see are sick and wounded people.

¹³Be corrected, Jerusalem, or I will turn away from you

and lay you in ruins— a country where nobody lives.

¹⁴The LORD of armies says this: Thoroughly glean^e like a vine what is left of Israel.

Like one picking grapes pass your hand again over its branches.

¹⁵Whom can I warn, to whom can I talk that will listen?

Their ears are sealed^f so that they can't pay attention.

When the LORD talks to them, they show contempt and don't like it.

¹⁶I am full of the LORD's fury and tired of holding it in.

Pour it out on the children in the street

and on the gangs of young men.

Yes, a man and his wife will be captured,

the mature person and the aged.

¹⁷Their houses, their fields, and their wives

will be turned over to others.

I will stretch out My hand over the people of the country, says the LORD,

¹⁸because all of them, small and great,

are eager for dishonest money; all of them, prophet and priest, cheat.

¹⁹They heal My people's wounds superficially,

saying, "All is well, all is well!" when nothing is well.

²⁰Are they ashamed when they do abominable things?

^eGk: *Heb they will thoroughly glean* ^f*Heb uncircumcised*

No, they aren't ashamed.
 They don't even know how to blush.
 So they will fall with those that fall.
 When I punish them, they will be brought down,
 says the LORD.

¹⁸The LORD says this:
 Stand at the crossroads and look.
 Ask about the ancient ways:
 "Where is the way that leads to good things?"
 Live in it
 and find rest for yourselves.
 But they said,
 "We won't live that way."

¹⁷I set up watchmen over you.
 Listen for the blast of the trumpet.
 But they said,
 "We won't listen."

¹⁶Then listen, you nations,
 and know, you witnesses,
 what we have here.

¹⁵Listen, earth.
 I'm bringing a calamity on these people,
 the results of their own thinking,
 because they won't listen to what I say
 and they reject My Word.

¹⁴Of what good to Me is incense coming from Sheba,
 and sweet cane from a distant country?
 Your burnt offerings I don't like,
 and your sacrifices don't please Me.

¹³And so the LORD says:
 I'm going to lay stumbling blocks before these people.
 They will stumble over them,
 fathers and sons together:
 a neighbor and his friend will perish.

¹²The LORD says this:
 A people will come from the north,
 and a great nation stirs itself in the distant places of the earth.
¹¹They take hold of bows and spears—
 they're cruel, without any pity.
 Their noise is like the roaring sea.
 They ride on horses
 and have armed soldiers ready to fight
 against you, Zion's daughter.

¹⁰When we hear the news about them,
 our hands sink helplessly.
 Anguish grips us,
 pain like a woman having a child.

⁹Don't go out into the field
 or walk on the road
 because the enemy's sword is there,
 terrifying all around.

⁸Daughter of my people,
 put on sackcloth,
 then roll in ashes
 and mourn as if you lost your only son—
 wailing bitterly
 because the destroyer will suddenly come on us.

A Word to Jeremiah

⁷I appointed you as one who tests My people
 without being overcome yourself.
 You should examine and test their ways.

⁶They are all stubborn rebels,
 going around slandering
 and corrupting themselves.

⁵The bellows blow fiercely,
 making a fire from which comes—

lead, copper or iron.

In vain is all the smelting.

The dross is not removed.

¹⁰They will be called rejected silver because the LORD has rejected them.

This Temple Will Be Like Shiloh

7 This is what the LORD told Jeremiah: ²Stand at the gate of the LORD's house and announce this:

All you men of Judah who go into these gates to worship the LORD, hear what the LORD says. ³The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says: Live right and do good, and I will live with you in this place. ⁴Don't trust those who deceive you by saying, "This is the LORD's temple, the LORD's temple, the LORD's temple!" ⁵No, if you will really live right and do good, if you will treat one another right, ⁶if you will not oppress strangers, orphans, or widows, or kill innocent people in this place, or ruin yourselves by running after other gods, ⁷then I will live with you in this place, in the land I long ago gave your fathers to be theirs forever. ⁸But now you trust in lies that can't help you. ⁹What! Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear to lies, sacrifice to idols, and run after other gods you don't know, ¹⁰and then come and stand before Me in this house that bears My name and say, "We are rescued!" only to go on doing all these abominable things? ¹¹Do you think this house that bears My name is a den of robbers? I too see it as that, says the LORD. ¹²Please go to My place at Shiloh where I first made a home for My name, and see what I did to it because My people Israel were so wicked. ¹³And now,

you have done all these things, says the LORD; though I was prompt to speak to you, you refused to listen, and when I called you, you didn't answer. ¹⁴So now, what I did to Shiloh I will do to this house that bears My name, the place I gave you and your fathers, where you feel so safe. ¹⁵I will drive you out of My sight as I drove away all your relatives, all of Ephraim's descendants.

Worshiping the Queen of Heaven

¹⁶Don't pray for these people. Don't raise a cry or a prayer for them, and don't plead with Me because I will not listen to you. ¹⁷Don't you see what they're doing in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem: ¹⁸The children gather wood, the fathers light the fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven and pour drink offerings to other gods and so provoke Me. ¹⁹Are they really provoking Me? asks the LORD. Are they not vexing themselves so as to make themselves feel ashamed? ²⁰And so the Lord GOD says this: My anger and fury will be poured out on this place, on men and animals, the trees in the field and the produce of the ground. It will burn and not be put out.

Obey Me

²¹The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this: Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat meat. ²²But when I brought your fathers out of Egypt, I didn't talk to them or order them for the sake of burnt offerings and sacrifices. ²³But this is the order I gave them: Obey Me; then I will be your God, and you will be My people. And live in the ways I order you, so it will be

7
¹¹ Mt 21:13
 Mk 11:17
 Lk 19:46
²³ 2 Co 6:16
 Rv 21:3,7

well with you. ²⁴But they disobeyed and refused to listen. They followed their own plans and the stubborn impulses of their evil hearts, so they went backward instead of forward. ²⁵Ever since the day their fathers left Egypt till now I have faithfully sent My servants the prophets. ²⁶but they disobeyed Me and refused to listen to Me, getting stubborn and worse than their fathers.

²⁷If you tell them all these things, they will not listen to you. If you preach to them, they will not respond to you. ²⁸Tell them: This is the nation that refused to listen to the LORD their God and took no warning. No one can depend on them anymore; they don't even pretend to be loyal.

All Happiness Will Disappear

²⁹Cut off your hair and throw it away and sing a song of mourning on the bare hills because the LORD has rejected and forsaken the people of this age—He's angry with them. ³⁰The people of Judah have done what I condemn, says the LORD. They have set up their abominable idols in this house that bears My name in order to make it unclear. ³¹They have built the high place of Topheth in the valley of Hinnom to burn their sons and daughters—I didn't order this, and it wasn't My idea. ³²That is why the days will come, says the LORD, when it will no more be called Topheth or the valley of Hinnom but the valley of Death. They will bury people at Topheth because there will be no other place left. ³³The dead bodies of these people will be eaten by the birds in the sky and the

animals on the ground, and there will be nobody to scare them away. ³⁴Then I will banish from the cities of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem the sound of joy and happiness and the voices of the bridegroom and the bride because the country will be a barren waste.

8 At that time, says the LORD, the bones of the kings of Judah, the bones of its leaders, the bones of the priests, the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the other people of Jerusalem will be taken out of their graves and spread out before the sun, the moon, and all the stars in the sky—which they loved, served, ran after, went to for help, and worshiped. These bones will not be gathered or buried but become manure on the ground.

³⁴ *Rev 18:23*

³⁵Then all who are left of these wicked people in all the places where I have driven them will want to die rather than live, says the LORD of armies.

An Apostate People

'Tell them, the LORD says:
If men fall, can't they get up?
If one goes away, can't he come back?
'Why do these people of Jerusalem turn away
and desert Me forever?
They cling to deception.
They refuse to return.
'I paid attention and listened,
but they don't say the right thing.
Nobody feels sorry for his wrong saying, "What have I done?"
They all run their own course,
like horses charging into battle.

⁸Heb your

⁷Even a stork in the sky
knows its seasons;
a turtledove, a swallow, and a
crane
migrate at the right time;
but My people don't know
what the LORD prescribes.

⁸How can you say: We are wise,
and the LORD's law is with us.
Surely the scholars with lying
pens
have made it a lie.

⁹Wise men feel ashamed, con-
fused, and caught.
You see, they have rejected the
LORD's Word,
so what wisdom have they got?

¹⁰So I will give their wives to
others
and their fields to conquerors
because all of them, small and
great,
are eager for dishonest money;
all of them, prophet and priest,
cheat.

¹¹They heal My people's wounds
superficially,
saying, "All is well, all is well!"
when nothing is well.

¹²Are they ashamed when they do
abominable things?
No, they aren't ashamed.
They don't even know how to
blush.
So they will fall with those that
fall.
When I punish them, they will be
brought down,
says the LORD.

¹³I will certainly consume them,
says the LORD.
There are no grapes on the vine,
no figs on the fig tree;
even the leaves are dried up.
I will turn them over to those
who will overrun them.

Our God Destroys Us

¹⁴Why are we sitting still?
Let us gather and retreat into
the fortified cities
and perish there;
because the LORD our God de-
stroys us.

He gives us poison to drink
because we have sinned against
Him.

¹⁵We were looking for a happy
life,
but nothing that happens is
good;
for a time of healing,
but there's only terror.

¹⁶The snorting of the enemy's
horses
can be heard from Dan.
The neighing of their stallions
makes the whole country
tremble.
They come and devour the coun-
try
and everything in it,
the city and the people living
there.

¹⁷I'm sending among you snakes,
vipers that can't be charmed
away.
They will bite you, says the
LORD.

Jeremiah Laments

¹⁸How can I be cheered up in my
sorrow?
My heart is so sick!

¹⁹Listen to the daughter of my
people
crying in distant places: "Isn't
the Lord in Zion?
Isn't her King there?"
Why do they make me angry
with their images,
with their strange gods?

²⁰The harvest is past, the summer
is over,

and we aren't saved.

²¹For the crushing of the daughter
of my people I am crushed.

I wear black; terror grips me.

²²Is there no balm in Gilead?

Is there no doctor there?

Why doesn't the wound of my
people's daughter heal?

9 I wish my head were water
and my eyes a spring of tears
so I could weep day and night
for those of my people's daugh-
ter
who have been killed.

No Honesty

¹I wish I had a place in the wil-
derness
where travelers stay,
so I could leave my people
and get away from them.
They are all adulterers,
a community of unfaithful peo-
ple.

²They use their tongue like a bow
that is bent to shoot a lie.
Falsehood, not truth, prevails^b
in the land
because they go from one evil to
another
and don't know Me,
says the LORD.

⁴Everybody should be careful
about his friend,
and nobody should trust his
brother
because every brother cheats
and every friend goes around
slandering.

⁵Everybody cheats his friend,
and nobody tells the truth.
They train their tongues to tell
lies.
They are corrupt and cannot re-
pent.

⁶Extortion follows extortion;
deception follows deception.
They refuse to know Me,
says the LORD.

⁷And so the LORD of armies says
this:

I will purify them in fire
and test them.

How can I deal with the daugh-
ter of My people?

⁸Their tongue is a murdering ar-
row;

their mouths deceive.

With his mouth a person talks
friendly to his neighbor,

but in his mind he's laying a trap
for him.

⁹Shouldn't I punish them for
this?

asks the LORD.

Shouldn't I take vengeance
on a nation like this?

Jerusalem A Heap of Ruins

¹⁰I will cry and weep over the
hills
and sing mournfully about the
open pastures
because they are so scorched
nobody passes through them
and no noise of cattle is heard.
Everything from the birds in
the sky to the cattle
has fled and is gone.

¹¹And I will make Jerusalem
heaps of ruins,
a lair of jackals,
and lay the towns of Judah in
ruins
so that nobody will live there.

Why?

¹²Is there anybody wise enough to
understand this
and to tell what the LORD has
told him?

^bGk: Heb They have grown strong

Why does the country perish,
being scorched like the desert
so that nobody lives there?

¹⁷The LORD answered: Because
they've forsaken My Word
that I put before them,
refused to listen to it and follow
it.

¹⁸They follow their own stubborn
hearts
and the Baals their fathers
taught them.

¹⁹And so the LORD of armies, the
God of Israel, says:
I will feed these people worm-
wood
and give them poison to drink;

¹⁶I will scatter them among na-
tions
they and their fathers haven't
known.
And I will send the sword after
them
till I've wiped them out.

⁹
²⁴ 1 Co 13:1,
² Co 10:17
²⁶ Acts 7:51

The Death Song

¹⁷The LORD of armies says:
Consider this and call the
mourning women;
summon the trained women to
come.

¹⁸They should quickly start wail-
ing over us;
our eyes will run with tears;
our eyelids flow with water.

¹⁹A sound of wailing can be heard,
coming from Zion:
"How we are ruined!
We feel miserable because
we've left our country,
and our homes have thrown us
out."

²⁰You women, listen to the LORD
speaking
and let your ears catch what He
says.
Train your daughters how to
wail.

Everyone should teach her
neighbor a song of death.

²¹Death climbs through our win-
dows
and comes into our palaces
to cut off the children from the
street
and the young men from the
open places.

²²The LORD says this:
Dead human bodies will fall
like manure on the field,
like grain behind the one who
cuts it
when there's nobody to gather
it.

²³The LORD says: If you're wise,
don't brag about your wisdom.
If you're strong, don't brag
about your strength.
And if you're rich, don't brag
about your riches.

²⁴But if you want to boast, boast
that you understand and know
Me—
that I the LORD, act kindly,
right, and just in the earth
because this I delight in, says
the LORD.

Uncircumcised Hearts

²⁵The days are coming, says the
LORD,
when I will punish all who are
circumcised
and really aren't circumcised—

²⁶Egypt, Judah, Edom, Ammon,
Moab,
all who clip their hair at the
temples and cut their beards,
who live in the desert.
While all these nations are real-
ly uncircumcised,
all Israel is uncircumcised at
heart.

God and Idols

10 Listen to what the LORD says to you people of Israel. ¹The LORD says this:

Don't imitate the ways of the other nations,
and don't be frightened by the signs in the sky
as the other nations are frightened.

²The religious beliefs of other people are nothing.
A tree cut down in a forest is taken

and prepared with an ax in a carpenter's hands.

³He beautifies it with silver and gold
and fastens it with nails and hammers
so it will not tumble over.

⁴Such things are like a scarecrow in a cucumber garden;
they can't talk.

They have to be carried because they can't walk.
Don't be afraid of them—
they can't harm you,
nor can they help you.

⁵There's nobody like You, LORD.
You are great,
and Your power has made a great name for You.

⁶Is there anyone who shouldn't fear You,
King of the nations?
It is fitting for You.
Among all the wise ones of the nations

and all their royalty
there's none like You.

⁷But people are altogether stupid and brutish,
taking their useless instructions
from pieces of wood.

⁸From Tarshish comes silver beaten into plates
and from Ophirⁱ gold to be prepared by a craftsman and a goldsmith
and dressed in violet and purple,
all of it the work of skilled men.

⁹But the LORD is really God.
He is the living God and everlasting King.
His anger makes the earth tremble;
the nations can't stand His fury.

¹⁰Tell them this: gods who didn't make heaven and earth will perish
from the earth and from under heaven.

¹¹He made the earth by His power,
set up the world by His skill,
and stretched out the world by His intelligence.^j

¹²When He thunders, a storm of water appears in the sky.
He makes vapors rise from the ends of the earth,
makes lightning flash for the rain,
and brings out wind from His storehouses.

¹³Every man shows himself brutish and ignorant.
Every goldsmith should be ashamed
because his idols are a lie;
they have no breath in them.

¹⁴They are nothing, a joke.
The time is set when they'll vanish.

¹⁵But what Jacob has as his Portion isn't like them,
because He made everything,
and Israel is the tribe that belongs to Him.
The LORD of armies is His name.

ⁱVersions: Heb Uphaz ^jCompare 12-16 with 51:15-19

Submit to the LORD

- ¹Pack up your baggage and leave the country,
you who live under siege.
- ¹⁸because the LORD says:
I will throw the people out of the country at this time and cause them trouble — they'll find out!
- ¹⁸Woe to me! I've been struck.
I'm desperately wounded.
But I said, "This is my suffering, and I must bear it."
- ²⁰My tent is wrecked,
and all my ropes are broken.
My children have left me and are no more.
There's nobody to set up my tent again
and put up my tent curtains.
- ²¹The shepherds are brutish;
they don't go to the LORD for help.
That's why they will not succeed,
and all their flocks will be scattered.
- ²²Listen to the news—here it comes!
The loud noise of battle comes from the north
to lay Judah's cities in ruins
and make them a lair of jackals.
- ²³LORD, I know a man doesn't control his own way
or the course he takes.
He doesn't direct his own steps.
- ²⁴Correct us,^k LORD, but fairly;
not when You're angry,
or You'll cut us^k down.
- ²⁵Pour out Your fury
on the nations who don't know
You and on people who don't call on Your name,
because they have devoured and

consumed Jacob
and turned his home into ruins.

Keep the Covenant

11 The LORD told Jeremiah: "Listen to what this covenant says and tell it to the men of Judah and the people in Jerusalem. Tell them, the LORD God of Israel says: Cursed is the man who will not listen to what this covenant says that I ordered your fathers to keep when I brought them out of Egypt, the furnace for purifying iron. I said: Listen to Me and do these things just as I order you. Then you will be My people and I will be your God. In order to do what I promised with an oath to your fathers, to give them a country flowing with milk and honey, as you have it today.

I answered, "So be it, LORD."

²⁵ The LORD told me: Announce all these things in the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. Tell them: Listen to what this covenant says and do it. I solemnly warned your fathers when I brought them out of Egypt and so I've done till today, promptly warning them: Listen to Me. But they wouldn't listen or pay attention, but everybody followed his own stubborn evil heart. And so I'm bringing on them everything threatened in this covenant I ordered them to keep but they wouldn't.

²⁶ The LORD told me: There's a conspiracy among the men of Judah and the people in Jerusalem. They've gone back to the wrong ways of their early fathers who refused to listen to what I said. They are following other gods and worshipping them. The people of Israel

25 1 Th 4.5.
2 Th 1.8.
Rv 16.1
13
4 2 Co 6.16
Rv 21.3.7

^kGk: Heb me

and Judah have broken My covenant I made with their fathers. ¹¹And so the LORD says: I will bring on them a disaster from which there will be no escape. When they cry to Me, I will not listen to them. ¹²The towns of Judah and the people in Jerusalem will go and cry to the gods they've been sacrificing to, but these certainly won't save them when disaster comes. ¹³You, Judah, have as many gods as you have towns; and you have set up as many altars to the shameful idol, altars to sacrifice to Baal, as there are streets in Jerusalem. ¹⁴Now, Jeremiah, don't you pray for these people or raise a cry or prayer for them, because I won't listen when they call to Me for help in their trouble.

¹⁵What is wrong with the people I love?

Many are in My temple doing shameless things.

If holy sacrifices of meat could take your calamity from you, then you could rejoice.

¹⁶The LORD called you an olive tree with leaves and good-looking fruit.

But with a loud thunderstorm He lights a fire on it, and its branches break off.

¹⁷The LORD of armies who planted you now announces disaster for you because of the evil done by Israel and Judah to make Him¹ angry, by sacrificing to Baal.

¹⁸I learned about this when the LORD told me. He showed me what they were doing. ¹⁹I was like a pet lamb taken to be butchered. I didn't

know that they were plotting against me and saying, "Let us destroy the tree with its fruit and put him out of the land of the living so his name won't be remembered anymore."

²⁰LORD of armies, You judge fairly and test the inner feelings and thoughts.

Let me see how You take vengeance on them.

because I've laid my case before You.

²¹So the LORD says this about the men of Anathoth who are trying to kill me^m and say, "Don't prophesy in the LORD's name or we'll kill you." ²²The LORD of armies says this: I'm going to punish them. The sword will kill the young men. The famine will kill their boys and girls.

²³None of them will escape because I will bring disaster on the men of Anathoth, a year when I will punish them.

Why Do the Wicked Succeed?

12 When I disagree with You, You are right, LORD.

so surely I can talk to You about justice.

Why do the wicked succeed and all who are treacherous live so comfortably?

²You planted them, and they take root.

They grow and even produce fruit.

You are always on their lips, but far from their hearts.

³You know me, LORD and see me: You test how I feel about You. Drag them away like sheep to be slaughtered and dedicate them for the day of slaughter.

²⁰ 1 Th 2:4
Rv 2:23
¹²
3 Jn 5:5

¹Heb me ^mHeb you

‘How long must the ground
mourn
and the plants in every field
wither?
The animals and the birds are
gone
because those who live there are
wicked.
They say, “Jeremiah will not see
the end of us.”

I Will Forsake My Heritage

‘If running on foot made you
tired,
how can you run a race with
horses?
If you fall down in a safe country
how will you do in the jungle of
the Jordan?
‘Even your brothers and your
father’s family are disloyal to
you;
they call out loud after you.
You dare not trust them even
when they talk friendly to you.

‘I will forsake My house,
abandon My heritage,
and put those I love in their
enemies’ hands.
‘My people have become like a
lion in the forest;
they roar against Me,
so I hate them.

‘Is My heritage a colorful bird of
prey
attacked by other birds from
every side?
Go, gather all the wild animals
and bring them to devour it.

‘Many shepherds have destroyed
My vineyard;
they’ve trampled on My posses-
sion
and made the place I delighted
in a dreary wilderness.

‘It is desolate, and I mourn be-
cause it is desolate.

The whole country is a dreary
waste
because nobody took things to
heart.

‘Destroyers have come on all the
bare hills in the wilderness
because the LORD’s sword de-
vours from one end of the land
to the other
so that no one fares well.

‘People sow wheat and reap
thorns;
they work themselves sick
and gain nothing by it. They are
disappointed in your crops
because the LORD is blazing
with anger.

‘The LORD says this: as for all
the evil neighbors who touch the
inheritance I gave My people Israel,
I will pluck them up from their lands
and will pluck the people of Judah
from among them. ‘After I’ve
plucked them up, I will again feel
sorry for them and bring them back,
everyone to his own heritage and
everyone to his own land. ‘Then if
they will really learn the ways of My
people—and swear by My name,
“as the LORD lives,” as they once
taught My people to swear by
Baal—then they will be allowed to
live among My people. ‘But if any
nation will not listen, I will pluck up
that nation and destroy it, says the
LORD.

A Linen Belt

13 The LORD told me, “Go
and buy a linen belt and
put it around your waist, but don’t
dip it in water.”

‘I bought a belt as the LORD told
me, and I put it around my waist.

‘The LORD spoke to me again,
“Take the belt you bought which is
around your waist, and go to the

⁷ Mt 23:38;
¹³ Lk 13:34

Euphrates, and bury it there in the cleft of a rock."

⁵I went and buried it at the Euphrates as the LORD ordered me.

⁶After many days the LORD told me, "Go to the Euphrates and get the belt from the place where I ordered you to bury it."

⁷I went to the Euphrates and dug and got the belt from the place where I buried it. Now the belt was ruined and no good for anything.

⁸Then the LORD spoke to me: ⁹"This is what the LORD says: Just like that will I ruin Judah's pride and Jerusalem's great pride. ¹⁰"These wicked people refuse to listen to what I say. They live in their own stubborn ways and run after other gods to serve them and worship them, and so are like this belt that is good for nothing. ¹¹"As this belt clings to a man's waist, so I had all the people of Israel and all the people of Judah cling to Me, says the LORD, to be My people, be a name, be praised, and be something beautiful. But they didn't listen.

Broken Jars

¹²"Tell them this: The LORD, the God of Israel, says, "Every jar should be filled with wine." And when they ask, "Don't we know every jar should be filled with wine." ¹³"tell them, the LORD says: I'm going to fill all the people in this country, the kings sitting on David's throne, the priests and the prophets and all who live in Jerusalem—with drunkenness. ¹⁴I will dash one against another, the fathers and sons together, says the LORD, and no sympathy, mercy, or pity from Me will keep Me from destroying them.

Exile

¹⁵Listen and pay attention! Don't be proud, because the LORD has spoken.

¹⁶Give glory to the LORD your God before it gets dark, and your feet stumble on the hills in the twilight. You will look for light, but He turns it to gloom and changes it to dark night.

¹⁷If you won't listen, then I will weep secretly over your pride; my eyes will cry bitterly and flow with tears because the LORD's flock will be taken away captive.

¹⁸Tell the king and the queen-mother: Sit in a humble seat because your beautiful crown will come down from your head.

¹⁹The cities in the Negev will be closed and there'll be nobody to open them. All of Judah will be taken away captive—all of it!

²⁰Look up and see them coming from the north. Where is the flock given to you, your beautiful flock?

²¹What will you say when He appoints those to govern you whom you trained to be your friends?

Won't pains grip you like a woman having a child?

²²You ask in your heart, "Why do these things happen to me?"

Because your sins are so many, your flowing skirts will be lifted up

and you will be ravished.

²³Can an Ethiopian change his skin
or a leopard his spots?
Can you then do good,
you who have the habit of doing
wrong?

²⁴I will scatter them like chaff
blown away by the desert wind.

²⁵This is your lot,
the fate I assign to you, says the
LORD,
because you have forgotten Me
and trusted in false gods.

²⁶Then I too will lift the train of
your dress over your face
so that your shame will be seen.

²⁷I have seen your adulteries,
your neighings, your lusting
after prostitutes;
on the hills and in the open coun-
try I have seen your abomina-
tions.

Woe to you, Jerusalem!
How long will it be before you
get clean?

The Drought

14 Here is what the LORD told
Jeremiah about the drought:

¹Judah mourns.
Her gates languish.
People sit in black on the ground.
Jerusalem has sent up a cry.

²Their noblemen send their ser-
vants for water.
They go to the cisterns
and don't find any.
They come back with their emp-
ty pitchers.

Ashamed and disappointed,
they cover their heads.

³Because the ground is cracked
for lack of rain in the country;
farmers are disappointed
and cover their heads.

⁴Even a deer in the field deserts
her newborn young

because there is no grass.

⁵Wild donkeys stand on the bare
hills,
panting for air like jackals.
Their eyes are worn out
because there is no green plant.

⁷Although our wrongs testify
against us,
act, LORD, for Your name's
sake,
even though we have often fallen
away
and sinned against You.

⁸You are Israel's hope,
the One who saves it in trouble.
Why should You be like a
stranger in the country,
like a traveler putting up his tent
to lodge for a night?

⁹Why should You be like a man
caught by surprise,
a strong man without strength to
save.

You are among us.
We are named after You.
Don't leave us.

¹⁰The LORD says this to these
people: That is how they love to
wander. They don't keep their feet
in check. And the LORD doesn't like
them. Now He will remember their
wrong and punish their sins.

¹¹The LORD told me, "Don't pray
to help these people. ¹²Even if they
fast, I will not listen to their cry.
Even if they sacrifice animals and
food, I don't like them, but by sword,
famine, and plague I will destroy
them."

¹³Then I said, "O Lord GOD, the
prophets are telling them. 'You won't
see a sword or get a famine because
I will give you a dependable peace
in this place.' "

¹⁴Then the LORD told me, "The
prophets are telling lies in My name.
I didn't send them, order them, or

¹⁶
¹² Nu 6:8
¹⁴ Mt 7:22

talk to them. What they prophesy to you is a vision that lies, fortune-telling, empty superstitions, their own ideas that deceive."

¹⁵And so the LORD says this about the prophets who talk in My name when I didn't send them and say, "There will be no sword or famine in this country": Sword and famine will consume those prophets. ¹⁶The people to whom they prophesy will be thrown out on the streets of Jerusalem as victims of famine and sword, and nobody will bury them or their wives, sons, and daughters. I will pour out on them what they deserve for their wickedness.

¹⁷Tell them this:

My eyes are flowing with tears
day and night without stopping
because the virgin daughter of
My people
will be broken down by a great
destruction,
by a very serious blow.

¹⁸If I go out into the field,
there I see those killed by the
sword.

If I go into the city,
there I see the victims of the
famine.

Both prophet and priest will
wander around in a country
they don't know.

¹⁹Have You rejected Judah?
Do You detest Zion?

Why have You struck us
when there is nothing to heal us?
We look for peace,
but nothing good comes;
for a time of healing,
but there's only terror.

²⁰We realize, LORD, how wicked
we are,
the wrongs of our fathers,
and how we sin against You.

²¹For Your name's sake don't
despise us.

Don't treat the throne of Your
glory as contemptible.

Think of Your covenant with
us—
don't break it.

²²Are there among the unreal gods
of the nations any that can
make rain?

Or do the skies by themselves
give showers?

No! It is You, the LORD our God?
We trust in You
because You do all these things.

War!

15 Then the LORD said to me.
Even if Moses and Samuel
were standing before Me, I would
not feel kind toward these people.
Send them away! Have them leave
Me! ²When they ask you, "Where
should we go?" tell them, the LORD
says:

Those who are to die must go to
their death;

*those whom the sword will kill
must go to meet the sword;*

those whom the famine will take
must face the famine;

and those who will be captives
should go into captivity.

³I have assigned four ways for
them, says the LORD, the sword to
kill them, dogs to drag them, and
birds in the sky and animals on the
ground to devour and destroy them.
⁴I will let all the kingdoms of the
world mistreat them on account of
the things Manasseh son of Heze-
kiah king of Judah did in Jerusalem.

⁵Who will feel sorry for you,
Jerusalem;

who will weep over you?

Who will go out of his way to ask
how you are?

¹⁵
² *Pr.* 6.8.
^{13:10}

⁶You have left Me, says the LORD;
you have turned your back on Me.

So I will stretch out My hand
against you
and destroy you.

I'm tired of feeling sorry for you.

⁷I will winnow them with a winnowing fork in the towns of the land.

I will take away their children,
and destroy My people
because they will not give up
their ways.

⁸Their widows have become more
than the sand by the sea.

In the middle of the day
I will bring an oppressor to
them.

On a nation of warriors I will
suddenly let anguish and ter-
rors fall.

⁹The mother of seven sons will
languish
and swoon away;

her sun will go down while it is
still day.

She will feel hopeless and
crushed.

And the rest of them I will leave
to the sword of their enemies,
says the LORD.

Jeremiah's Struggles

¹⁰How sad it is, my mother, that
you gave birth to me!

I am a man who must strive and
struggle with the whole world.

I have neither lent nor borrowed
anything,
yet everyone curses me.

¹¹I will certainly free you for a
good purpose, said the LORD.

I will make your enemies beg you
when they are in trouble and
distress.

¹²Can iron break the iron from the

north, or bronze?

¹³I will give your property and
treasures away as spoils.

No one will pay for them,
because of the sins you commit
throughout your land.

¹⁴I will make you serve your ene-
mies in a country you don't
know,

because My anger has lit a fire
that will burn against you.

¹⁵LORD, You understand.

Remember me, come to help me,
and take vengeance on those
who pursue me.

You are very patient;
don't let me be snatched away.

You know that for Your sake I've
been insulted.

¹⁶When Your words were found, I
ate them,

and Your word became a joy to
me

and delighted my heart
because I bear Your name.

LORD, God of armies.

¹⁷I didn't keep company with peo-
ple who scoff and have fun.

I sat alone because Your hand
had taken hold of me

and You had filled me with in-
dignation.

¹⁸Why is there no end to my pain,
no cure for my wound that re-
fuses to heal?

Are You actually like a deceitful
brook to me,
water that fails?

¹⁹So the LORD said this: If you will
repent,

I will restore you
and you will stand before Me.

If you will speak nobly rather
than frivolously,

you will speak for Me.

These people should come back
to you,

but you should not go back to them.

²⁰I will make you a bronze wall that these people can't climb. When they fight against you, they will not win against you, because I will be with you to save you, says the LORD.

²¹I will rescue you from wicked men and free you from the power of tyrants.

Don't Marry

16 The LORD told me: ¹Don't marry and have sons and daughters in this place. ²The LORD says this about the sons and daughters born in this place and about their mothers and fathers who had them in this country: ³They will die of ravaging diseases. They shouldn't be mourned or buried but be like manure on the ground. ⁴Sword and famine will kill them. Their bodies will be food for the birds in the air and the animals of the country. ⁵The LORD says this: Don't go into a house where there is wailing for the dead. Don't go to mourn or show grief for them, because I'm taking My friendship, kindness and pity, away from these people, says the LORD. ⁶Old and young will die in this country. They will not be buried or mourned. Nobody will cut himself or shave his head for them. ⁷Nobody will provide bread for the mourner to comfort him about the dead, or give him a cup of something to drink to comfort him about his father or mother.

⁸Don't even go into a home where there is a banquet to sit with them and eat and drink. ⁹The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this: I will banish from this place, in your time while you are watching, the

sounds of joy and happiness, the sounds of a groom and bride.

¹⁰When you tell these people all these things, they will ask you, "Why does the LORD threaten us with all of this great disaster. What wrongs and what sins have we done to the LORD our God?" ¹¹Then tell them: It's because your fathers deserted Me, says the LORD, and ran after other gods, served them, worshiped them, and deserted Me and didn't keep My Law. ¹²You have done worse than your fathers; each of you is following your own stubborn evil way that keeps you from listening to Me. ¹³So I will throw you out of this country into a country you and your fathers haven't known; there you will serve foreign gods day and night because I will no longer have pity on you.

I Will Bring Them Back

¹The time will come, says the LORD, when people will no more say, "as the LORD lives who brought Israel out of Egypt," ²but "as the LORD lives who brought Israel from the north and from all the countries where He had driven them." I will bring them back to their country that I gave their fathers.

³I'm going to send for many fishermen, says the LORD, to catch them. After that I will send for many hunters to hunt for them on every mountain and hill and in the clefts of the rocks. ⁴I'm watching all their ways, which aren't hidden from Me. Nor are their wrongs hidden; I can see them. ⁵I will first make them pay double for their wrong and their sin because they have polluted My country with the lifeless images of their detestable

¹⁶

⁹ Ru 10 23

idols and filled My land with their abominations.

¹⁹The LORD is my Strength and my Fortress,

my Refuge when I'm in trouble.

The nations come from the most distant places of the world to You

and say, "Our fathers have inherited only lies, empty superstitions,

and there isn't one of them that can help us."

²⁰Can man make gods for himself?

They are not gods.

²¹For that reason I will teach them;

this time I will show them

My hand and My power.

Then they will know My name is the LORD.

Sins Without a Cure

17 Judah's sin is written with an iron pen;

it is engraved with a diamond point

on the tablets of their hearts.

It is on the horns of their altars,

²as a memorial against them.

Their altars and their shameful posts

are beside every green tree, on the high hills,

³in the mountains and in the open country.

Your property and all your treasures I will give as spoils to pay for^a all the sin in your land.

⁴It will be your own fault

when you give up the country you inherited,

which I gave you.

I will make you the slaves of your enemies

in a country you don't know because you have made My anger blaze as a fire that will burn forever.

⁵The LORD says this:

Cursed is the man who trusts in man,

makes flesh his strength,

and in his heart turns away from the LORD.

⁶He will be like a dry scrub in the desert

who doesn't see any rain coming as he lives in the scorched places in the desert,

a salty ground where nobody can live.

⁷Blessed is the man who trusts the LORD

and whose confidence is in the LORD.

⁸He will be like a tree planted by water,

sending its roots to the stream.

He isn't afraid of the coming heat.

His leaves will be green.

He won't get worried in a year of drought

but will produce fruit without stopping.

The Mind and Heart

⁹The mind is more devious than anything

and very sick. Who can understand it?

¹⁰I, the LORD, search the mind

and test the feelings

to give everyone what he deserves,

according to what he has done.

¹¹As a quail broods on eggs she didn't lay,

¹⁹ Rv 15 4

17

¹⁰ Rv 2 23

20 12

22 12

^a "to pay for" reading with 15:13

if you get rich but not by honest means,
riches will desert you in the middle of your life,
and in the end you'll be a fool.

Heal Me, LORD!

¹²O Exalted One, enthroned in glory
established in our sanctuary
from the beginning,

¹³O LORD, the hope of Israel,
all who leave You come to a shameful end.

Those who turn away from Me
will be consigned to the dust
because they leave the LORD,
the fountain of living water.

¹⁴Heal me, LORD,
and I'll be healed.
Save me, and I'll be saved
because You are the One I praise.

¹⁵They're asking me,
"What's happened to the LORD's prediction?
Let it come true."

¹⁶I didn't press You for the fatal day.

You know I didn't long for the day of disaster.
What I said was said right in front of You, LORD.

¹⁷Don't be One who terrifies me.
You are the One I flee to when I'm in trouble.

¹⁸Let those who hunt me end in shame, but not me.
Let them panic, but not me.
Bring on them a day of disaster.
Destroy them with repeated destruction.

Keep the Sabbath

¹⁹The LORD told me: Go and stand in the gate of the lay people where the kings of Judah go in and out, and in all the gates of Jerusalem. ²⁰Tell

them: Listen to what the LORD says, king of Judah, and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem who come into these gates. ²¹The LORD says this: Watch for your lives, and don't carry any burdens on the Sabbath day or bring them into the gates of Jerusalem. ²²And don't take any burden out of your homes on the day of rest. Don't do any work, but keep the Sabbath day holy as I ordered your fathers to do. ²³But they didn't listen or pay attention but got too stubborn to listen and be warned.

²⁴If you will obey Me, says the LORD, and not bring any burden into the gates of this city on the Sabbath day and not do any work on it, ²⁵then kings and princes will come into the gates of this city and sit on David's throne. They will ride in chariots and on horses, they and their princes with the men of Judah and the people of Jerusalem; and this city will have people living in it forever.

²⁶From the cities of Judah, the places around Jerusalem and from Benjamin, from the low hills and the mountains and from the Negev they will come bringing burnt offerings, sacrifices, food offerings, incense, and they will bring sacrifices of thanksgiving to the LORD's temple. ²⁷But if you don't obey Me to keep the Sabbath day holy and not carry burdens into the gates of Jerusalem on a Sabbath day, I will set its gates on fire and it will burn down the palaces in Jerusalem and will not be put out.

Jeremiah at the Potter's House

18 The LORD told Jeremiah: ²Come, go down to the potter's house, and there I will tell you what I have to say.

¹I went down to the potter's house, and he was working at his wheel. ²Whenever the thing the potter made was spoiled in his hands, he re-made it into a new object just as he meant to make it.

³The word of the LORD came to me: ⁴"Can't I do to you people of Israel like this potter?" asks the LORD. Like clay in the potter's hands, so are you people of Israel in My hands. ⁵At any time I may threaten a nation or a kingdom to tear it up, break it down, and destroy it. ⁶But if that nation I threatened turns away from the evil, then I will change My mind about the evil I planned to do to them. ⁷Another time I may promise a nation or a kingdom to build and plant it. ⁸But if it does wrong before Me, refusing to listen to Me, then I will change My mind about the good I promised to do to them.

⁹And now tell the men of Judah and the people of Jerusalem: The LORD says this: I'm preparing evil and making plans against you. Everyone should turn from his wicked way and live right and do good.

¹⁰But they answer, "It's hopeless! We'll live as we think we should, and each of us will act according to his own stubborn evil way."

¹¹And that is why the LORD says: Please ask among the nations, who has ever heard such things? The virgin Israel has done a horrible thing.

¹²Does the snow fail to fall on the rocky slopes of Lebanon? Or do the cold streams coming from strange sources dry up?

¹³But My people have forgotten Me.

They sacrifice to empty idols who make them stumble in their

ways, on the ancient paths; they go on bypaths and a road that isn't a highway.

¹⁴They make their country a horror;

a thing to be scorned forever. Everybody who passes by is horrified and shakes his head.

¹⁵Like the east wind I will scatter them before the enemy.

I will show them My back and not My face on the day of their calamity.

A Plot Against Jeremiah

¹⁶Then they said, "Come, let us plot against Jeremiah because there'll still be priests to teach us, wise men to advise us, and prophets to talk to us. Come, let us make an accusation against him and pay no attention to what he says."

¹⁷Pay attention to me, LORD,

and listen to what those who oppose me say.

¹⁸Should good be paid back with evil?

They dig a pit to take my life. Remember how I stood before you to plead for them, to turn Your anger away from them.

¹⁹And so abandon their children to famine and hand them over to the sword so that their wives will become childless and widows, their husbands killed by disease and their young men struck down in battle.

²⁰Let a cry be heard from their homes when You suddenly bring raiding hordes on them because they dug a pit to catch me

¹⁸
^{6 No. 9 21}

and hid snares for my feet.

²³You, LORD, know their plot to kill me.

Don't forgive their wrongs.

Don't blot out their sins from your sight.

Make them fall before You.

When You get angry deal with them.

Smashing a Clay Jar

19 The LORD said this: Go and buy a clay jar and take some of the elders of the people and some of the older priests, ²and go out to the valley of Hinnom's son at the entrance of the Potsherd Gate and there announce what I will tell you. ³Say, Listen to what the LORD says, kings of Judah and people in Jerusalem. The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says: I'm bringing such a disaster that it will make the ears of anyone tingle when he hears about it, ⁴because they, their fathers, and the kings of Judah have forsaken Me, profaned this place, and sacrificed here to foreign gods they haven't known. They have filled this place with the blood of innocent people. ⁵They have built high places for Baal to burn their children as offerings to Baal. I didn't order or tell them to do this, and it didn't enter My mind. ⁶That is why the time will come when this place will no more be called Tophet or the valley of Hinnom's son but the valley of Slaughter. ⁷Like a clay jar I will smash the plans of Judah and Jerusalem in this place and have the sword cut them down before their enemies and by the hands of those who want to kill them. I will give their bodies as food to the birds in the sky and to the animals in the country. ⁸I will make this city something horrible and scorned.

Everybody who goes by it will be horrified and jeer with scorn at all the blows she has suffered. ⁹And I will make them eat the flesh of their sons and daughters, and they will eat the flesh of one another when their enemies and those who want to kill them besiege and distress them. ¹⁰Then smash the jar as the men who went with you watch you. ¹¹And tell them, the LORD of armies says this: I will smash these people and this city as a jar made by a potter is smashed and can't be repaired. And they will bury them in Topheth because there'll be no other place to bury. ¹²That is what I will do to this place, says the LORD, and to those who live here, to make this city like Topheth. ¹³The homes in Jerusalem and the palaces of the kings of Judah will be unclean like this place Topheth, that is all the homes on whose roofs people made offerings to the stars in the sky and poured out libations to other gods.

¹⁴Then Jeremiah left Topheth, where the LORD had sent him to prophesy, and he stood in the court of the LORD's temple and talked to the people: ¹⁵The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says: I'm going to bring on this city and all its towns all the calamity I threatened them with because they've gotten too stubborn to listen to what I say.

Pashhur Opposes Jeremiah

20 Pashhur the son of Immer the priest, who was a high officer of the LORD's temple, heard Jeremiah prophesy these things. ²Pashhur gave the prophet Jeremiah a beating and put him in the stocks at the upper gate of Benjamin that was by the LORD's temple.

³The next day when Pashhur took

Jeremiah out of the stocks. Jeremiah told him: The LORD doesn't call you Pashhur but Terror-all-around. 'The LORD says this: I'll make you a terror to yourself and to all your friends. Their enemies will cut them down with the sword, and you will see it, and I will put all Judah in the hands of the king of Babylon, who will take them away captive or kill them with the sword. 'And all the riches of this city, all the products of your work, all its valuable things, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah I will put in the hands of their enemies who will plunder them, take them away, and bring them to Babylon. 'As for you, Pashhur, and all who live in your home, you will go into captivity. You will come to Babylon, and there you will die. There you will be buried, you and all your friends to whom you prophesied lies.

Jeremiah's Confession

⁷LORD, You have misled me
and I let you mislead me.
You grabbed me and conquered
me.
I've been a joke all day long.
Everybody mocks me.
⁸Whenever I talk I have to cry
out,
calling, "Violence and destruc-
tion!"
Speaking the word of the LORD
has brought me
only disgrace and mockery all
day long.
⁹When I think I will not mention
Him
and say no more in His name,
then His word is in my heart like
a burning fire,
shut up in my bones.
I tried hard to hold it in but in
vain—

I couldn't do it.

- ¹⁰I heard many whispering,
on every side terrifying me,
"Denounce him! We'll denounce
him!"
All my friends are watching to
see me make a false move,
saying, "Perhaps he will be mis-
led,
then we'll take him and avenge
ourselves on him."
¹¹But the LORD is with me like a
terrifying warrior.
That is why those who pursue
me will fall and can't win.
They will fail badly
because they don't act wisely.
Their everlasting shame will not
be forgotten.
¹²You LORD of armies, You test
the righteous
and search their feelings and
thoughts—
I want to see You take ven-
geance on them
because I've laid my case before
You.
¹³Sing to the LORD.
Praise the LORD
because He saves the life of the
needy
from the hands of the wicked.
¹⁴Cursed is the day I was born,
the day when my mother gave
birth to me.
May it not be blessed.
¹⁵Cursed is the man who told my
father the news,
"You have a baby boy,"
and made him very happy.
¹⁶May that man be like the cities
the LORD destroyed without
pity.
May he hear a cry in the morn-
ing
and a battle cry at noon.

¹⁷because he didn't kill me before
I was born,
making my mother my grave
and her womb pregnant forever.
¹⁸Why did I come out of the womb
to see trouble and grief
and finish my days in shame?

21 The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah when King Zedekiah sent Passhur son of Malchiah and Zephaniah son of Maaseiah the priest saying, ²"Consult the LORD for us because Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon is fighting against us. Perhaps the LORD, who has done many wonderful deeds, will do one for us and make Nebuchadnezzar leave us."

³Jeremiah told them: Tell Zedekiah: "The LORD, the God of Israel, says, I'm going to turn back the weapons of war with which you are fighting the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans who are now besieging you outside the wall; I'll bring them into the middle of this city. ⁴And I Myself will fight against you with My hand stretched out and My strong arm in anger, fury, and great wrath. ⁵I will strike the people in this city, man and animal, and they will die in a great plague. ⁶Afterwards I will take Zedekiah king of Judah, his men, and the people, whoever is still living in this city after the plague, sword, and famine and I will turn them over to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and to their enemies who want to kill them. He will kill them with the sword and not spare them, pity them, or feel sorry for them. ⁷Tell these people, the LORD says: I put before them the way of life and the way of death. ⁸If you stay in this city, you will die by sword, famine, or plague, but if you go out and surrender to the

Chaldeans besieging you, you will live—you will get away with your life. ¹⁰I'm determined to harm and not to help this city, says the LORD. It will be put in the hands of the king of Babylon, and he will burn it with fire.

¹¹Tell the family of the king of Judah: Listen to what the LORD says:

¹²Descendants of David, the LORD says:

In the morning judge justly
and free from the oppressor
those who are robbed,
or My fury will blaze like fire
and there'll be nobody to put it
out
because you've done such
wicked things.

¹³The LORD says: I'm against you,
O dweller in the valley,
and on the rock in the plain!
You ask, "Who will come down
against us
or who will come into our
homes?"

¹⁴I will punish you according to
the works you produce, says
the LORD,
and I'll start a fire in your forest
to burn down everything around
you.

Jehoiakim

22 The LORD says this: Go down to the palace of the king of Judah and there say this: ²Listen to what the LORD says, king of Judah, sitting on David's throne, you, your men, and your people who come into these gates. ³The LORD says: Do what is right and just, rescue anyone who is robbed from the oppressor's hands. Don't oppress or treat violently a stranger, orphan, or widow. Don't pour out innocent

blood in this place. "If you do what I say, kings yet to sit on David's throne will come riding in chariots and on horses with their men and people and go through the gates of this palace. "But if you don't listen to what I say, I swear by Myself, says the LORD, this palace will be turned to ruins.

"The LORD says this about the palace of the king of Judah: Though you are to Me like Gilead

and the top of Lebanon,

I will certainly make you a desert with ghost towns.

⁷I will sanctify an army to destroy you,

everyone with his weapons.

They will cut down the best of your cedars

and throw them on the fire.

"Many nations will pass by this city and ask one another. "Why did the LORD do such a thing to this great city?" "And they will answer, "Because they have broken away from the covenant of their God and worshiped alien gods and served them."

Shallum

¹⁰Don't cry over the dead or weep over him.

Cry bitterly over him who is going away

because he will never come back to see the land where he was born.

"The LORD says this about Shallum son of Josiah king of Judah, who succeeded his father Josiah as king and left this place: He will never come back here again. ¹²He will die at the place where he is taken captive and will never see this country again.

Jehoiakim

¹³Woe to him who builds his house dishonestly

and his upper rooms through fraud,

who makes people work for him for nothing

and doesn't pay them for their work,

¹⁴who says, "I will build myself a big house

and grand upper rooms."

He cuts out windows for himself, panels the rooms with cedar wood,

and paints them red.

¹⁵Are you going to be king by trying to surpass others with cedar wood?

Didn't your father eat and drink

and do what is fair and right?

Then everything went well with him.

¹⁶He gave justice to the poor and needy.

Then all was well.

"Isn't this what it means to know Me?" asks the LORD.

¹⁷But your eyes and your mind are set only on making a profit,

pouring out innocent blood,

and practicing oppression and violence.

¹⁸That is why the LORD says about Jehoiakim son of Josiah

king of Judah:

People shouldn't mourn for him and say,

"Oh my brother," or "Oh sister."

They shouldn't mourn for him.

"Oh master," or "Oh his majesty!"

¹⁹He should be buried like a donkey,

dragged outside the gates of
Jerusalem
and dumped there.

Jehoiachin

²⁰Go up to Lebanon and cry,
and in Bashan raise your voice.
Cry from Abarim
because your lovers are all shat-
tered.

²¹I talked to you when all was well
with you,
but you said, "I won't listen."
This has been your way since
you were young—
you have refused to listen to Me.

²²The wind will consume all your
leaders,
and your lovers will go away
into captivity.
Then you will be disappointed
and ashamed about all your
wickedness.

²³You who live on Lebanon
and have your nest in the ce-
dars,
how you will groan when pangs
come on you,
pain like a woman having a
child.

²⁴As I live, says the LORD, even if
Coniah^o son of Jehoiakim king of
Judah were a seal ring on My right
hand, I would tear you away from
there ²⁵and put you in the hands of
those who want to kill you and of
whom you are afraid, Nebuchadnezzar
king of Babylon and the Chal-
deans. ²⁶I will throw you and your
mother who bore you into another
country where you were not born,
and there you will die. ²⁷But they
will not come back to the country
they long to return to.

^oJehoiachin

²⁸This Coniah is despised
and broken.
Is he something nobody delights
in?

Why are he and his descendants
discarded
and thrown into a country they
don't know?

²⁹O land, land, land!
Listen to what the LORD says.

³⁰The LORD says: Write down this
man as childless,
a man who will not succeed in
his life
because none of his descendants
will succeed
to sit on David's throne
and rule again in Judah.

A Righteous Branch

23 Woe to the shepherds who
ruin and scatter the flock
of which I'm the Shepherd, says the
LORD. ²And so the LORD, the God
of Israel, says to the shepherds
feeding My people: You have scat-
tered My flock, driven them away,
and not taken care of them, and now
I'll take care of you by punishing
you for the evil you've done, says the
LORD.

³I will gather what is left of My
flock from all the countries where
I've driven them and bring them
back to their folds, and they will
have lambs and be a large flock.
⁴Then I will appoint shepherds over
them to feed them. They will no
more be afraid or terrified, and
none will be missing, says the
LORD.

⁵The days will come, says the
LORD,
when I will raise for David a
righteous Branch

who will rule as king and be wise.

He will create fairness and righteousness in the earth.

⁸When He comes, Judah will be saved,

and Israel will live safely.

This is the name that He will be called,

The-LORD-our-righteousness.

⁹And so the days are coming, says the LORD, when they will no more say, "As the LORD lives who brought Israel out of Egypt!" ¹⁰but "As the LORD lives who brought up Israel's descendants and had them come from the northern country and all the countries where I drove them, to live in their own country."

Jeremiah Against the Priests and Prophets

¹About the Prophets:

My heart is broken within me.

All my bones shake.

I'm like a drunkard,

like a man overcome with wine,

on account of the LORD

and His holy words when He says:

²The country is full of adulterers; because of them^P the land mourns.

Pastures in the open country dry up.

They are running after evil

and use their strength for what isn't right.

³Prophet and priest are ungodly.

Even in My temple I've found their wickedness, says the LORD.

⁴And so their way will be like slippery ground in the dark

where they will be pushed and fall down,

because I will bring disaster on them,

a year when they'll be punished, says the LORD.

⁵Among the prophets of Samaria

I have seen a silly superstition:

They prophesy by Baal

and make My people Israel go wrong.

⁶Among the prophets of Jerusalem

I have seen an abominable thing: adultery and living in lies.

They support those who do wrong

so that nobody turns back from his wickedness.

They are all to Me like Sodom,

and the people in Jerusalem are like Gomorrah.

⁷And so the LORD of armies threatens the prophets:

I will give them bitter things to eat

and poison to drink

because ungodliness has spread from the prophets in Jerusalem

to the whole country.

⁸The LORD of armies says:

Don't listen to what the prophets say.

They give you empty hopes.

They tell about visions of their own imagination

that don't come from the LORD's mouth.

⁹They are telling those who despise Me,

"The LORD says: All will be well with you."

And they tell all who live in their own stubborn ways,

"No harm will come to you."

¹⁰Who stands in the LORD's inner circle

^P "them." Gk and some Heb manuscripts. Others "because of a curse"

and sees and hears what He says?

Who pays attention and listens to what He says?

¹⁰Look! The LORD's storm!

Fury has gone out, a tornado, whirling down on the heads of the wicked.

²⁰The LORD will not stop being angry till He has finished, and carries out what He has planned.

In the last days you will understand it clearly.

¹¹I didn't send the prophets, and yet they ran. I didn't talk to them, and yet they prophesied.

¹²If they had stood in My council, then they would have told My people what I say and would turn them from the evil they live in and the evil they do.

¹³Am I a God who is only near and not far away? asks the LORD.

¹⁴Can anyone hide in a secret place so that I can't see him? asks the LORD. Don't I fill heaven and earth? asks the LORD.

²⁵I've heard what the prophets say: those who tell lies in My name say, "I had a dream, I had a dream!" ²⁶How long will the hearts of these prophets tell lies and invent dishonest prophecies? ²⁷By the dreams they tell one another, do they plan to make My people forget My name, as their fathers forgot My name for Baal? ²⁸If a prophet has a dream, let him tell it, but he who has My Word, let him honestly speak My Word. Why mix the grain with the straw? says the LORD.

²⁹Isn't My Word like fire? says the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces? ³⁰And so I'm against the prophets, says the LORD, who steal My words from one another. ³¹I'm against the prophets, says the LORD, who use their tongues and say, "God said it." ³²I'm against those who prophesy false dreams, says the LORD. They tell them and make My people go wrong by their lies and wild talk. I didn't send them or order them to go, and they can't help these people at all, says the LORD.

³³When these people, a prophet or a priest ask you what the LORD's burden is, tell them, "You are the burden! And I will dump you," says the LORD. ³⁴When a prophet, a priest, or anybody says, "The LORD's burden," I will punish that man and his family. ³⁵You should talk to one another, neighbor to neighbor, brother to brother, like this: "What did the LORD answer?" and "What did the LORD say?" ³⁶But don't mention the words "the LORD's burden" anymore because what a man says will be his burden, and you will twist the Word of the living God, the LORD of armies, our God? ³⁷This is how you should speak to the prophet: "What did the LORD answer you?" or "What did the LORD say?" ³⁸If you say "the LORD's burden," then the LORD says, "Because you say this phrase, "the LORD's burden," when I sent you an order not to say it. ³⁹I will carry you like a burden, you and the city I gave you and your fathers, and throw you down, to get you out of My sight. ⁴⁰I will bring on you everlasting disgrace and everlasting shame that will never be forgotten.

Baskets of Figs

24 Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had taken away into exile Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim king of Judah with the princes of Judah, the skilled workers and the metal smiths. He had taken them from Jerusalem and brought them to Babylon. After that, the LORD showed me two baskets of figs set in front of the temple. ²One basket had very good figs, like those that get ripe first, and the other basket had very bad figs, too bad to be eaten.

“What do you see, Jeremiah?” the LORD asked.

“Figs,” I answered. “Good figs that are very good, and bad figs that are very bad, too bad to be eaten.”

“Then the LORD told me: ³The LORD, the God of Israel, says this: I will look kindly, as at these good figs, at the captives of Judah, whom I sent away from here to the land of the Chaldeans. ⁴I will watch over them to help them and will bring them back to this land. I will build them up and not tear them down. I will plant them and not pull them out by the roots. ⁵I will give them a heart to know Me as the LORD. *They will be My people, and I will be their God,* because they will have come back to Me with all their hearts. ⁶But like the bad figs, too bad to be eaten, says the LORD, so will I abandon Zedekiah, king of Judah, and his princes, those who were left in Jerusalem and those who stayed in this country and those who are living in Egypt. ⁷And I will make them an example of misery that will terrify all the kingdoms of the earth, to be scorned, mocked, taunted, and cursed in every place to which I will drive them. ⁸I will send against them

the sword, famine, and plague till they are destroyed and none of them are left in the land I gave them and their fathers.

Nebuchadnezzar to Destroy the Country

25 The LORD spoke to Jeremiah about all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah. (It was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon.) ²The prophet Jeremiah spoke to all the people of Judah and all the people in Jerusalem: ³From the 13th year of Josiah, Amon's son, king of Judah, till today, these 23 years the LORD has spoken to me and I have spoken to you, always eager to do so, but you refused to listen. ⁴The LORD promptly sent you all His servants, the prophets, but you wouldn't listen or pay attention to hear them. He said: ⁵Turn, each of you, from the evil way you live in and the evil things you do, then you may always live in the country the LORD gave you and your fathers. ⁶Don't run after other gods to serve and worship them; don't make Me angry by the idols your hands have made. Then I won't harm you. ⁷But you refused to listen to Me, says the LORD, and you made Me angry with your idols, to your own harm. ⁸And so the LORD of armies says: Because you refuse to listen to what I say, ⁹I'm going to send for all the northern clans, says the LORD, including Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant; I will bring them against this country, the people living here and all the surrounding nations. I will completely destroy them and make them something shuddered over, scorned, and a permanent ruin. ¹⁰I will banish

²⁴
7, 2 Co 6:16
Rev 21:3, 7

from them the sound of joy and happiness, the voice of a groom and the voice of a bride, the sound of a mill, and the light of a lamp. ¹¹The whole country will be in ruins and a wasteland. And these nations will serve the king of Babylon 70 years. ¹²And when the 70 years are over, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, says the LORD, for their wrongs; and I will punish the land of the Chaldeans and make it an everlasting wasteland. ¹³And I will bring on that country everything I threatened to do to it, everything written in this book in which Jeremiah prophesies against all the nations. ¹⁴Many nations and great kings will make slaves of them too, and I will pay them back according to their work and their deeds.

The Cup of the LORD's Fury

¹⁵The LORD, the God of Israel, says this to me: Take from My hand this wine cup of My fury and make all the nations to whom I'm sending you drink it. ¹⁶When they drink it, they will stagger and go mad, due to the sword I'm sending among them.

¹⁷I took the cup from the LORD's hand and made all the nations to whom the LORD sent me drink it: "Jerusalem and Judah's towns, its kings and leaders, to make them a desolation and a ruin, something shuddered over, scorned, and cursed, as it is today. ¹⁸And these will also drink: Pharaoh, king of Egypt, his men, leaders, and all his people, ¹⁹and all the foreigners among them, all the kings of the land of Uz, and all the kings of the country of the Philistines (Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and those who were left in Ashdod). ²⁰Edom, Moab, the

people of Ammon, ²¹and all the kings of Tyre and all the kings of Sidon, and the kings on the coasts on the other side of the sea, ²²Dedan, Tema, Buz, and all who clip their hair at the temples. ²³all the kings of the Arabs, and all the kings of the mixed people living in the wilderness, ²⁴and all the kings of Zimri, all the kings of Elam, all the kings of the Medes, ²⁵and all the kings of the north, living near and far from one another, and all the kingdoms of the world that are on the earth, and last of all the king of Sheshak^a will drink.

²⁶You shall tell them: The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says: Drink and get drunk, vomit, fall, and don't get up because of the sword I'm sending among you. ²⁷If they refuse to take the cup from your hand to drink it, tell them, the LORD of armies says: You must drink it.

²⁸If I start by bringing disaster on the city named after Me, should you go unpunished? You certainly will not go unpunished! I'm calling for a sword to come on all the people in the world, says the LORD of armies.

²⁹Prophecy to them all these things and tell them:

The LORD roars from on high and calls from His holy mansion. He roars against His fold. He shouts like those trampling grapes against all the people living in the world.

³⁰A noise is sounding to the ends of the earth because the LORD accuses the nations. He is out to judge all human beings.

25
10 Rev 18:23
15 Rev 14:10
16 19
18 3

^aA name for Babylon

He will give the wicked to the sword.

This is the word of the LORD.

¹¹The LORD of armies says:

See disaster is spreading
from nation to nation
and a great storm is stirring
from the distant places of the
earth.

¹²On that day those whom the LORD will kill will be from one end of the earth to the other. They will not be mourned, taken away, and buried, but be like manure on the ground.

¹³Howl, shepherds, and cry.

Leaders of the flock, roll on the ground—

the time has come for you to be slaughtered.

I will scatter you,

and you will fall like fine rams.

¹⁴There will be no way for the shepherds to flee,

no escape for the leaders of the flock.

¹⁵Listen to the shepherds crying
and the leaders of the flock wailing

because the LORD is plundering
their pasture.

¹⁶The peaceful folds are destroyed

by the LORD's blazing anger.

¹⁷Like a lion He has left His lair—

their country is turned to ruins
by His violent sword and blazing
anger.

Jeremiah Arrested

26 When Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah started to rule, the LORD said the following: ¹The LORD says this: Stand in the court of the Lord's temple and tell the people of all Judah's cities who come to worship in the LORD's temple everything I order you to tell

them. Don't omit anything. ²Perhaps they will listen and everyone will turn from his evil way. If so, I will change My mind about the evil I intend to do to them for their evil deeds. ³Tell them, the LORD says this: If you will not listen to Me or follow the instructions I set before you ⁴or listen to My servants the prophets, whom I promptly sent you even though you wouldn't listen, ⁵then I will do to this temple what I did to Shiloh and make this city a curse for all the nations in the world.

⁶The priests and prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah say these things in the LORD's temple. ⁷But as soon as Jeremiah finished everything the LORD ordered him to tell all the people, the priests, the prophets, and all the people took hold of him and said, "You must die! ⁸Why do you prophesy in the LORD's name and say: This temple will be like Shiloh, and this city will become ruins so that nobody will live here?" And all the people gathered to oppose Jeremiah in the LORD's temple.

⁹When Judah's princes heard about these things, they left the king's palace, went up to the LORD's temple, and sat in the entrance of the New Gate of the LORD's temple. ¹⁰Then the priests and the prophets said to the princes and all the people, "This man is condemned to die because he prophesied against this city as you yourselves have heard."

¹¹Then Jeremiah said to all the princes and all the people, "The LORD sent me to prophesy against this temple everything you heard. ¹²Now live right and do what is right and listen to the LORD your God, and the LORD will change His mind

about the evil He threatens to do to you. ¹⁸"I'm now in your hands. Do to me what you please and what you think is right. ¹⁹but realize this if you kill me, you, this city, and the people living in it are responsible for killing an innocent man because it is true that the LORD sent me to you to tell you all these things."

²⁰Then the princes and all the people said to the priests and the prophets, "This man doesn't deserve to die; he has spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God."

²¹Then some of the older men of the country got up and said to the whole assembly of the people, ²²"Micah from Moresheth prophesied at the time of Hezekiah, king of Judah, and told all the people of Judah: The LORD of armies says this:

Zion will be plowed as a field,

Jerusalem will be ruins,

and the temple hill a wooded height.^r

²³Did Hezekiah, king of Judah, and all the people of Judah kill him? Didn't he fear the LORD and beg the LORD so that the LORD changed His mind about the evil the LORD threatened to do to them? But we're going to bring a disaster on ourselves."

²⁴There was another man prophesying in the LORD's name, Uriah son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-jearim. He prophesied against this city and this country just as Jeremiah did. ²⁵When King Jehoiakim with all his soldiers and all his princes heard what he said, the king tried to kill him. When Uriah heard of it, he was frightened; he fled and went to Egypt. ²⁶But King Jehoiakim sent men to Egypt, Elnathan son of

Achbor, and others with them. ²⁷They got Uriah out of Egypt and took him to King Jehoiakim who killed him with a sword and threw his body on the public burying-ground. ²⁸But Ahikam, Shaphan's son, helped Jeremiah so that he wasn't handed over to the people to be killed.

Put Your Neck Under the Yoke of Babylon

27 In the early part of the rule of Zedekiah son of Josiah king of Judah, the LORD said the following to Jeremiah.

²The LORD said this to me: Prepare straps and bars for a yoke and put it on your neck. ³Then send them to the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and the king of Sidon, by means of their envoys who have come to Zedekiah king of Judah in Jerusalem. ⁴Give them an order to their masters and say: The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this: Say to your masters: ⁵I have made the earth along with men and animals on the earth by My great power and My outstretched arm; and I give it to anyone I think is the right person. ⁶Now I have given all these countries to My servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; I have even given him the animals in the field to serve him. ⁷All nations should serve him, his son, and his grandson till the time comes also for his country when many nations and great kings will make him their slave. ⁸If any nation or kingdom will not serve Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, or put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, I will punish that nation by sword, famine, and plague, says the LORD, till I

^rMicah 3:12

have put an end to them by his hand. ⁹Then don't listen to your prophets, to men who claim to have supernatural knowledge or powers, to your dreamers, or fortune-tellers who tell you: Don't serve the king of Babylon. ¹⁰When they're prophesying to you, they're lying; so you'll be taken far from your country and I'll drive you away and you will perish. ¹¹But if any nation will put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, I will leave them in their own country, says the LORD, and they will cultivate it and live in it.

¹²I said the same thing to Zedekiah, king of Judah: Put your neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, serve him and his people, and stay alive. ¹³Why should the sword, famine, and the plague kill you and your people as the LORD has warned any nation that will not serve the king of Babylon? ¹⁴Don't listen to what the prophets are telling you when they say, "Don't serve the king of Babylon," because what they're telling you when they prophesy is a lie. ¹⁵I didn't send them, says the LORD, and they prophesy lies in My name; so I will drive you away, and you and the prophets prophesying to you will perish.

¹⁶I also talked to the priests and all these people. I said: the LORD says this: Don't listen to your prophets who say to you, "The vessels of the LORD's temple will soon be brought back from Babylon," because it is a lie they're prophesying to you. ¹⁷Don't listen to them, but serve the king of Babylon and live. Why should this city be turned to ruins? ¹⁸If they were prophets and

the LORD was speaking to them, they would beg the LORD of armies to keep the vessels that are left in the LORD's temple, in the palace of the king of Judah, and in Jerusalem from going to Babylon. ¹⁹The LORD of armies says in regard to the pillars, the pool, the stands, and the rest of the utensils that are left in this city—²⁰which Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, didn't take away when he took Jeconiah^s son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, with all the noblemen of Judah and Jerusalem, from Jerusalem into exile in Babylon—²¹the LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this about the utensils that are left in the LORD's temple, in the palace of the king of Judah, and in Jerusalem: ²²They will be taken to Babylon and stay there, says the LORD, till I come for them and bring them up and put them back in this place.

Hananiah

28 Now that same year, in the early part of the rule of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the fifth month of his fourth year, Hananiah son of Azzur the prophet who was from Gibeon, spoke to me in the LORD's temple before the priests and all the people. He said, ¹"The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says: I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon. ²Within two years I will bring back to this place all the vessels of the LORD's temple that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, got from this place and took to Babylon. ³I will also bring back to this place Jeconiah, son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, with all the exiles of Judah who went to Babylon, says the LORD, because I will break the

²⁷
¹⁵ Mt 7:22

^sAlso called Jehoiachin

yoke of the king of Babylon."

"The prophet Jeremiah answered the prophet Hananiah before the priests and all the people standing in the LORD's temple. "Yes, so be it!" the prophet Jeremiah said. "May the LORD do this! May the LORD carry out what you prophesied by bringing back the vessels of the LORD's temple and all the exiles from Babylon to this place. 'But please listen to what I say for you and all the people to hear. 'Long ago prophets, who were before me and you, prophesied against many countries and great kingdoms about war, calamity, and the plague. 'But the prophet who prophesied about peace was recognized to be the prophet the LORD really sent only if what the prophet said came true."

"Then the prophet Hananiah took the yoke from the neck of the prophet Jeremiah and broke it. "'The LORD says this," Hananiah said before all the people. "This is how I will break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all the nations within two years." The prophet Jeremiah went his way.

"But after the prophet Hananiah broke the yoke from the neck of the prophet Jeremiah, the LORD spoke to Jeremiah. "'Go to Hananiah and tell him: The LORD says this: You broke the wooden yoke, but I will make an iron yoke instead. "The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this: I will put an iron yoke on the neck of all these nations, so they will serve Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. They will serve him! I will even give him the animals in the field. "Then Jeremiah told the prophet Hananiah. "Now listen,

Hananiah, the LORD didn't send you; you make these people trust a lie. "And so the LORD says this: I'm dismissing you from the face of the earth. This year you will die because you have promoted rebellion against the LORD." "So the prophet Hananiah died in the seventh month of that year.

A Letter to the Exiles

29 This is the letter the prophet Jeremiah sent from Jerusalem to the rest of the elders in exile, to the priests, prophets, and all the people Nebuchadnezzar took from Jerusalem into exile at Babylon. (This was after King Jeconiah, the queen-mother, the court officials, and the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen and metal smiths left Jerusalem.) He sent it with Elasah son of Shaphan, and Gemariah son of Hilkiah whom Zedekiah king of Judah had sent to Babylon, to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.

The letter said: "The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this to all the exiles I took from Jerusalem into exile at Babylon: 'Build homes and live in them. Plant gardens and eat what they produce. *Marry and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands so they will have sons and daughters; grow in number, and don't decrease. 'Strive for the welfare of the city where I've taken you into exile and pray to the LORD for it; when it fares well, it will be well with you.

"The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this: Don't let the prophets who are among you or others

*Gk: Heb "you"

who claim supernatural knowledge deceive you and don't even listen to your own dreams that you will become powerful. ⁹What they prophesy to you in My name is a lie. I didn't send them, says the LORD.

¹⁰The LORD says this: When Babylon's 70 years are over, I will come to you and keep My good promise to you and bring you back to this place.

¹¹I know what I'm planning for you, says the LORD; I'm planning to make you happy and not to harm you, to give you a future you can hope for. ¹²When you call Me and come and pray to Me, I will hear you. ¹³When you look for Me, you will find Me; yes, when you search for Me with all your heart, ¹⁴I will let you find Me, says the LORD.

I will take you out of captivity, gather you from all the nations and places I've driven you, says the LORD, and bring you back to the place from which I took you into exile.

¹⁵Now you've said that the LORD has given you prophets in Babylon. ¹⁶Yes, but the LORD says this about the king sitting on David's throne and all the people living in this city, your relatives who didn't go with you into exile: ¹⁷This is what the LORD of armies says: I'm going to send the sword, famine, and plague among them. They are to me like rotten figs, too bad to be eaten. ¹⁸I will pursue them with sword, famine, and plague. I will make them an example that will terrify all the kingdoms of the earth; they will horrify people and be cursed, taunted, and scorned by all the nations where I drive them, ¹⁹because they didn't listen to Me, says the LORD. I was prompt in sending them My servants the prophets, but you refused to listen, says

the LORD. ²⁰Listen then, to what the LORD says, all you exiles whom I sent away from Jerusalem to Babylon! ²¹The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this about Ahab son of Kolaiah, and Zedekiah son of Maaseiah who prophesy lies to you in My name: I'm putting them in the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, who will kill them in your presence. ²²And all of Judah's captives that are in Babylon will refer to them when they curse and say, "May the LORD make you end like Zedekiah and Ahab whom the king of Babylon roasted in fire!" ²³They did shameful things in Israel, committed adultery with their neighbors' wives, told lies in My name, which I didn't order them to do—I know, I'm a witness, says the LORD.

Shemaiah Objects

²⁴Tell Shemaiah from Nehelam: ²⁵The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this: You sent letters in your name to all the people in Jerusalem, to Zephaniah son of the priest Maaseiah, and to all the priests, which said: ²⁶"The LORD made you a priest to succeed Jehoiada the priest, so there will be men to take care of the LORD's temple; so it is your duty to put any madman who poses as a prophet in the stocks and an iron collar.

²⁷Now, then, why didn't you stop Jeremiah from Anathoth who is posing as a prophet to you. ²⁸As such Jeremiah sent a message to us in Babylon which said: 'It will be long. Build homes and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce.'

²⁹When the priest Zephaniah had read this letter to the prophet Jeremiah, ³⁰the LORD spoke to Jeremiah: ³¹Send a message to all the exiles: The LORD says this to

Shemaiah from Nehelam: Because Shemaiah prophesied to you without My sending him and had you trust in a lie. "the LORD says this: I will punish Shemaiah from Nehelam and his descendants: He will not have anyone living among these people or enjoying the good things I'm going to do for My people. says the LORD. because he talked rebellion against the LORD.

I Will Free the Captives

30 The LORD said to Jeremiah: "The LORD, the God of Israel says this: Everything I tell you write down in a book for yourself. "The days are coming, says the LORD, when I will free the captives of My people Israel and Judah, says the LORD, and bring them back to own the land I gave their fathers.

"These are the words the LORD spoke about Israel and Judah.

"The LORD says:

We hear a cry of terror,
of panic and not peace.

"Ask now and see if a man can
bear a child?

Why then do I see every strong
man gripping his sides
like a woman giving birth to a
child,

and every face turned pale?

"Woe to you because that day
will be so awful
there will be none like it,
a time of trouble for Jacob,
yet he will be saved from it.

"On that day, says the LORD of
armies, I will break your yoke from
your neck and snap your ropes, and
no more will strangers make you
serve them. "but you will serve the
LORD your God and David your King
whom I will raise for you.

"Don't be afraid, My servant
Jacob, says the LORD.

and don't be terrified, Israel.

I will rescue you however far
away you are.

and your descendants from the
land where they are captives;
so that Jacob again will live in
peace,

undisturbed and frightened by
no one.

"I'm with you to save you, says
the LORD.

While I will completely destroy
all nations

among whom I scattered you,

I will not completely destroy
you.

I will correct you as you de-
serve,

without letting you go unpun-
ished.

"The LORD says this:

You are hurt too much to be
cured;

your wound is sore.

"There is no one to champion
your cause,

to press your wound,

no remedy to heal you.

"All your lovers have forgotten
you

and don't want you any more.

I have struck you

as though I were an enemy

and corrected you

as though I were cruel.

because your guilt is great
and your sins are many.

"Why call to Me for help for your
injury,

your incurable pain?

I have done this to you

because your guilt is great

and your sins are many.

"But all who devour you will be
devoured,

and all your enemies will go into
captivity.

Those who took your goods
will be robbed of theirs,
and all who took you for their
prey

I will make a prey.

¹⁷I will restore your health and
heal your wounds, says the
LORD.

They used to call you the Out-
cast,

Zion, for whom nobody cares.

My People

¹⁸The LORD says this,

I will restore Jacob's tents
and take pity on his homes.

Cities will be built on their
mounds,

and palaces be inhabited as they
used to be.

¹⁹They will pour out thanksgiving
and the laughter of happy
people.

I will make them many and not a
few;

I will bring honor to them
so they will no longer be unim-
portant.

²⁰They will have children as they
had long ago.

Their community will be estab-
lished in My presence,
and I will punish all who op-
press them.

²¹Their prince will be one of their
own,

and their ruler will rise from
among them.

I will have him approach and
come close to Me—

who else would dare to come
near Me? asks the LORD.

²²Then you will be My people,
and I will be your God.

²³Now the LORD's storm will go
out in fury,

a sweeping storm that will burst
on the heads of the wicked.

²⁴The LORD's fierce anger will not
turn back

till He has carried out and fin-
ished

what He plans in His heart.

In the last days you will under-
stand it.

31 Then, says the LORD, *I will
be the God of all the
families of Israel, and they will be
My people.*

An Everlasting Love

¹The LORD says this:

The people who escaped the
sword

will find kindness in the wilder-
ness.

Israel will journey to find his
rest.

²The LORD has come from far to
appear to him.

He says: I have loved you with
an everlasting love;

and so with kindness I will draw
you to Me.

³I will build you again,
so you will be rebuilt, O virgin
Israel.

You will adorn yourself again
with tambourines

and go out dancing with happy
people.

⁴You will again plant vineyards
on Samaria's hills,

the planters planting
and playing the flute.

⁵Yes, there will be a day when
watchmen on Ephraim's hills
will shout:

"Rise, and let us go up to Zion,
to the LORD our God."

⁷The LORD says this:

Raise a happy shout for Jacob
and a lusty cry for the first of
the nations!

30
22 2 Co 6 16
Rv 21 3 7
31
1 2 Co 6 16
Rv 21 3 7

Sing loud your praise
and say, "LORD, save your
people,
those who are left of Israel."

"I will bring them from the
northern country
and gather them from distant
places of the earth:
the blind and lame will be among
them;
pregnant women and those in
labor will be there.
It will be a large crowd.

"They will weep as they come
home
and plead for pardon as I bring
them.

I will lead them to streams of
water,
on a level road where they can't
stumble
because I will be a Father to
Israel,
and Ephraim will be My first-
born.

"You nations, hear what the
LORD says,
and tell it to the distant coun-
tries by the sea.
Say: He who scattered Israel
will gather them
and take care of them as a shep-
herd watches his flock.

"The LORD will ransom Jacob
and redeem him from those who
are stronger than he.

"They will come and shout for joy
on Zion's height;
streams of people will go to en-
joy the LORD's good things,
the fresh grain, wine, and oil,
the lambs and calves.
Their life will be like a well-
watered garden,
and no longer will they have to
starve.

"Then the virgin will delight in
dancing;
young men and old men will be
happy together.

I will turn their mourning to joy,
comfort them and make them
glad after their sorrow.

"I will satisfy the hungry priests
with rich food,
and My people will be filled with
My good things, says the
LORD.

"The LORD says this: *In Ramah
you hear mourning and bitter
weeping:
Rachel is weeping for her chil-
dren.*

*She refuses to be comforted, be-
cause her children are gone.*

"The LORD says this: Stop your
weeping,
and don't cry,

because you will be rewarded
for your labor, says the LORD.
They will come back from the
enemy's country.

"There is hope for your future,
says the LORD.

Your children will come back to
their own country.

"I hear Ephraim weeping over
himself:

You have disciplined me:
I'm disciplined like a young bull
that isn't trained.

Turn me, and I will be turned
because You are the LORD My
God.

"After I turned away I was sorry,
and after I came to my senses I
struck my thigh;

I felt so ashamed and humili-
ated; I felt disgraced for
what I did when I was
young.

"Is Ephraim a darling to Me?
Is he a child I delight in?

15-21

As often as I say anything
against him,

I still cherish him in My memory.
So My heart yearns for him,
and I deeply love him, says the
LORD.

²¹Put up road marks for yourself.
Set up posts to guide you.
Keep in mind the highway,
the road on which you went
away.

Come back, virgin of Israel,
come back to your cities.

²²How long will you turn this way
and that,
you lost daughter?

The LORD will create a new
thing on earth—
a woman who returns to a hus-
band.

²³The LORD of armies, the God of
Israel, says this: Once again they
will say this in Judah's land and
cities when I've brought them back
from exile:

The LORD bless you,
home of righteousness
and holy mountain! ²⁴Judah
and all her cities will live
there together—

those who plow and those who
move around with flocks.

²⁵I will give drink to those who are
thirsty
and fill all who are starving.

²⁶Just then I woke up and looked
around. My sleep had been pleasant
to me.

A New Covenant

²⁷The time will come, says the
LORD, when I will sow Israel and
Judah with the seed of men and the
seed of cattle. ²⁸Just as I watched
over them to pluck them out and
tear them down, to wreck, ruin, and
hurt them, so now I will watch over
them to build and plant them, says

the LORD. ²⁹Then people will no
more say, "The fathers have eaten
sour grapes, and so the children's
teeth feel numb," ³⁰but everyone
will die for his own sin—everyone
who eats the sour grapes will have
his own teeth feel numb.

³¹The time will come, says the
LORD, when I will make a new
covenant with Israel and Judah.

³²It will not be like the covenant I
made with their fathers when I took
them by their hand to lead them out
of Egypt—My covenant that they
broke although I was their master,
says the LORD. ³³But this is the
covenant I will make with Israel
after those days, says the LORD: I
will put My law within them and
write it on their hearts, and so I will
be their God, and they will be My
people. ³⁴And no more will anyone
have to teach his neighbor or his
brother, and say, "Know the
LORD," because they will all know
Me, from the least to the greatest of
them says the LORD, because I will
forgive the wrong they did and not
remember their sins anymore.

³⁵The LORD who makes the sun
shine during the day
and regulates the moon and
stars to shine at night,
who stirs up the sea so that its
waves roar,
whose name is the LORD of
armies, says this:

³⁶If these fixed events were ever
to cease from My presence,
says the LORD,
then also Israel's descendants
would forever stop
being a nation in My presence.

³⁷The LORD says this:
If the heavens above could
be measured
or the foundations of the earth
below searched,

³¹⁻³² Mt
26 28,
Mk 14 24,
Lk 22 26,
1 Co 11 25,
2 Co 3 6
5 16
^{31, 34} Heb
8 8-12,
10 16-17
³⁴ Acts
13 38-39

then I would also reject all of Israel's descendants for everything they did, says the LORD.

³⁰In those days, says the LORD, the city will be rebuilt for the LORD from Hananel's Tower to the Corner Gate. ³¹The line will go on from there straight to Lepers' Hill and then turn to Goah. ³²The whole valley with its dead bodies and ashes and the whole area to the Kidron valley as far as the corner of the Horse Gate in the east will be holy and belong to the LORD. It will never be pulled up or torn down again.

Jeremiah Buys Land

32 The LORD spoke to Jeremiah in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah (it was the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar). ²The army of the king of Babylon was at that time besieging Jerusalem.

The prophet Jeremiah was kept as a prisoner in the court of the prison at the palace of the king of Judah. ³Zedekiah king of Judah had made him a prisoner and had asked him, "Why did you prophesy and say the LORD says: I'm putting this city in the hands of the king of Babylon, who will capture it. ⁴Zedekiah king of Judah will not escape from the Chaldeans but be put in the hands of the king of Babylon, and he will talk to him face to face and see him eye to eye. ⁵He will take Zedekiah to Babylon, where he'll stay till I visit him, says the LORD. Although you fight the Chaldeans, you will not win?"

⁶Jeremiah said: The LORD told me: ⁷Hanamel, the son of your uncle Shallum, is coming to tell you, "Buy my land at Anathoth because you have the right of the closest

relative to buy it." ⁸So just as the LORD said, my cousin Hanamel came to me in the court of the prison. "Please buy my field at Anathoth in Benjamin," he told me. "because you have the right to own it, the right of the closest relative. Buy it for yourself." Then I realized the LORD had spoken.

⁹I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel and weighed out the money for him, 17 shekels of silver. ¹⁰And I wrote the bill of sale, sealed it, got witnesses, and weighed the silver on the scales. ¹¹Then I took the sealed deed, containing the terms and conditions, together with the open copy. ¹²I gave the deed to Baruch son of Neriah, son of Mahseiah, in the presence of my cousin Hanamel and the witnesses who had signed the deed and in the presence of the Jews who were in the court of the prison. ¹³Then I gave Baruch an order in their presence: ¹⁴The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this: Take these deeds—this bill of sale that is sealed and the copy that is open—and put them in an earthenware jar to keep them a long time. ¹⁵The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says: Houses, fields, and vineyards will again be bought in this country.

¹⁶After I gave the deed to Baruch, Neriah's son, I prayed to the LORD: ¹⁷O Lord GOD, who made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you. ¹⁸You are kind to thousands and punish children who follow after their fathers' sins. Your name is the great and mighty God, the LORD of armies. ¹⁹great in counsel and mighty in deed. Your eyes see all the ways of men to reward each one according

to how he lives and what he deserves. ²⁰You did miracles and wonders in Egypt and they are to this day a fact in Israel and among other people, and so You made a name for Yourself as it is today. ²¹You brought Your people out of Egypt with miracles and wonders, by a strong and outstretched arm, and with great terror. ²²You gave them this land You swore to give their fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey. ²³After they went in and took it, they refused to obey You or follow Your instruction. They did nothing You ordered them to do, so You brought on them all this trouble. ²⁴See how the siege mounds come up to the city so it can be taken! By sword, famine, and plague the city will fall into the hands of the Chaldeans who are attacking it. What You said has happened as You see. ²⁵And yet You, Lord GOD, told me to buy a field with money and get witnesses, even while the city is given to the Chaldeans.

²⁶Then the LORD said to Jeremiah: "I am the LORD, the God of all men. Nothing is too hard for Me. ²⁸So the LORD says: I'm giving this city to the Chaldeans, to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon who will take it.

²⁹And the Chaldeans who are attacking this city will come in, set this city on fire, and burn it with the houses on whose roofs men have provoked Me by sacrificing to Baal and pouring out libations to other gods. ³⁰From their youth Israel and Judah have done only but what I condemn, yes, Israel has only provoked Me with what they've done, says the LORD. ³¹This city has made Me so angry and furious from the day it was built to this day I had to rid myself of it. ³²Yes, the people

of Israel and Judah have provoked Me with their wrongdoing. Their kings, princes, priests, and prophets, the men of Judah, and the people in Jerusalem ³³have turned their backs to Me instead of their faces. Although I was eager to teach them, they refused to listen and be warned. ³⁴But they set up their detestable idols in the temple called by My name, to pollute it. ³⁵They built high places for Baal in the valley of Hinnom's son to sacrifice their sons and daughters to Molech—something I didn't order. Such an abominable thing was not my idea, so as a result Judah was led into sin. ³⁶Now then, the Lord GOD of Israel says this about this city of which you say: By the sword, famine, and the plague it is given to the king of Babylon: ³⁷I'll gather them from all the countries where I will drive them in My anger and fury and great wrath, and I will bring them back to this place and have them live there without danger. ³⁸They will be My people, and I will be their God. ³⁹I will give them one heart and one way to fear Me forever for their own good and for their children's welfare after them. ⁴⁰And I will make an everlasting covenant with them in which I will never stop doing good to them, and will put reverence for Me in their hearts to keep them from leaving Me. ⁴¹It will be My delight to do them good and I will faithfully plant them in this country with all My heart and soul. ⁴²The LORD says: As I brought this whole disaster on these people, so I will bring on them all the good I promise them. ⁴³People will buy fields in this country about which you now say, "It is a barren waste, without man or animal, and given to the Chal-

³²
³⁸ 2 Co 6:16
 Rv 21:3,7

deans." "Men will buy fields for money, sign deeds, seal them, get witnesses in Benjamin, the neighborhood of Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, in the cities in the hills, in the lowlands, and in the Negev, because I will bring them back from their exile, says the LORD.

I'm Going to Restore and Heal Them

33 The LORD spoke to Jeremiah a second time while he was still a captive in the court of the prison. ²The LORD who made the world and formed it to make it stand firm, whose name is the LORD, says this: ³Call Me, and I will answer you and tell you great secrets you don't know. ⁴The LORD, the God of Israel, says this about the houses of this city and the palaces of kings of Judah that are torn down, and also about the siege mounds and swords ⁵and the men who go to fight the Chaldeans: I filled these houses with the bodies of men I struck down in My anger and fury; but even though I hid My face from this city for all their wrongs ⁶I'm going to restore and heal them. When I have healed them, I will show them a very happy and secure life. ⁷I will bring back the captives of Judah and Israel and rebuild them to be as they were at first. ⁸I will cleanse them from all their guilt and sin; I will forgive them all the wrongs they did to Me, in their rebellion against Me. ⁹This city^u will be a delight, a reason for praise, and a thing of beauty to Me before all the nations of the earth. When the nations hear of all the good things I will do to them, they will fear and tremble on

account of all the good things and all the prosperity I will provide for Jerusalem.^u

¹⁰The LORD says this: In this place about which you say, "It's a waste land where there's no man or animal," in the towns of Judah and the desolate streets of Jerusalem where there's neither man nor beast, there will again be heard ¹¹the sounds of joy and delight, the voices of a groom and a bride, and the voices of those who bring thank offerings to the LORD's temple and say, "Praise the LORD of armies because the LORD is good and kind forever." I will restore the country to what it was before, says the LORD.

¹²The LORD of armies says: In this country that is a wasteland, without man or animal, and in all its cities there will again be pastures for shepherds to let their flocks lie down to rest. ¹³In the cities of the hills, the lowlands, and the Negev, in the territory of Benjamin, the neighborhood of Jerusalem, and the towns of Judah flocks will again pass under the hands of those who count them, says the LORD. ¹⁴The time will come, says the LORD, when I will do the good thing I promised to the house of Israel and of Judah. ¹⁵In those days, at that time, I will make a righteous Branch grow for David, and He will do what is right and just in the land. ¹⁶Then Judah will be saved and Jerusalem live without danger, and the city^v will be called: The-LORD-our-righteousness. ¹⁷The LORD says this: There will not fail to be someone from David sitting on the throne of Israel. ¹⁸And there will never fail to be one of the priests descended

³³
¹¹ ¹⁰ ¹⁸ ²³

^uHeb "It" ^vHeb "she"

from Levi who will offer before Me burnt offerings, food offerings, and bring sacrifices.

¹⁹Then the LORD told Jeremiah: ²⁰The LORD says this: If you could break My covenant with the day and the night so that day and night did not come at their appointed time, ²¹then My covenant with My servant David also could be broken so that he will fail to have a descendant as a king on his throne. The same is true regarding the priests from Levi, My servants. ²²Like the stars of heaven that you can't count and the sand by the sea that you can't measure, so will I multiply My servant David's descendants and the Levites who serve Me.

²³The LORD asked Jeremiah: ²⁴Haven't you noticed what these people say: The LORD has rejected the two families He chose? So they consider My people unfit to be a nation anymore.

²⁵The LORD says: If I made no covenant with day and night or no laws for heaven and earth, ²⁶then I will also reject the descendants of Jacob and of My servant David and not take any of David's line to rule over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. No, I will bring them back from exile and love them.

Zedekiah

34 The LORD spoke to Jeremiah when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and his whole army with all the kingdoms and people of the world he ruled over were fighting against Jerusalem and all its towns: ²The LORD, the God of Israel, says, Go and tell Zedekiah king of Judah, and say to him: The LORD says this: I'm putting this city in the hands of the king of Babylon, and he will burn it down. ³You will not escape

him but certainly be captured and put in his hands, and you will see him eye to eye and talk to him face to face and go to Babylon. ⁴But hear what the LORD says, Zedekiah king of Judah. The LORD says this about you: You will not die by the sword. ⁵You will die in peace, and as they burned spices for your fathers, the former kings who were before you, so they will burn them for you and say as they mourn for you, "Oh master!" I have declared it, says the LORD.

⁶So the prophet Jeremiah told all this to Zedekiah king of Judah, in Jerusalem, ⁷while the army of the king of Babylon was fighting against Jerusalem and the cities of Judah that were left, Lachish and Azekah. These were the only fortified cities of Judah that were left.

Hebrew Slaves to be Free

⁸The LORD spoke to Jeremiah after King Zedekiah made a covenant with all the people in Jerusalem to proclaim liberty. ⁹Everyone was to free his Hebrew slaves, male and female, and no one was to have a fellow Judean serve him as a slave. ¹⁰All the princes and all the people who entered into the covenant to free their slaves, male and female, and not have them serve them as slaves anymore carried out the pledge and freed them. ¹¹But afterwards they changed their minds and brought back the men and women they freed and made them their slaves again. ¹²So the LORD spoke to Jeremiah: ¹³The LORD, the God of Israel, says this: I made a covenant with your fathers when I brought them out of Egypt where they were slaves. I said: ¹⁴Every seven years everyone of you should free his fellow Hebrew who has sold

himself to you. When he has served you six years, free him and let him leave you. But your fathers refused to obey and listen to Me. ¹³Just now you turned around and did what I judge to be right when each of you told the other he was free, and you made a covenant before Me in the temple called by My name. ¹⁴But you changed your minds and dishonored My name by bringing back the male and female slaves you had sent away to live their own lives as free men. You have forced them to be your male and female slaves again. ¹⁵And so the LORD says this: You didn't obey Me by granting freedom to your relatives and neighbors. Now I grant freedom to you, says the LORD, I will free you to the sword, plague, and famine, and I will make all the kingdoms of the world shudder at the thought of you. ¹⁶These people have broken My covenant and not kept the pledges of the covenant they made before Me when they cut a calf in two and passed between its parts. I will put ¹⁷the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, the palace officials, the priests, and all the people of the country who passed between the parts of the calf ¹⁸in the hands of their enemies who want to kill them, and their dead bodies will be eaten by the birds in the sky and the animals of the field. ¹⁹I will put Zedekiah king of Judah and his princes in the hands of their enemies who want to kill them, the army of the king of Babylon who is now leaving you. ²⁰I will give them an order, says the LORD, and bring them back to this city to attack it and take it and burn it. And I will lay waste the cities of Judah so that nobody will live there.

The Rechabites

35 The LORD spoke to Jeremiah in the days of Jehoiakim, Josiah's son, king of Judah: ²Go to the clan of Rechab and talk to them. Take them to one of the rooms in the LORD's temple and offer them a drink of wine.

³I took Jaazaniah son of Jeremiah, son of Habazziniah, his brothers, all his sons, the whole clan of Rechab, ⁴and brought them to the LORD's temple to the room of the sons of Hanan son of Igdaliah, the man of God; it was next to the room of the princes, above the room of Maaseiah, Shallum's son, the keeper of the door. ⁵Then I set before the clan of Rechab bowls full of wine with cups. "Drink wine," I told them.

⁶"We don't drink any wine," they answered, "because our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab ordered us, 'Never drink wine, you or your sons. ⁷Don't build any houses, sow any fields, sow or own any vineyards, but always live in tents, so that you may live long in the country where you are strangers.' ⁸We, our wives, sons, and daughters, have obeyed our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab in everything he ordered us to do: We never drink wine, ⁹build houses to live in, or own vineyards, land, or grainfields. ¹⁰We have lived in tents and have carefully followed everything our ancestor Jonadab ordered us to do. ¹¹But when Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon invaded the country, we said, 'Come, let us go to Jerusalem and escape the Chaldean and Aramean armies.' So we are living in Jerusalem."

¹²Then the LORD said to Jeremiah: ¹³The LORD of armies, the God of

Israel, says this: Go and tell the men of Judah and the people living in Jerusalem: Will you not take a warning and listen to what I say? It is the LORD speaking. ¹⁴Jonadab son of Rechab ordered his sons not to drink wine; his order has been conscientiously carried out. Obeying their ancestor's order, they have drunk no wine to this day, but though I have spoken to you so earnestly, you have refused to listen to Me. ¹⁵I have been prompt to send you all My servants, the prophets, to urge everyone of you to turn from his evil way, do good works, and not run after other gods to serve them, so that you might live in the country I gave you and your fathers. But you refused to listen and obey Me. ¹⁶Yes, the descendants of Jonadab, Rechab's son, have carefully done what their ancestor ordered them to do, but these people refuse to obey Me. ¹⁷And so the LORD, the God of armies, the God of Israel, says: I will bring on Judah and all who live in Jerusalem all the evil I threatened them with, because I spoke to them, but they didn't listen: I called to them, but they didn't answer.

¹⁸But Jeremiah told the clan of Rechab, "The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says: Because you obeyed your ancestor Jonadab, followed all his instructions, and did exactly as he ordered you, ¹⁹the LORD of armies, the God of Israel says: There will never fail to stand before Me a descendant of Jonadab son of Rechab."

Baruch Jeremiah's Secretary

36 In the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah, the LORD said to Jeremiah: ²Take a scroll and write on it every-

thing I told you about Israel, Judah, and all the other nations from the day I spoke to you in time of Josiah till today. ³It may be the house of Judah will take to heart all the evil I plan to do to them and so everyone will turn from his evil way and I will forgive their wrong and their sins.

⁴Then Jeremiah called Baruch son of Neriah, and as Jeremiah dictated, Baruch wrote on a scroll everything the LORD told the prophet. ⁵Then Jeremiah gave Baruch an order: "I'm prevented from coming to the LORD's temple. ⁶But on a day of fasting you go in and read to the people in the temple from the scroll the words of the LORD which you wrote as I dictated; read it also to all the people of Judah who come up from their towns. ⁷It may be they will humbly plead before the LORD, and everyone will turn from his evil way, realizing how great the anger and fury is with which the LORD has threatened these people."

⁸So Baruch son of Neriah did exactly as the prophet Jeremiah ordered him: He read in the LORD's temple from the scroll what the LORD said. ⁹In the ninth month of the fifth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah king of Judah all the people in Jerusalem and all who were coming from the towns of Judah to Jerusalem were summoned to fast before the LORD. ¹⁰As he was in the LORD's temple, in the room of the secretary Gemariah son of Shaphan in the upper court at the entrance of the new gate of the LORD's temple, Baruch read to all the people what Jeremiah had said.

¹¹When Micaiah son of Gemariah, son of Shaphan heard from the scroll everything the LORD said, ¹²he went down to the secretary's room in the king's palace, where he

found all the princes sitting—Elishama the secretary, Delaiah son of Shemaiah, Elnathan son of Achbor, Gemariah son of Shaphan, Zedekiah son of Hananiah, as well as all the other princes. ¹³Micaiah told them everything he heard Baruch read to the people from the scroll. ¹⁴Then all the princes sent Jehudi son of Nethaniah, son of Shelemiah, son of Cushi to Baruch and told him. ¹⁵“Bring the scroll from which you read to the people and come.” Baruch son of Neriah took the scroll and came to them. ¹⁶“Please sit down,” they told him, “and read it to us.”

So Baruch read it to them. ¹⁷When they had heard everything, they turned in alarm to one another. ¹⁸“We must tell the king all this,” they said to Baruch. ¹⁹“Please tell us,” they asked Baruch, “how did you write all this? Did Jeremiah dictate it?”

²⁰“He dictated all this to me,” Baruch answered them, “and I wrote it with ink on the scroll.”

²¹“Go and hide, you and Jeremiah,” the princes told Baruch. “No one must find out where you are.”

Jehoiakim Burns Jeremiah's Scroll

¹After they deposited the scroll in the room of the secretary Elishama, they went to the king in the court and reported everything to the king. ²Then the king sent Jehudi to get the scroll. He got the scroll from the room of the secretary Elishama. Then Jehudi read it to the king and all the princes standing near the king. ³It was the ninth month,^w and the king was sitting in the winter house by a fire burning in a

brazier. ⁴As often as Jehudi read three or four columns, the king would cut it off with a penknife and throw it into the fire in the brazier till the whole scroll was burned in the fire in the brazier. ⁵Neither the king nor any of his attendants showed any alarm or tore their clothes as they heard all this. ⁶Even though Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah begged the king not to burn the scroll, he refused to listen to them. ⁷The king ordered Jerahmeel the king's son, Seraiah son of Azriel, and Shelemiah son of Abdeel to arrest Baruch the secretary and the prophet Jeremiah, but the LORD kept them hidden.

⁸After the king burned the scroll on which Baruch had written what Jeremiah dictated, the LORD said to Jeremiah: ⁹“Take another scroll and write on it all that was written on the first scroll that Jehoiakim king of Judah burned. ¹⁰And say about Jehoiakim, king of Judah: The LORD says this: You burned this scroll and you said: Why did you write on it. “The king of Babylon will certainly come to destroy this country and take away men and animals.” ¹¹So the LORD says this about Jehoiakim, king of Judah: He will have no one to sit on David's throne, and his own dead body will be thrown out to be exposed to the heat of the day and the cold of the night. ¹²I will punish him, his descendants, and his attendants for their wrongs: I will bring on them, the people of Jerusalem, and the men of Judah all the evil with which I threatened them while they refused to listen.

¹³Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to the secretary

^wDecember

Baruch son of Neriah and as Jeremiah dictated, he wrote on it everything that had been on the scroll that Jehoiakim king of Judah burned, and they added to them many similar things.

Zedekiah Consults Jeremiah

37 Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made Zedekiah son of Josiah king of the land of Judah. He succeeded Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim. ²but he, his servants, and the people of the land didn't listen to what the LORD said through the prophet Jeremiah.

³But King Zedekiah sent Jehucal son of Shelemiah and the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah to the prophet Jeremiah to ask him, "Please pray to the LORD our God for us." ⁴Jeremiah was still free to go among the people and hadn't been put in prison yet. ⁵Pharaoh's army had come out of Egypt, and when the Chaldeans who were besieging Jerusalem heard the news they broke off the siege of Jerusalem.

⁶The LORD spoke to the prophet Jeremiah: ⁷The LORD, the God of Israel, says: Tell the king of Judah who sent you to Me for advice: Pharaoh's army that has come out to help you will go back home to Egypt. ⁸And the Chaldeans will come back; they will fight against the city, capture it and burn it. ⁹The LORD says: Don't deceive yourselves by thinking: The Chaldeans will certainly leave us. They will not leave. ¹⁰Even if you defeated the whole Chaldean army that's fighting against you, leaving only a few badly wounded men, each one in his tent would get up and burn down this city.

¹¹When the Chaldean army had

broken off the siege of Jerusalem because Pharaoh's army was coming. ¹²Jeremiah wanted to leave Jerusalem and go to the territory of Benjamin and take possession of his property there in presence of the people. ¹³But when he reached the gate of Benjamin a sentry on guard there, by the name of Irijah son of Shelemiah, son of Hananiah, arrested the prophet Jeremiah saying, "You're deserting to the Chaldeans!"

¹⁴"It's a lie," Jeremiah answered; "I'm not deserting to the Chaldeans." But he wouldn't listen to him. Irijah arrested Jeremiah and took him to the princes. ¹⁵The princes were so angry with Jeremiah they beat him and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the secretary, since that had been made a prison. ¹⁶Jeremiah went into the cells of a dungeon and he stayed there a long time.

¹⁷Then King Zedekiah sent men to get him, and privately in his palace he asked him, "Has the LORD said anything?"

"He has spoken," Jeremiah answered, and he added: "You will be put in the hands of the king of Babylon." ¹⁸Jeremiah then asked the king, "What wrong have I done you or your officers, or these people, that you have put me in prison? ¹⁹Where are your prophets who prophesied to you and said: The king of Babylon will not come against you and this country? ²⁰And now, my lord the king, please listen to me and let my humble pleading come before you: Don't put me back in the house of Jonathan the secretary, or I will die there."

²¹King Zedekiah then gave the order and had Jeremiah put in the court of the prison and gave him a

loaf of bread a day from the bakers' street till all the bread in the city had been eaten. So Jeremiah stayed in the court of the prison.

38 Shephatiah son of Mattan, Gedaliah son of Pashhur, Jucal son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur son of Malchiah heard Jeremiah tell all the people: "The LORD says this: Anyone who stays in this city will die by the sword, starvation, or plague, but anyone who surrenders to the Chaldeans will live; he will escape with his life and live. "The LORD says this: This city will certainly be put in the hands of the army of the king of Babylon, who will take it.

"Then the princes told the king, "Have this man put to death; he discourages the soldiers who are left in this city and all the people by telling them such things. This man is not trying to help these people but to ruin them."

"He's in your hands," King Zedekiah answered, "The king can do nothing against you."

"So they took Jeremiah and threw him into the cistern of Malchiah the king's son; it was in the court of the prison. There was no water in the cistern but only mud; Jeremiah sank into the mud.

"But Ebed-melech from Ethiopia, an official in the king's palace, heard Jeremiah was put in the cistern. "Ebed-melech left the king's palace, and said to the king, who was sitting at the Gate of Benjamin. "My lord the king, these men have done wrong in everything they did to the prophet Jeremiah: They have thrown him into the cistern, where he's starving to death be-

cause there's no more bread in the city."

"Then the king gave Ebed-melech from Ethiopia this order: "Take from here 30^a men, and lift the prophet Jeremiah out of the cistern before he dies."

"So Ebed-melech took charge of the men and went to the palace of the king and got from under the storehouse rags and torn clothes and by ropes let them down to Jeremiah in the cistern. "Ebed-melech from Ethiopia told Jeremiah, "Put these rags and torn clothes under your armpits to protect you from the ropes." Jeremiah did that. "Then with the ropes they pulled Jeremiah up and lifted him out of the cistern. And Jeremiah stayed in the court of the prison.

A Last Offer to Save Zedekiah

"Then King Zedekiah sent men to bring the prophet Jeremiah to him at the third entrance to the LORD's temple. "I'm going to ask you a question," the king said to Jeremiah. "Don't hide anything from me."

"If I speak out," Jeremiah answered Zedekiah, "you will certainly kill me, won't you? And if I give you advice, you won't listen to me."

"Then King Zedekiah secretly promised Jeremiah with an oath: "As the LORD lives who gave us our life, I will not kill you or put you in the hands of these men who want to kill you."

"The LORD, the God of armies, the God of Israel, says this," Jeremiah told Zedekiah: "If you will surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, you will live, and this city will not be burned; you and your household will live. "But if you

^aOne manuscript reads "3"

will not surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, this city will be put in the hands of the Chaldeans, who will burn it, and you will not escape from them."

¹⁹"I'm afraid of the Jews who have gone over to the Chaldeans," King Zedekiah answered Jeremiah. "I may be put in their hands to be abused."

²⁰"You will not be put in their hands," Jeremiah said. "Obey the LORD as I'm telling you; then it will be well with you, and you will live. ²¹But if you refuse to surrender, this is what the LORD has shown me: ²²All the women who are left in the palace of the king of Judah will be taken away to the officers of the king of Babylon, and these women will say:

Your friends have led you astray and had their way with you.

Now that your feet are stuck in the mud,

they desert you.

²³All your wives and children will be taken away to the Chaldeans. You will not escape them but will be captured by the king of Babylon, and this city will be burnt down."^y

²⁴"Nobody must know about this conversation," Zedekiah told Jeremiah. "otherwise you will die. ²⁵When the princes hear I've been talking to you, and they come and ask you, 'Tell us what you said to the king and what the king said to you. Don't hide anything from us or we'll kill you,' ²⁶then tell them, 'I pleaded with the king not to put me back in Jonathan's house to die there.'"

²⁷When all the princes came to Jeremiah, and questioned him, he

answered them as the king had ordered him to answer. Saying no more they left him since they hadn't heard what was said. ²⁸So Jeremiah stayed in the court of the prison till the day Jerusalem was taken.

The Fall of Jerusalem

39 This is what happened when Jerusalem was taken:

In the tenth month of the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with his whole army against Jerusalem and besieged it. ²And on the ninth day of the fourth month of the eleventh year, they broke into the city.

³Then all the officers of the king of Babylon came in and took seats in the middle gate: Nergalsharezer of Simmagir, Nebusarsechim² the chief eunuch, Nergalsharezer the chief fortune-teller, with all the rest of the officers of the king of Babylon.

⁴When Zedekiah king of Judah and all the soldiers saw them, they fled from the city at night by way of the king's garden through the gate between the two walls, then they went on the road to the Jordan valley. ⁵But the Chaldean army pursued them and caught up with Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho. They arrested him and brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, at Riblah, in the country of Hamath, where he passed a sentence on him. ⁶At Riblah the king of Babylon killed the sons of Zedekiah while he was watching. The king of Babylon also killed all the leading men of Judah. ⁷He also put out Zedekiah's eyes.

^yGk and some Heb manuscripts. Heb reads "you will burn down. . ."

²Called Nebushazban in 39:13

bound him in bronze chains, to take him to Babylon.

"The Chaldeans burned the king's palace and the people's homes and tore down the walls of Jerusalem. "The rest of the people who were left in the city and the deserters who surrendered to him and many other people Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took away captive to Babylon. "But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left in the land of Judah some poor people who had nothing, and at that time gave them vineyards and fields.

"Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon gave Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard an order concerning Jeremiah: "'Take him and look after him. Don't do him any harm, but treat him as he tells you.'" "So Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard sent Nebushazban the chief eunuch, Nergalsharezer the chief fortune-teller, and all the other chiefs of the king of Babylon "who took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison and handed him over to Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan to take him home. So he stayed among the people.

Ebed-melech Is Rewarded

"While Jeremiah was still being held in the court of the prison, the LORD had said to Jeremiah: "Go and tell Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, the LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this: When I do what I said I would to this city, evil and not good, you will see it done on that day. "But when that day comes I will save you, says the LORD. You will not be put in the hands of the men you dread, "because I will certainly save you: The sword will not strike you down; you will escape

with your life because you trusted Me, says the LORD.

Jeremiah Released

40 The LORD spoke to Jeremiah after Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard let him go at Ramah. There he had fetched Jeremiah, bound as he was with chains among all the exiles of Jerusalem; and Judah who were being taken to Babylon. "When the captain of the guard had singled him out, he told him, "The LORD your God threatened to bring this calamity to this place "and He has carried out His threat. The LORD did as He said because all of you sinned against Him and refused to obey Him; that's why this happened to you. "But now, this very day, I'm removing the chains from your hands. If you would like to go with me to Babylon, come and I'll look after you. But if you don't want to come with me to Babylon, don't do it. See, the whole country is open to you. Go anywhere you like or feel you want to go." (But Jeremiah didn't answer yet.) "Then go back to Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon put in charge of the cities of Judah, and stay with him among the people; or go anywhere you would like to go." The captain of the guard gave him a ration of food and a present and let him go. "Jeremiah went to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at Mizpeh and stayed with him among the people that were left in the land.

Gedaliah Assassinated

"When all the captains of the troops that were in the country with their men heard the king of Babylon had put Gedaliah son of Ahikam in charge of the country and entrusted

to him some of the poorest men, women and children in the country, who had not been taken away to Babylon. "they came to him at Mizpeh: Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan and Jonathan sons of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth, the sons of Ephai from Netophah, and Jezaniah son of a man from Maacah. They came with their men. "Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan assured them and their men with an oath: "Don't be afraid to be subject to the Chaldeans. Live in the land, be subject to the king of Babylon, and all will be well with you. "I'm going to live in Mizpeh to represent you before the Chaldeans who will come to us. But you should gather wine, fruit, and olive oil, and store them in containers, and live in the towns you occupy."

"Then also all the Judeans who were in Moab, among the people of Ammon, in Edom, and in all the other countries heard the king of Babylon left a remnant in Judah and put Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, in charge of them. "So all the Jews came back from all the places where they had been driven and came to Judah and to Gedaliah at Mizpeh; and they gathered a large store of wine and summer fruit.

"Johanan son of Kareah and all the captains of the troops still in the country came to Gedaliah at Mizpeh. "'Do you know," they asked him, "that Baalis king of the Ammonites, has sent Ishmael son of Nethaniah to kill you?" But Gedaliah, Ahikam's son, didn't believe them.

"Then Johanan son of Kareah secretly asked Gedaliah at Mizpeh: "Let me go and kill Ishmael son of Nethaniah and nobody will know

about it. Why should he kill you, and all the Judeans who have gathered around you be scattered, and what is left of Judah perish?"

"Don't do that," Gedaliah son of Ahikam told Johanan son of Kareah, "because what you say about Ishmael is a lie."

41 But in the seventh month Ishmael son of Nethaniah, son of Elishama, a member of the royal family and one of the king's officers, came with ten men to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at Mizpeh. While they were eating together at Mizpeh, ¹Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the ten men who were with him got up and with their swords struck down Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan; and so he assassinated the man the king of Babylon put in charge of the country. ²Ishmael also killed all the Judeans who had been with Gedaliah at Mizpeh, as well as the Chaldean soldiers who happened to be there.

"On the second day after he assassinated Gedaliah, before anyone knew of it, ³80 men came from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria with their beards shaved off, their clothes torn, and cuts on their bodies. They were bringing food offerings and incense to take them to the LORD's temple. ⁴Ishmael son of Nethaniah left Mizpeh to meet them, weeping all the way. "Come to Gedaliah son of Ahikam," he told them when he met them. ⁵But when they came to the middle of the town, Ishmael son of Nethaniah and his men killed them and threw them into a pit. ⁶But there happened to be ten of them who told Ishmael, "Don't kill us, because we have stores of wheat, barley, olive oil,

and honey buried in the fields." So he let them alone and didn't kill them with the others.

"Now the cistern into which Ishmael threw all the dead bodies of the men he killed by using Gedaliah's name was the same that King Asa made as a defense against Baasha king of Israel: Ishmael son of Nethaniah filled it with those he killed.

"Then Ishmael took away as captives all the rest of the people who were at Mizpeh. The king's daughters and all the other people who had been left at Mizpeh, whom Nebuzaradan captain of the guard had put under the control of Gedaliah son of Ahikam, Ishmael son of Nethaniah, took captive and left to cross over the people of Ammon.

"But when Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers who were with him heard of all the crimes done by Ishmael son of Nethaniah ^{5, 7, 9, 15} they took all their men and went to fight with Ishmael son of Nethaniah, and caught up with him at the great pool in Gibeon. "When all the people who were with Ishmael saw Johanan son of Kareah and the army officers who were with him, they were delighted. "And the people Ishmael had taken captive turned around and went back to Johanan son of Kareah. "But Ishmael son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men and fled to the people of Ammon.

"Then Johanan, son of Kareah, and all the army officers who were with him took from Mizpeh the survivors they rescued from Ishmael after he had killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam. All whom Johanan brought back from Gibeon, soldiers, men, women, children and the officials "left and stayed at Chincham's inn,

near Bethlehem, intending to go on to Egypt. "They were now afraid of the Chaldeans, seeing that Ishmael son of Nethaniah had killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam whom the king of Babylon had put in charge of the country.

"Don't Go to Egypt!"

42 Then all the army officers, including Johanan son of Kareah and Jezaniah son of Hoshai and all the people from the least to the greatest came to Jeremiah, and said to him, "Please grant our request and pray to the LORD your God for us, for all who are left here—as you see we are only a few left of many people—that the LORD your God will tell us where to go and what to do."

"I will do what you say," the prophet Jeremiah answered them. "I will pray to the LORD your God as you say and tell you everything the LORD answers you. I won't keep anything from you."

"May the LORD be a true and faithful witness against us," they told Jeremiah, "if we don't do exactly as the LORD your God tells us through you. "Whether it be good or bad, we will obey the LORD our God to whom we now send you, so that it will be well with us; yes, we will obey the LORD our God."

"After ten days the LORD spoke to Jeremiah. "Then he called Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers that were with him and all the people from the least to the greatest. "He said, "The LORD, the God of Israel, to whom you sent me humbly to plead with Him says this: "If you stay in this country, I will build you up and not tear you down. I will plant you and not pluck you up, because I am sorry over the

harm I've done you. "Don't be afraid of the king of Babylon whom you fear now. Don't be afraid of him, says the LORD—I'm with you to save you and rescue you from him. "I will make him merciful to you so he will let you live in your own country. "But if you say, 'We will not live in this country,' and so you refuse to listen to the LORD your God, "and say, 'No, we'll go to Egypt where we don't have to see war, hear a trumpet, or be hungry for food, and there we'll stay.' "then you, remnant of Judah, listen to what the LORD says. The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this: If you're determined to go to Egypt and you go to stay there, "then the sword you fear will catch up with you there in Egypt, and the famine you dread will dog your footsteps there in Egypt, and you will die there. "Then all the men who decided to go to Egypt to stay there will die by the sword, famine, and plague, and none of them will be left or escape from the doom I will bring on them. "The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this: Just as My anger and My fury were poured out on the people living in Jerusalem, so My fury will be poured out on you when you go to Egypt. You will be condemned and made a horrible example, cursed and insulted; and you will never see this place again. "Remnant of Judah, the LORD tells you, 'Don't go to Egypt.' You must realize I warn you today: "You will pay for your error with your lives because you sent me to the LORD your God and said, 'Pray to the LORD your God for us, and tell us exactly what the LORD our God says, and we will do it.' "I tell you today, but you refuse to obey the LORD your God in anything He sent

me to tell you. "Now then, you must know that the sword, famine, and plague will kill you at the place where you want to go and live."

The Remnant Flees to Egypt

43 When Jeremiah finished telling all the people everything the LORD their God said, everything the LORD their God sent him to tell them, "then Azariah son of Hoshaiiah and Johanan son of Kareah and all those defiant men told Jeremiah, "You're telling a lie. The LORD our God didn't send you to say, 'Don't go to Egypt to live there.' "But Baruch son of Neriah is stirring you up against us to put us in the hands of the Chaldeans so they will kill us or take us captive to Babylon."

"Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers and all the people refused to obey the LORD and stay in Judah. "And Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers, took all who were left of Judah, all who had come back from the places where they had been driven to stay in Judah: "the men, women, children, princesses and every person whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, including the prophet Jeremiah and Baruch son of Neriah. "So they came to Egypt because they refused to obey the LORD, and they arrived at Tahpanhes.

"Then the LORD spoke to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes: "Take some large stones and bury them in mortar in the brick pavement at the entrance of Pharaoh's palace in Tahpanhes while the men of Judah watch you. "Tell them: The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, said this: I'm sending for My servant

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. and I will set up his throne over these stones I buried and spread his canopy above them. "He will come and defeat Egypt. Whoever must die will die; whoever must be exiled will be exiled; and whoever must be struck with the sword will be struck with the sword. "And I will set fire to the temples of Egypt's gods. He will burn down the temples and take away the idols. He will clean Egypt as a shepherd cleans his garment of vermin. He will leave there only when he is finished. "At the Temple-of-the-sun He will break the obelisks in Egypt and burn down the temples of Egypt's gods.

Jeremiah's Last Prophecy

44 The LORD spoke to Jeremiah about all the Judeans living in Egypt, at Migdol, Tahpanhes, Noph, and in the land of Pathros: "The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this: You have seen the calamity I brought on Jerusalem and all the other cities of Judah. Today they are ruins where nobody lives 'because of the wickedness of those who provoked Me by going to worship other gods that neither you nor your fathers knew. "I was prompt to send you all My servants, the prophets. "Don't do this abominable thing that I hate," I said. "But they didn't obey or listen, nor did they turn from their wickedness and stop sacrificing to other gods. "So My fury and anger were poured out and continued to blaze in the cities of Judah and on the streets of Jerusalem, and they became the desolate ruins and barren wastes, as they are today. "And now, the LORD, the God of armies, the God of Israel, asks this: Why do you bring this great doom on yourselves? Why

destroy men and women, children and babes from Judah until none are left? "This is what happens when you provoke Me by sacrificing to other gods in Egypt where you have come to live. So you will destroy yourselves and be cursed and scorned among all the nations of the earth? "Have you forgotten the wickedness of your ancestors, of the kings of Judah and their wives, and of you and your wives in Judah and on the streets of Jerusalem? "To this day nobody feels contrite or afraid or lives according to My laws and My statutes that I laid before them and their ancestors. "And so the LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this: I'm determined to bring disaster on you and destroy all Judah. "I will remove those who are left of Judah, who were determined to come to Egypt to live: in Egypt they will all be wiped out. The sword will strike them down, and the famine will consume them: yes, the sword and famine will kill them from the least to the greatest. They will be a thing condemned, a horrible example, cursed, and scorned. "I will punish those living in Egypt as I punished Jerusalem by the sword, famine, and plague. "None of the remnant of Judah who came to Egypt to live will survive to go back to Judah where they long to return and live: only a few fugitives will go back there.

"Then all the men who knew their wives were making offerings to other gods and all the women who stood there, a great assembly of people who lived in Pathros in Egypt, answered Jeremiah. "'We will not listen to what you tell us in the LORD's name. "But we will do everything we have vowed to do: making offerings to the queen of

heaven and pouring out libations to her, just as we and our fathers, our kings and princes did in the cities of Judah and on the streets of Jerusalem. We had plenty to eat then and were comfortable and saw no disaster. ¹⁶But since we stopped our offerings to the queen of heaven and pouring out libations to her, we have nothing and the sword and the famine consumes us."

¹⁹And the women said, "When we made offerings to the queen of heaven and poured out libations to her, and made cakes for her with her image on them, do you think it was without the approval of our husbands?"

²⁰Then Jeremiah said to all the people, men and women, all who were answering him: ²¹"Doesn't the LORD remember how you made offerings in the cities of Judah and on the streets of Jerusalem, you, your fathers, your kings and princes, and the people of the country, doesn't He recall it? ²²The LORD could no longer bear the wicked and abominable things you did, that is why your country is in ruins, a horrible example, and a cursed place where nobody lives, as it is today. ²³You made your offerings and sinned against the LORD and refused to listen to Him: you didn't live according to His law, statutes, and decrees. That is why you have met with this disaster as it is today."

²⁴Then Jeremiah said to all the people, especially the women: All you people of Judah who are in Egypt, listen to what the LORD says. ²⁵The LORD of armies, the God of Israel says this: You and your wives make promises with your mouths and with your hands you keep them, and say, "We will certainly do what we vow: making offerings to the

queen of heaven and pouring out libations to her." Yes, of course, keep your vows and do what you vow! ²⁶Hear then what the LORD says, all you people of Judah who live in Egypt: I swear by My great name, says the LORD: No Judean who is anywhere in Egypt will ever again call on My name and say, "As the Lord GOD lives!" ²⁷I am watching to bring evil on them and not good: the sword and famine will consume everyone from Judah who is in Egypt till they are all gone. ²⁸A few men will escape the sword and go back from Egypt to Judah. Then all the remnant of Judah who came to Egypt to live will know whether what I say or what they say comes true. ²⁹This is how you will know, says the LORD: I will punish you in this place; you will know that when I threaten you with evil it comes true. ³⁰The LORD says this: I will deliver Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt over to his enemies and to those who want to kill him, just as I delivered Zedekiah king of Judah to his enemy, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and to those who wanted to kill him.

45 The prophet Jeremiah spoke to Baruch son of Neriah when he wrote these things on a scroll, as Jeremiah dictated, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah: ²The LORD, the God of Israel, says this about you, Baruch: ³You said, "I'm miserable because the LORD has added grief to my pain. I'm worn out with groaning. I can find no rest." ⁴Tell him: The LORD says this: I will tear down what I built; I will pluck up what I planted, that is, the whole earth. ⁵And you! Are you looking for great things for yourself? Don't look for

them, because I'm bringing disaster on all people, says the LORD. But wherever you go I will let you escape with your life.

Prophecies Against the Nations

46 The LORD spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about the nations.

Egypt

²This is about Egypt; that is about the army of Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt at Carchemish by the river Euphrates, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah.

³Get ready with your small and large shields:
advance into battle!

⁴Hitch horse to chariot;
drivers mount your chariots!
Stand ready, with helmet on!
Polish the spears!
On with your armor!

⁵Why do I even look at it?
They are shattered!
They turn back!
Their warriors are crushed.
They run away without looking back!
Around them is terror, says the LORD.

⁶The fastest can't get away;
even a hero can't escape.
In the north, by the Euphrates river
they stumble and fall.

⁷Who is this rising like the Nile,
like its streams and their turbulent waters?

⁸Egypt is like the rising Nile
and like the turbulent waters of its streams.

"I will rise," he says, "and cover the earth.

I will destroy towns and the people in them."

⁹Forward with the horses!
Drive chariots like mad!
March out, you fighting men—
you men of Cush and Put
who handle shields,
and you men of Lud
who handle the bow!

¹⁰That will be the day of the Lord,
the LORD of armies,
a day of vengeance
when He will avenge Himself on His enemies.
The sword will devour till it has had enough
and is drunk with their blood.
The Lord, the LORD of armies,
will make a sacrifice
in the north country by the Euphrates river.

¹¹Go up to Gilead and get balm,
virgin daughter of Egypt!
In vain you have used so many medicines
but you can't be healed.

¹²The nations have heard how you were disgraced;
your cry has sounded through the whole world,
one warrior stumbled over another
and both fell together.

¹³The LORD told the prophet Jeremiah how Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon would defeat Egypt:

¹⁴Tell it in Egypt, announce it in Migdol,
proclaim it in Memphis and in Tahpanhes.
Say: Stand and get ready
because the sword devours those around you.

¹⁵Why is your bull-god lying on the ground?
He doesn't stand because the LORD has pushed him down.

- ¹⁶He has frequently stumbled,
but now he has fallen.
Each person says to the other,
"Get up and let us go back to our
people,
to the country where we were
born
and away from the oppressor's
sword."
- ¹⁷This is the title of Pharaoh king
of Egypt:
A-big-noise-who-missed-his-
chance.
- ¹⁸As I live, says the King,
whose name is the LORD of ar-
mies,
someone will come who is like
Tabor among the hills,
like Carmel by the sea.
- ¹⁹Get your baggage ready for
exile.
O native daughter of Egypt,
because Memphis will become a
dreary waste,
charred ruins where nobody
lives.
- ²⁰Egypt is a pretty heifer;
but a gadfly from the north has
lit on her.
- ²¹Also her hired soldiers are like
calves in their stalls
—yes, they also have all turned
and fled
without making a stand;
for the day of their doom has
come
and it is time for them to be
punished.
- ²²Egypt sounds like a hissing
snake
when her enemy comes with an
army
to attack her with axes like
wood-cutters.
- ²³They will cut down her forest,
says the LORD,
- though it is impenetrable,
because there are more of them
than locusts;
they can't be counted.
- ²⁴The daughter of Egypt is dis-
graced,
she is put in the hands of a
people from the north.
- ²⁵The LORD of armies, the God of
Israel, says:
I will punish Amon god of
Thebes,
Egypt with her gods and her
kings,
Pharaoh and those who trust in
him.
- ²⁶I'll turn them over to those who
want to kill them,
to the hands of Nebuchadnezzar
king of Babylon and his offi-
cers;
and yet later she will live in
peace as she did long ago,
says the LORD.
- ²⁷But don't be afraid, My servant
Jacob,
or terrified, Israel,
because I will bring you back
from a distant country
and your children from the
country where they are exiles.
Then Jacob will again have un-
disturbed peace,
and no one will frighten him.
- ²⁸Don't be afraid, My servant
Jacob;
it is the LORD who says: I am
with you
and I will destroy all the nations
where I've driven you,
but I will not destroy you.
I will be fair when I discipline
you
but I will not let you go unpun-
ished.

The Philistines

47 The LORD spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about the Philistines before Pharaoh defeated Gaza. ¹The LORD said this:

See the water rising from the north
and becoming a rushing torrent.
It overflows the land and everything in it,
the cities and the people living there.

Men shriek and all who live in the land howl

²at the sound of the tramping of the hoofs of their war horses,
the rattling of their chariots,
and the rumble of their wheels:
Fathers desert their children,
because their hands go limp.

³The day has come, to take spoil from all the Philistines,
to cut off from Tyre and Sidon any Philistine who might have escaped to get help,
because the LORD will make spoil of the Philistines,
and any who are left from the island of Crete.

⁴Gaza has become bald;
Ashkelon is destroyed.
O remnant of their plain,
how long will you slash yourselves?

⁵O sword of the LORD,
how long will you refuse to be quiet?
Go back into your scabbard.
Rest there and be still!

⁶How can it be at peace
when the LORD has given it an order
and appointed it to go against Ashkelon and the seacoast?

^aHeb uncertain

Moab

48 About Moab: The LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this:

Woe to Nebo because it has been plundered.

Kiriathaim is disgraced and captured.

The mountain retreat is disgraced and crushed.

¹Moab's glory is gone.

At Heshbon evil was planned against her:

"Come, let us destroy her so she will no longer be a nation!"

Madmen, you also will be silenced:

the sword will pursue you.

²There is a cry from Horonaim:

"Plunder and a great destruction!"

³Moab is destroyed:

her little ones have cried out.

⁴Weeping people go up the ascent of Luhith

because they have heard in the descent of Horonaim
this distressful cry of destruction:

⁵"Flee, save yourselves or you will be like dry scrub in the desert."

⁶Because you trusted in your works

and in your treasures,
you also will be captured:

Chemosh will go into exile
with all his priests and princes.

⁷The destroyer will come to every city,

and no city will escape.

The valley will be destroyed,

and the plateau will be laid waste

as the LORD has said.

⁸Give Moab warning.^a

- because she is about to be destroyed;
her cities will become ruins so that nobody will live there.
- ¹⁰Cursed is anyone who is negligent in doing the LORD's work!
Cursed is anyone who holds back his sword from shedding blood.
- ¹¹Feeling secure from his youth, Moab is a wine that has stood undisturbed,
since it has not been poured from one jar to another.
He has not gone into exile, so his flavor has stayed the same,
and his aroma hasn't changed.
- ¹²The time will come, says the LORD,
when I will send men to tilt him, empty his jars,
and smash his pitchers.
- ¹³Then Chemosh will be a disappointment to Moab
as (the idols of) Bethel were a disappointment to the people of Israel who trusted them.
- ¹⁴How can you say, "We are heroes and mighty warriors?"
- ¹⁵The destroyer of Moab and her cities has come up,
her finest young men have gone down to be slaughtered!
The King whose name is the LORD of armies says this:
- ¹⁶Moab's doom is near and coming;
calamity is coming to him fast.
- ¹⁷Mourn over him all you who are around him
and all who know his name:
- say, "Look the strong staff,
the beautiful rod is broken!"
- ¹⁸O daughter of Dibon,
come down from your glory,
sit in a thirsty land
because the destroyer of Moab comes up against you;
he destroys your fortifications.
- ¹⁹You who live in Aroer,
stand by the road and watch.
Ask him who's fleeing and her who's escaping,
"What has happened?"
- ²⁰Moab is in disgrace; it is crushed!
Wail and cry.
Tell the news in Arnon that Moab is plundered."
- ²¹Judgment has come on the plateau, on Holon, Jahzah, Mephaath,
²²Dibon, Nebo, Beth-diblathaim,
²³Kiriathaim, Beth-gamul, Bethmeon, ²⁴Kerioth, Bozrah, and on all the towns of Moab, far and near.
- ²⁵Moab's horn is cut off,
and his arm is broken,
says the LORD.
- ²⁶Make him drunk;
he has boasted against the LORD.
Moab will splash in his vomit and be laughed at too.
- ²⁷Didn't you laugh at Israel?
Was he caught among thieves that you shake your head whenever you talk of him?
- ²⁸You people who live in Moab,
leave the cities,
and live among the cliffs,
and be like doves making their nests
in the sides of the-mouth of a gorge.
- ²⁹We have heard about Moab's pride:

he's very proud. He's lofty,
haughty, arrogant,
and lordly.

²⁰I know how arrogant he is, says
the LORD,
and there's no reason for it;
he brags and doesn't do what he
says.

³¹And so I wail over Moab
and cry for all Moab;
there is moaning for the people
of Kir-heres.

²²More than anyone wept for
Jazer
I weep for you, vine of Sibmah.
Your branches reach to the sea
and stretch to the pool of Jazer.
The plunderer will pounce on
your summer fruits
and your grape harvest.

²³Joy and gladness will vanish
from Moab's garden land.
I will stop the wine flowing from
the winepresses.
Nobody will tread the grapes
with shouting; there will be no
shouting.

²⁴The cry will be heard from
Heshbon to Elealeh, even to Jahaz,
from Zoar to Horonaim and Eglath-
shelishiyah, because even the water
of Nimrim will dry up. ²⁵I will stop
anyone in Moab who comes up to a
high place, says the LORD, anyone
who brings offerings to his gods.
²⁶So my heart wails for Moab like a
flute; my heart wails like a flute for
the men of the Kir-heres, because
the wealth they gained is lost.

²⁷Every head is shaved, and every
beard cut off. There are gashes on
every hand and sackcloth on their
waists. ²⁸On all the housetops of
Moab and in its squares, every-
where there will be mourning be-
cause I will break Moab like a jar
nobody wants, says the LORD.
²⁹They wail, "Is Moab crushed?

Does Moab turn his back in shame!"
All the people around Moab scorn
him as a thing of horror.

⁴⁰The LORD says this:
Like a vulture he will swoop
down
and spread his wings over
Moab.

⁴¹The cities will be taken,
and the fortified places cap-
tured.

On that day, the hearts of
Moab's soldiers will be
like the heart of a woman in
childbirth.

⁴²Moab will be destroyed
and no longer be a people
because he boasted against the
LORD.

⁴³Terror, a pit, and a trap
are for you who live in Moab,
says the LORD.

⁴⁴He who runs away from terror
will fall into the pit,
and he who gets out of the pit
will be caught in the trap,
because I will bring on Moab
the year when he will be pun-
ished, says the LORD.

⁴⁵Those who flee will stand ex-
hausted in the shadow of
Heshbon,
but a fire will come out of
Heshbon
and a flame from Sihon;
it will devour the foreheads of
Moab
and the brows of men shouting
their battle-cry.

⁴⁶Woe to you, Moab!
You people of Chemosh will per-
ish,
because your sons will be taken
away into exile.

⁴⁷But I will restore Moab in the
last time, says the LORD.
Here ends the verdict on Moab.

Ammon

49 About the people of Ammon:
The LORD says this:

Doesn't Israel have any sons?
Or any heirs?

Why, then, has Milcom taken
over Gad's inheritance
and why do his people live in the
towns of Gad?

²So look, a time will come, says
the LORD,

when I will raise a war cry
against Rabbah of the people
of Ammon

and it will become a dreary heap
of ruins

and the villages depending on
her will be burned.

Then Israel will take the posses-
sions of those who took his
possessions,
says the LORD.

³Wail, Heshbon, because Ai is
destroyed.

Cry, daughters of Rabbah, put
on your sackcloth and mourn;
run back and forth between the
walls,

because Milcom goes into exile
with all his princes and priests.

⁴Why do you brag about your
strength,^b

your strength is flowing away,
you unfaithful daughter?

You trust in your stored up sup-
plies,

saying, "Who dares come
against me?"

⁵I will bring terror against you
from all around,

says the Lord, the LORD of ar-
mies.

You will be driven away,

everyone in headlong flight
with nobody to rally the fugi-
tives.

⁶But afterwards I will restore the
people of Ammon, says the
LORD.

Edom

⁷About Edom: The LORD of ar-
mies says this:

Is there no more wisdom in
Teman?

Have the wise men lost their
advice?

Has their wisdom vanished?

⁸Flee, turn around,
retreat to remote places and
stay there,

you people living in Dedan,
because I will bring about
Esau's doom,

a time when I will punish him.

⁹If those who gather grapes come
to you,

they leave nothing to glean;
if robbers come at night,
they loot till they're satisfied.

¹⁰Yes, I will strip Esau.

I will reveal his hiding-places
so he can't hide.

His children and relatives will
be destroyed.

None of his neighbors will say,^c

¹¹"Leave your orphans, I will keep
them alive;

and as for your widows you can
trust me."

¹²The LORD says this: If those
who aren't sentenced to drink the
cup drink it, should you go unpun-
ished? You will not go unpunished
but must drink it. "I swear by My-
self, says the LORD, Bozrah will be-
come a horrible example; it will be
scorned, laid in ruins, and cursed.

^bOr "valleys" ^cVersions: Heb omits "will say"

and all the towns depending on her will be ruins forever.

¹⁴I hear a message from the LORD.

A messenger is sent among the nations:
Gather, and march against her.
Get ready for battle.

¹⁵I will make you small among the nations
and despised among men.

¹⁶While you terrify others,
you deceive yourself with pride.
You who live in the clefts of the rock
and hold the height of the hill.
Even though you build your nest
as high as the eagle,
I will bring you down from there,
says the LORD.

¹⁷Then Edom will become a horrible example.
Everyone who passes by her will be appalled
at all the blows struck at her.

¹⁸It will be like Sodom and Gomorrah
when they were overthrown
with their neighboring towns,
says the LORD.
Nobody will live there,
and no human being will stay there.

¹⁹It will be like a lion coming up
from the jungle of the Jordan
into a pasture land.
Yes, in a moment I will drive them from their place
and whoever I choose I'll appoint over it.
Who is like Me,
and who will challenge Me;
is there any shepherd who can face Me?

²⁰Therefore hear what the LORD is planning against Edom
and what He intends to do against the people living in Teman:

Even the little ones of the flock will be dragged away,
and the flock will be amazed at what is happening to them.

²¹The news of their downfall will make the earth quake,
and the noise of their crying will be heard at the Red Sea.^d

²²He will come up like a vulture; swoop down and spread his wings against Bozrah.
On that day fighting men of Edom
will feel like women in childbirth.

Damascus

²³About Damascus:
Hamath and Arpad are disheartened
by bad news they have heard.
They are panic-stricken.
They are in a sea of trouble
that can't be calmed.

²⁴Feeling weak, Damascus turns to flee.

Panic seizes her;
anguish and pains grip her
like a woman having a child.

²⁵How is it that the famous city is deserted,
that happy city?

²⁶Her young men fall in her squares,
and all her fighting men will be silenced that day,
says the LORD of armies.

²⁷I will light a fire within the walls of Damascus
that will burn down Benhadad's palaces.

^dThat is, the gulf of Aqaba

Kedar and Hazor

²⁸About Kedar and Hazor's kingdom that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon defeated:

The LORD says this:

Get ready, attack Kedar, and plunder the people of the east.

²⁹Their tents and their flocks will be captured;

their tent-curtains, all their equipment, and camels will be taken away.

A cry goes out about them:

"There's terror all around!"

³⁰Flee, wander hopelessly, go to live in remote places, you people who live in Hazor, says the LORD.

Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has made a plan against you

and intends to attack you.

³¹Get ready, attack a nation living comfortably

and fearing no danger, says the LORD.

Without gates or bars they live by themselves.

³²Their camels will be taken as prey

and their many cattle as spoil.

I will scatter to the winds those who clip their hair at the temples,

and from every direction I will bring doom on them,

says the LORD.

³³Hazor will be a place where jackals stay,

forever a dreary waste.

Nobody will live there,

and no human being will stay there.

Elam

³⁴The LORD spoke to the prophet

Jeremiah about Elam when Zedekiah started to rule as king of Judah.

³⁵The LORD of armies says this:

I will break Elam's bow, their main strength.

³⁶I will bring against Elam four winds

from the four corners of the sky and scatter them to all these winds

so that there will be no nation to which the outcasts of Elam will not come.

³⁷I will crush Elam before their enemies

and those who want to kill them.

I will bring evil on them—

My flaming fury, says the LORD.

And I will send the sword after them till I make an end of them.

³⁸I will set My throne in Elam

and get rid of the king and the princes,

says the LORD.

³⁹But in the last time I will restore Elam, says the LORD.

Babylon

50 The word the LORD spoke by the prophet Jeremiah about Babylon the country of the Chaldeans:

¹Tell this among the nations and announce it.

Set up a sign and announce it.

Don't conceal it:

Babylon will be taken!

Bel is in disgrace;

Marduk is broken-hearted!

Babylon's images are in disgrace;

her idols are broken-hearted!

²A people from the north will come against her

and destroy her land

so that nobody will live in it.

People and animals will flee and be gone.

⁴In those days and at that time, says the LORD, Israel will come and Judah with them.

They will weep as they come and look for the LORD their God.

⁵They will ask for the road to Zion and turn that way. They will come and bind themselves to the LORD in an everlasting covenant that will not be forgotten.

⁶My people were lost sheep. Their shepherds misled them; they led them astray on the mountains, where they've gone from hill to hill and forgotten their resting place.

⁷All who find them devour them, and their enemies say, "We are not to blame because they have sinned against the LORD." The LORD, who was the hope of their fathers, is a rich pasture land.

⁸Flee from Babylon, and leave the country of the Chaldeans. Behave like rams who lead the flock.

⁹I will stir up against Babylon a horde of great nations from the north, who will line up against her. From there they will come and capture her. Their arrows will be like a skillful warrior

who doesn't come back empty-handed.

¹⁰The Chaldeans will become a prey. All who plunder her will get everything they want, says the LORD.

¹¹Although you are glad and triumph, you who plunder my heritage, although you jump like a calf on the grass and neigh like a stallion,

¹²your mother will be bitterly disappointed; she who bore you will be disgraced. See, as the tail end of the nations you will become a wilderness, a parched ground, and a desert.

¹³Because the LORD is angry, nobody will live there, and it will be completely forsaken. Everyone who passes by Babylon will shudder and whistle in amazement at all her wounds.

¹⁴Line up around Babylon, all you who bend a bow, shoot at her, don't save any arrows, because she has sinned against the LORD.

¹⁵Shout a war cry over her on every side—she'll give up. Her buttresses will fall and her walls be torn down. Since this is the LORD's vengeance, take vengeance on her; do to her as she has done to others.

⁵⁰
E 2 Co 6:17
Rv 18:4

¹⁶Kill in Babylon every man who sows
and him who handles a sickle in the harvest.
When the sword of the oppressor threatens,
everyone will go back to his own people
and flee to his own country.

¹⁷Israel is a sheep that has been driven away
and chased by lions. First the king of Assyria devoured him,
and now at last Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has gnawed his bones.

¹⁸That is why the LORD of armies, the God of Israel, says this:
I will punish the king of Babylon and his country
as I punished the king of Assyria;

¹⁹and I will bring Israel back to his pasture,
and he will feed on Carmel and Bashan,
and his hunger will be satisfied on the hills of Ephraim and Gilead.

²⁰In those days and at that time, says the LORD,
people will search for Israel's wrongs, but there will be none,
and for Judah's sins, but none will be found,
because I will forgive the people whom I preserve.

The Fall of Babylon

²¹Go up against the country of Merathaim
and against the people living in Pekod.
Put them to the sword and completely destroy them, says the LORD.

Do just as I order you.

²²The noise of battle and of a great destruction fills the land.

²³How is it that the hammer of all the earth is now cut and broken in pieces?
How is it that Babylon is a horrible example to all the nations?

²⁴I will lay a snare for you, Babylon,
and you will be caught without knowing it.
You will be discovered and captured
because you have gone to war with the LORD.

²⁵The LORD will open his armory and bring out the weapons He punishes with when He's angry,
because the Lord, the LORD of armies,
has a job to do in the country of the Chaldeans.

²⁶Come against her from everywhere,
open her granaries,
pile up the loot like heaps of grain,
and destroy them completely, without leaving anything.

²⁷Destroy all her young bulls;
let them go down to be slaughtered.
Woe to them because their day has come,
the time when they will be punished.

²⁸There is a noise of men fleeing and escaping from the land of Babylon
to tell in Zion how the LORD our God takes vengeance,
vengeance for His temple.

²⁸Call up archers against Babylon,
all who bend a bow.
Besiege her all around;
don't let anyone escape.
Pay her back for her deeds:
do to her just as she has done.
By her unrestrained pride she
has insulted the LORD,
the holy One of Israel.

²⁹For that her young men will fall
in her squares,
and all her fighting men will be
silenced that day, says the
LORD.

³¹I'm against you, you proud one,
says the Lord, the LORD of ar-
mies.
Your day has come,
the time for you to be punished.

³²Then the proud one will stumble
and fall,
and there will be nobody to help
her get up.
I will light a fire in her cities
that will consume all who are
around her.

²⁹ Nu 18:6
³⁴ Nu 18:9
³⁸ Nu 16:12

The Redeemer of Israel

³³The LORD of armies says this:
The people of Israel and of
Judah are all oppressed;
those who took them away as
exiles
hold them firmly and refuse to
let them go.

³⁴But their Redeemer is strong
and is called the LORD of ar-
mies.
He will certainly defend them
and give rest to the earth
but unrest to the people of Bab-
ylon.

³⁵A sword comes against the
Chaldeans,
says the LORD,
against those living in Babylon,
against her princes and wise
men.

³⁶A sword comes against the
fortune-tellers
to make them fools.

A sword comes against her
soldiers to crush them.

³⁷a sword against their horses
and chariots,
against all the foreign troops
that are within her,
to make them like women.

A sword comes against her
treasures
so they will be looted.

³⁸a sword against her waters,
to dry them up.
It is a land of images,
and with their horrible idols
they delude themselves.

³⁹That is why the wild cats will
live there
with the jackals and ostriches,
but people will never live there
again
or dwell there throughout the
ages.

⁴⁰As when God overthrew Sodom
and Gomorrah
with their neighbors, says the
LORD,
nobody will live there,
and no human being will ever
stay there again.

⁴¹A people will come from the
north,
and many kings will rise from
the distant places of the earth.

⁴²They will take hold of bow and
spear:
they will be cruel and show no
mercy.
They sound like the sea when it
roars.
They will ride on horses.
They are ready for war,
ready to attack you, daughter of
Babylon.

⁴¹When the king of Babylon hears about them,

his hands will become feeble.
Anguish will grip him
and pains like a woman giving birth to a child.

⁴²The enemy will be like a lion coming up from the jungle of the Jordan

into a pasture land;
yes. I will suddenly drive them away

and appoint someone I choose to be in charge of the place.

Who is like Me?

Who will challenge Me?

Is there any shepherd who can stand up to Me?

⁴³For that reason listen

to what the LORD is planning against Babylon
and what He intends to do against the country of the Chaldeans.

They will certainly drag them away.

even the youngest of the flock,
and the flock will be shocked to see it.

⁴⁴The news, "Babylon is taken," will make the world tremble as her cry is heard among the nations.

War Against Babylon

51 The LORD says this:
I will stir up against Babylon,
and against the people of Levkamai,^e
a destructive wind.

¹I will send winnowers to Babylon
to winnow her and strip her land bare.

They will attack her from every direction

on her day of trouble.

²Lament the archer who must string his bow.

Lament him who must put on his coat of mail.

Don't spare her young soldiers.
Completely destroy her whole army.

³They'll fall slaughtered in the land of the Chaldeans:

they'll fall down pierced in her streets.

⁴Israel and Judah haven't been left a widow by their God, the LORD of armies, but the land of the Chaldeans is full of guilt toward the holy One of Israel.

⁵Flee from Babylon;

save your life everyone;
don't perish through her guilt;
this is the time for the LORD to avenge Himself,
to pay her back in full.

⁷Babylon was a golden cup in the LORD's hand.

She made the whole world drunk.

The nations have drunk of her wine

and have gone mad.

⁸But Babylon will suddenly fall
and be shattered.

Wail over her.

Take balm for her pain;
perhaps she can be healed.

⁹We meant to heal Babylon,
but she isn't healed.

Leave her, and let each of us go to his country.

because the wrong for which she is condemned

reaches to heaven
and rises to the skies.

51
6 Rv 14.7.
18.10
7 Rv 14.8.
17.2. 4.
18.3
8 Rv 14.8.
18.2. 9. 10
9 Rv 18.5

^emeaning, "The-heart-of-my-enemies" a name for "the Chaldeans"

¹⁰The LORD will show how right we are.

Come and let us tell in Zion what the LORD our God will do.

¹¹Polish the arrows and fill the quivers. The LORD will stir up the spirit of the kings of the Medes because He is planning to destroy Babylon; that is how the LORD will avenge His temple.

¹²Set up a standard against the walls of Babylon; strengthen the guard; post sentries; prepare an ambush. The LORD has planned and done what He said he would do to the people living in Babylon.

¹³You who live beside plentiful water and are rich in treasures, your end has come, and also the end of your plundering.

¹⁴The LORD of armies swears by Himself: Though I once filled you with men, swarming like locusts, now men will shout in triumph over you.

¹⁵He made the earth by His power,^f set up the world by His skill, and stretched out the heavens by His intelligence.

¹⁶When He thunders, a storm of water appears in the sky. He makes vapors rise from the end of the earth, makes lightning flash for the rain,

and brings out wind from His storehouses.

¹⁷Every man shows himself brutish and ignorant. Every goldsmith should be ashamed because his idols are a lie; they have no breath in them.

¹⁸They are nothing, a joke. The time is set when they'll vanish.

¹⁹But what Jacob has as his Portion isn't like them, because He made everything, and Israel is the tribe that belongs to Him. The LORD of armies is His name.

The LORD's Weapon

²⁰You are My war club and weapon.

With you I smash nations; with you I destroy kingdoms;

²¹with you I smash horses and their riders; with you I smash chariots and their drivers;

²²with you I smash men and women; with you I smash the old and the young; with you I smash vigorous young men and girls;

²³with you I smash shepherds and their flocks; with you I smash farmers and their teams; with you I smash governors and deputies.

²⁴Before your eyes I will pay back Babylon and all the Chaldean people for all the wrong they did to Zion, says the LORD.

¹³ Rv ^{17:1}

^fCompare 15-19 with 10:12-16

²⁵I am against you, says the LORD,
you destructive mountain,
that destroys the whole world.
I will stretch out My hand
against you
and roll your rocks from the
crag
and make you a burnt-out moun-
tain.

²⁶No cornerstone will be taken
from you
and no stone for a foundation,
because you will always be a
waste, says the LORD.

²⁷Set up a standard in the world!
Blow the trumpet among the na-
tions!

Sanctify nations to attack her;
call the kingdoms against her:
Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz.
Appoint a field marshal against
her;
bring up horses like bristling
locusts.

²⁸Sanctify nations to attack her,
the king of the Medes with his
governors,
and all his deputies,
and the whole country he rules
over.

²⁹The earth trembles and writhes
in pain
because the LORD carries out
His plans against Babylon
to make the country of Babylon a
barren waste where nobody
lives.

³⁰The fighting men of Babylon
have quit
and stay in their strongholds.
Their strength is exhausted;
they are like women.
Their homes are on fire;
the bars of their gates are bro-
ken.

³¹The relay runners meet one an-
other;

messenger meets messenger,
bringing news to the king of Bab-
ylon
that his whole city is captured,

³²the passages over the canals are
taken,
the forts are burned,
and the soldiers are panic-
stricken.

³³The LORD of armies, the God of
Israel, says this:
The daughter of Babylon is like a
threshing-floor
after it is tramped hard;
in a little while harvest-time will
come.

Vengeance on Babylon

³⁴Nebuchadnezzar king of Bab-
ylon, has devoured me;
drained me out and set me down
as an empty jar;
he has swallowed me like a mon-
ster,
filled his belly with my dainties,
and washed me clean.

³⁵May the crime done to my body
be on Babylon,
says she who lives in Zion.
My blood be on the Chaldean
people!
says Jerusalem.

³⁶So the LORD says this:
I will defend you
and take vengeance for you.
I will dry up her river
and make its source dry.

³⁷Babylon will be heaps of stones,
a place where jackals stay,
a thing of horror and scorn
where nobody lives.

³⁸They roar together like lions
and growl like lions' whelps.
When they are restless,

³⁹I will make a feast for them
and make them drunk till they
feel happy
and fall into an everlasting sleep

²⁵ Rv 8 8

- without waking up again, says the LORD.
- ⁴⁰I will bring them down like lambs to be slaughtered, like rams and he-goats.
- ⁴¹Can it be that Sheshak⁸ will be captured and she whom the whole world praised taken?
- ⁴²Can it be that Babylon will be a horror among the nations? The sea will come up over Babylon and she will sink in its churning waves.
- ⁴³Her cities will become ruins, a dry land, a desert, a country where nobody lives and where no human being passes through.
- ⁴⁴I will punish Bel in Babylon and take out of his mouth what he has swallowed. No more will the nations stream to him; yes, the wall of Babylon will fall.
- ⁴⁵Leave her, My people, save your life each of you, from the LORD's blazing fury.
- ⁴⁶Don't feel timid or afraid when you hear the news in the country, when you hear one thing one year and something else the next, when there is crime in the country and one ruler opposes another.
- ⁴⁷So the time will come when I will punish Babylon's idols and all her country will be put to shame and all who are slain within her will lie there.

⁴⁵ 2 Co 6:17
⁴⁶ Rv 18:4
⁴⁸ Rv 18:20
⁴⁹ Rv 18:24

- ⁴⁸Then heaven and earth and everything in them will sing with joy over Babylon because the destroyers came to her from the north, says the LORD.
- ⁴⁹Yes, Babylon will fall, O wounded people of Israel, just as she made the wounded of the whole earth fall.
- ⁵⁰You who escape the sword, leave, and don't stay there. Although you are far away, remember the LORD and think of Jerusalem.
- ⁵¹We were ashamed when we heard about the disgrace. We were humiliated because strangers came into the holy rooms of the LORD's temple.
- ⁵²That is why the time will come, says the LORD, when I will punish her idols and those who are mortally wounded will groan everywhere in her country.
- ⁵³Even if Babylon should climb to the heavens and make a high and inaccessible stronghold for herself, yet destroyers will come from Me against her, says the LORD.
- ⁵⁴Listen! A cry comes from Babylon and a great crash from the country of the Chaldeans!
- ⁵⁵It is the LORD destroying Babylon and silencing the loud noise coming from her.
- Her waves roar like many waters;

⁸A name for Babylon

they sound like a noisy tumult.

⁵⁶The destroyer will come against Babylon.

capture her soldiers,
and break their bows in pieces
because the LORD is a God who
pays back
and He certainly will repay.

⁵⁷I will make her princes and wise men drunk.

also her governors, deputies,
and soldiers:
they will sleep an everlasting sleep.

never to wake up.
says the King who is called the LORD of armies.

⁵⁸The LORD of armies says this:

The broad walls of Babylon will be leveled to the ground,
and her high gates will be burned down:

so people who toiled did it for nothing.

and the nations wearied themselves only for the fire.

⁵⁹The prophet Jeremiah gave an order to Seraiah son of Neriah, son of Mahseiah, when he went to Babylon with Zedekiah king of Judah in the fourth year of his rule. Seraiah was the manager of his travels.

⁶⁰Jeremiah wrote on a special scroll all the disaster that would come on Babylon, all these things that were written about Babylon. ⁶¹“When you come to Babylon,” Jeremiah told Seraiah, “see that you read all this. ⁶²and say, ‘LORD, You have threatened to destroy this place so that no man or animal will live here and it will always be a ruin.’ ⁶³When you have finished reading this scroll, tie a stone to it and throw it into the

middle of the Euphrates. ⁶⁴and say, ‘Babylon will sink like this and not rise again on account of the doom I will bring on it.’”^h

Here ends what Jeremiah said.

Historical Information on the Fall of Jerusalem

52 Zedekiah was 21 years old when he became king and he ruled 11 years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Hamutal, a daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. ²He did what was wrong before the LORD just as Jehoiakim had done. ³Because the LORD was angry, He finally got rid of the people in Jerusalem and Judah.

Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. ⁴In the ninth year of Zedekiah's rule, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and all his army came against Jerusalem; he camped nearby and built siege-mounds against it all around. ⁵So the city was besieged till the 11th year of king Zedekiah. ⁶On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine in the city got so bad the common people had no food. ⁷So the enemy broke into the city, and all the soldiers fled,ⁱ leaving the city at night through the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden (the Chaldeans were besieging the city from every side) and they went on the road toward the Jordan valley. ⁸The Chaldean army pursued the king and caught up with Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho and all his troops scattered and left him. ⁹They captured the king and took him up to Riblah in

^hHbrew adds “and they will be weary.” a scribal addition absent from Greek. Compare verse 58

ⁱ39:4 includes the king as does verse 8

Hamath, to the king of Babylon, who sentenced him. ¹⁷The king of Babylon killed Zedekiah's sons before his eyes. He also killed all the princes of Judah at Riblah. ¹⁸He blinded the eyes of Zedekiah and put him in chains. The king of Babylon took him to Babylon and put him in a prison, where he was till he died.

¹²On the tenth day of the fifth month—this was the 19th year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon—Nebuzaradan, the captain of the guard, a minister of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. ¹³He burned down the LORD's temple, the king's palace, the houses in Jerusalem, that is, every important building. ¹⁴The whole Chaldean army that was with the captain of the guard tore down the walls around Jerusalem.

¹⁵Then Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took away captive the rest of the people who were left in the city, those who had deserted to the king of Babylon, and the rest of the artisans. ¹⁶But Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the country to take care of the vineyards and the farms.

¹⁷The Chaldeans broke in pieces the bronze pillars, the stands, and the bronze pool that were in the LORD's temple, and transported all the bronze from them to Babylon. ¹⁸They also took away the pots, shovels, snuffers, sprinkling bowls, pans, and all the bronze utensils used in the service. ¹⁹The captain of the guard also took away the goblets, censers, sprinkling bowls, pots, lampstands, pans, and bowls used for libations. He took the golden articles for their gold and the silver

ones for their silver. ²⁰The bronze of the two pillars, the pool, and the 12 bronze bulls under the stands that king Solomon made for the LORD's temple was too much to be weighed. ²¹One of the pillars was 18 cubits high and 12 cubits in circumference; it was 4 fingers thick and hollow. ²²It had a bronze crown 5 cubits high with network and pomegranates around it, all of bronze. The second pillar was the same; it also had pomegranates. ²³There were 96 pomegranates on the outside—a total of a hundred pomegranates on the network all around.

²⁴The captain of the guard took captive Seraiah the high priest, and Zephaniah the second priest, with the three keepers of the door. ²⁵He also took captive from the city an official who had been in charge of the soldiers, seven of the king's personal companions who were found in the city, the secretary of the commander of the army, who mustered the people for war, and 60 citizens who were discovered in the city. ²⁶Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. ²⁷The king of Babylon struck them down and killed them at Riblah in the country of Hamath. So the people of Judah left their country to go into exile.

²⁸These are the people Nebuchadnezzar took away captive; in the seventh year, 3,023 Judeans; ²⁹in the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar 832 persons from Jerusalem; ³⁰in the 23rd year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took away 745 Judeans; the total number was 4,600.

10r "the crowd," compare II Kings 25:11

¹¹In the 37th year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, on the 25th day of the 12th month, Evil-merodach^k king of Babylon, in the first year of his rule, pardoned Jehoiachin king of Judah and released him from prison. ¹²He spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat

above those kings who were with him in Babylon. ¹³So Jehoiachin changed the clothes he had worn in prison and was supported by the king as long as he lived. ¹⁴The king of Babylon gave him a regular allowance as much as he needed each day as long as he lived, till he died.

^kArvil-marduk

THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH

Jerusalem Destroyed

- 1** How lonely she sits, the city
once crowded with people!
Once so great among the nations,
she's now like a widow.
Once a princess among the provinces,
now she does slave work.
- ²At night she weeps bitterly with
tears on her cheeks.
None of her lovers comfort her.
Her friends all betrayed her and
became her enemies.
- ³Judah's great slavery is miserable,
she's away in exile.
She lives among the nations without
finding rest.
Those who hunted her down
caught up with her in a narrow place.
- ⁴The roads to Zion are in mourning,
nobody comes to a festival.
All her gates are deserted.
Her priests are sighing, her girls
are weeping, she feels bitter.
- ⁵Her adversaries are now in control;
her enemies are without a worry.
The LORD made her suffer for her
many wrongs.
Her children went in front of the
enemy into captivity.
- ⁶All the splendor has gone from
Zion's daughter.
Her princes were like deer that
can't find food,
that run along without strength
before the hunter.
- ⁷Now miserable and homeless,
Jerusalem remembers
all the precious things she de-

lighted in for a long time.
Her people fell into the hands of the
enemy with nobody to help
her.

looking at her, her enemies
laugh at her "sabbath
rest."

⁸Jerusalem sinned so much that she
became a filthy thing.

All who used to honor her, now
despise her—they've seen her
naked.

She sighs and turns away.

⁹With her skirts soiled, she didn't
think of the end waiting for
her.

It's amazing how she went down;
now there's nobody to comfort
her.

"LORD, look at my misery—the
enemy has triumphed."

¹⁰The enemy laid his hand on all her
treasures;

She saw the pagans come into her
holy place

whom You ordered not to come
into Your community.

¹¹All her people sigh as they beg for
bread;

They have given their treasures
for food to keep themselves
alive.

"Look, LORD, see how I'm de-
spised!"

Jerusalem Weeps

¹²"Is it nothing to you, all who pass
by?

Look and see if there's any pain
like my pain

that the LORD, blazing with
anger, made me suffer.

¹³From above He sent fire into my bones and trampled on them.
He spread a net for my feet and made me turn back.
He made me shudder and feel sick all day long.

¹⁴My sins are fastened as a yoke on me.

With His hand the yoke is tied on my neck.

It makes my strength fail.

The LORD put me in the power of those I can't oppose.

¹⁵The LORD scorned all the strong men I had.

He called an army to crush my choice young men.

In a winepress the LORD trampled on the virgin daughter of Judah.

¹⁶I'm weeping over my affliction.

My eyes flow with water;

for the One who can comfort and refresh me is far away.

My children shudder because the enemy has won."

¹⁷Zion spreads out her hands—there's nobody to comfort her.
The LORD ordered Jacob's enemies to surround him;

Jerusalem became an unclean thing in their midst.

¹⁸"The LORD is righteous; it is I who rebelled against His Word.

Please listen, all you people, and look at my pain;

my girls and boys have gone into captivity.

¹⁹I called for my lovers but they betrayed me.

My priests and elders perished in the city,

looking for food to keep alive.

²⁰See, LORD, how troubled I am; I'm inwardly aflame;

My heart is upset within me—I've been such a rebel.

Outside the sword makes orphans;

inside it's like death.

²¹They hear how I moan with nobody to comfort me.

All my enemies, hearing of my disaster, are glad You did it.

Bring the day You announced when they'll be like me,

"when all their wickedness comes before You.

Then do to them as You did to me for all my wrongs,

because I groan much and feel sick at heart."

The LORD Destroyed Judah

2 Oh how the LORD in His anger covered Zion's daughter with darkness.

He hurled Israel's beauty from the sky to the ground!

When He was angry, He didn't remember His footstool.

²Without pity the LORD swallowed all of Jacob's homes.

In His fury He tore down the fortresses of Judah's daughter and brought them down to the ground.

He made the kingdom and its leaders unholy.

³In His blazing anger He cut off all of Israel's strength

and withdrew His right hand when they faced the enemy.

He burned in Jacob like a flaming fire, consuming everything around him.

⁴Like an enemy He strung His bow; like a foe He took His position,

and with his right hand killed everything delighting the eye in the tent of Zion's daughter.

He poured out His fury like a fire.

⁵The LORD became like an enemy and wiped out Israel.

He wiped out all their high buildings, destroyed their fortresses

¹⁵ Rev. ¹19:15
²1 Mt. ²5:35

He made Judah's daughter moan
and groan.

⁶He stripped His shelter^a as if it
were a garden

and destroyed the place where
He meets with His people.

The LORD made Zion forget
festival and sabbath.

He scorned king and priest when
He angrily punished them.

⁷The LORD rejected His altar as
disgusting

and made His holy place unholy.

He put the walls of her palaces in
the enemies' hands,

who shouted in the LORD's
temple as on a festival day.

⁸The LORD planned to destroy the
wall of Zion's daughter,

marking it with a line.

He didn't withdraw His hand from
destroying it.

He made rampart and wall mourn
and languish together.

⁹Her gates are sunk into the
ground.

He destroyed her bars and shat-
tered them.

Her king and leaders are among
the nations.

There's no instruction from God—
her prophets find no vision from
the LORD.

¹⁰The elders of Zion's daughter sit
silent on the ground.

They've thrown dirt on their heads
and put on sackcloth.

Jerusalem's girls let their heads
hang toward the ground.

There's No Comfort

¹¹My eyes are worn out with tears;
my feelings are in a turmoil.

My heart is poured out on the
ground

because my people's daughter is

^athe temple

broken down.

and little children and babies
faint in the streets of the
city.

¹²They're asking their mothers,
"Where is bread and wine?"

as they faint like wounded
people in the streets of the
city,

their lives ebbing out in their
mothers' bosoms.

¹³How can I come to your aid?

With what can I compare you,
Jerusalem's daughter?

What should I say to sooth and
comfort you, Zion's virgin
daughter—

your affliction is wide as the
sea? Who can heal you?

¹⁴Your prophets brought you visions
that are lies and nonsense.

They didn't uncover your guilt to
restore you.

They gave you their visions, their
prophecies that lie and mis-
lead.

¹⁵All who go along the road clap
their hands at you.

They hiss and shake their heads at
Jerusalem's daughter:

"Is this the city once called
perfectly beautiful,
the delight of the whole
world?"

¹⁶All your enemies open their
mouths wide at you.

They hiss and gnash their teeth.

They say, "We've destroyed her.

Surely this is the day we're look-
ing for.

Now we've come to it and we're
seeing it."

The Lord Did It

¹⁷The LORD planned it and did it.

What He said He would do long

ago He has carried out.

He tore you down without pity and
made your enemies gloat over
you

as He gave them victory.

¹⁸Let your^b heart cry to the LORD,
O Wall of Zion's daughter;
let tears run down like a stream
day and night;
don't let yourself stop; don't let
your eyes rest.

¹⁹Get up, cry at night at the start of
each nightwatch.

Pour out your heart like water be-
fore the LORD.

Raise your hands to Him for the
life of your little children
who faint with hunger at the
corner of every street.

²⁰Look, LORD, and consider to whom
You did this.

Should women eat what they gave
birth to, the children they
fondled,

or should priest and prophet be
killed in the LORD's holy
place?

²¹Young and old lie on the ground in
the streets.

My girls and my young men are cut
down by the sword.

You killed them when You were
angry; You slaughtered them
without pity.

²²As though for a festival You have
called for horror all around.

In the day the LORD got angry
nobody escaped or got away.

My enemy murdered the children I
fondled and raised.

We Suffer

3 I'm the man who suffered under
the rod of His fury.

¹It was I He led away and made to

^bHeb "their heart"

walk in the dark without a
light.

²Against me only He turns His hand
again and again all day long.

³He has worn out my flesh and my
skin and broken my bones.

⁴He made for me a yoke and sur-
rounded me with bitterness
and hardship.

⁵He has made me live in the dark
like one dead a long time.

⁶He has fenced me in so that I can't
get out, putting heavy chains
on me.

⁷Yes, whenever I cry and call for
help, He shuts out my prayer.

⁸He has walled up my way with
hewn stones and made my
paths crooked.

⁹He's like a bear waiting in an am-
bush for me, like a lion in hid-
ing.

¹⁰He scatters thorns in my way,
tears me in pieces, and leaves
me desolate.

¹¹He strings his bow, making me the
mark for His arrows

¹²and sends the arrows from His
quiver into my heart.

¹³I'm a joke to all people who taunt
me all day in their songs.

¹⁴He fills me with bitterness as my
food and makes me drink
deeply of misery.

¹⁵He grinds my teeth with gravel and
tramples me down into ashes.

¹⁶I no longer experience well-being;
I've forgotten how to be
happy.

¹⁷I think I've lost my strength to live
and my hope in the LORD.

¹⁸Remember my suffering and my
wandering, my bitter food and
drink.

¹⁹As I think of it, I'm crushed in
spirit.

We Find Hope in God

- ²¹But I recall one thing and so find hope:
²²The LORD is gracious; we're not completely wiped out because His mercies haven't come to an end;
²³they are new every morning— great is Your faithfulness.
²⁴I can say the LORD is my portion; that's why I find hope in Him.
²⁵The LORD is good to those who have confidence in Him, to anyone who seeks Him.
²⁶It is good to hope quietly for the LORD to save us.
²⁷It is good for a man to carry a yoke when he's young.
²⁸He should sit alone and quietly because the Lord has laid it on him.
²⁹He should put his face in the dust; there may still be hope.
³⁰He should offer his cheek to him who strikes him and take his fill of insults
³¹because the Lord will not reject him forever.
³²Even if He makes us suffer, He will be merciful—He's very kind.
³³He doesn't want to hurt anyone or make people suffer.
³⁴The Lord isn't happy to see— any prisoner on earth crushed under foot,
³⁵that defiance of the most high God which cheats a man of his rights,
³⁶or anyone treated unjustly in court.
³⁷Can anyone make something happen if the Lord hasn't ordered it?
³⁸Doesn't the Most High order everything to happen, both good and bad?

- ³⁹Why should any man, any mortal alive, complain about his sins?
⁴⁰Let us search out and test our ways and turn back to the LORD.
⁴¹Let us raise our hearts with our hands to God in heaven.

The Enemy Punishes Us

- ⁴²We have been disloyal and have rebelled and You haven't forgiven.
⁴³You wrapped Yourself in anger and pursued us. You killed without pity.
⁴⁴You wrapped Yourself in a cloud through which no prayer could pass.
⁴⁵You made us a scum and refuse among the nations.
⁴⁶All our enemies open their mouths wide to rail against us.
⁴⁷We have experienced terror and the pit, crash and ruin.
⁴⁸Streams of water run down from my eyes over the ruin of my people's daughter.
⁴⁹My eye keeps flowing without stopping for a rest
⁵⁰till the LORD looks down from heaven and sees.
⁵¹My eye pains me because of all the daughters of my city.
⁵²Those who are my enemies without a reason chased me like a bird.
⁵³They pushed me alive into a pit and threw stones at me.
⁵⁴Water flowed on my head. I thought I was finished.
⁵⁵From the deepest pit I called Your name, LORD.
⁵⁶You heard me call. Don't close Your ear when I cry for relief.
⁵⁷When I called You, You came near and said, "Don't be afraid!"
⁵⁸You defended me, LORD. You re-

deemed my life.

⁵⁹LORD, You saw the wrong done to me: give me justice.

⁶⁰You saw all their vengeance and all their scheming against me.

⁶¹You heard their insults and all their scheming against me.

⁶²You heard what those who attack me say and their continual muttering against me.

⁶³Whether they sit down or get up, see how they mock me in song.

⁶⁴Pay them back, LORD, according to what they do.

⁶⁵Make their hearts hard and put Your curse on them.

⁶⁶Pursue them in anger and wipe them out from under the LORD's heaven.

Zion in the Siege

4 How the gold has tarnished and the fine gold changed!

The sacred stones are thrown down on all street corners.

²Zion's precious children, worth their weight in fine gold.

are now treated like clay pitchers made by a potter!

³Even jackals offer their breasts and nurse their young

but the women of my people are as cruel as ostriches in the wilderness.

⁴A sucking baby is so thirsty its tongue sticks to the roof of its mouth.

Children beg for bread, and nobody will break off pieces for them.

⁵Those who were eating delicacies are now wasting away in the streets.

Those who were reared in scarlet cloth now cling to manure piles.

⁶The wrong of my people's daughter is worse than the sin of Sodom

that was overthrown in a moment, no human hands striking her.

⁷Her princes were purer than snow, whiter than milk,

with their bodies ruddier than corals, their forms like sapphires.

⁸Now they look blacker than soot, and nobody recognizes them on the streets.

Their skin, shriveled on their bones, has become as dry as wood.

⁹It is better to be killed by a sword than by starving

because you pine away, struck down by the lack of food from the fields.

¹⁰Tender women with their own hands have cooked their children

and used them for food when my people's daughter fell.

¹¹The LORD's fury has accomplished His purpose.

He has poured out His blazing anger.

He has lit a fire in Zion that has consumed its foundations.

The Leaders

¹²No one on earth or in the world whether kings or people believed

the enemy would get through the gates of Jerusalem.

¹³The reason was the sins of her prophets and the wrongs of her priests

who in her have poured out the blood of righteous people.

¹⁴So they staggered blindly through the streets,

so soiled with blood nobody would touch their clothes.

¹⁵"Get away! Unclean!" people called to them.

"Get away! Get away! Don't touch anyone."

So they fled and wandered around being told by the nations they couldn't stay any longer.

¹⁸The LORD has scattered them and will no more look kindly at them.

They no longer respect priests nor are they kind to old people.

The King Captured

¹⁷We are still straining our eyes trying in vain to find help.

We looked eagerly to a nation that couldn't save us.

¹⁸The enemy tracks us down so we can't go out on the streets.

Our end is near; our days have passed; yes, our end has come.

¹⁹Those who hunt us are faster than vultures in the sky.

They chase us on the hills and ambush us in the wilderness.

²⁰The one the LORD anointed,^c the breath of our life, was caught in their pits,

though we thought we would live in his shadow among the nations.

Edom Next

²¹Be happy and glad, Edom's daughter, living in the country of Uz.

Yet the cup will come to you too and you'll get drunk and strip off your clothes.

²²Zion's daughter, your punishment is over.

He will not again take you into exile.

But Edom's daughter, He will punish your wrong, laying bare your sins.

Be Merciful—A Prayer

5 Remember, LORD, what happened to us. Look and see our disgrace.

²The country we inherited has been turned over to strangers, our homes to foreigners.

³We are orphans, without a father. Our mothers are like widows.

⁴We have to buy the water we drink and pay for the wood we get.

⁵A yoke is on our necks. We are pursued; we are weary and get no rest.

⁶We have had to pledge ourselves to Egypt and Assyria to get enough food.

⁷Our fathers sinned and are gone; we have to take the punishment for their wrongs.

⁸Slaves rule us and nobody can rescue us from them.

⁹We get our food at the risk of our lives for fear of the sword in the wilderness.

¹⁰Our skin is hot like an oven with the fever of hunger.

¹¹Women in Zion are raped, as are girls in the towns of Judah.

¹²Leaders are hanged. Old people aren't honored.

¹³Young men work at the mill, and boys stagger under loads of wood.

¹⁴Elders stop meeting at the gate and young men no longer play their music.

¹⁵There's no joy left in our hearts, and our dancing has turned to mourning.

¹⁶The garlands have fallen from our heads.

Woe to us because we have sinned.

^cThe king of Judah

¹⁷For this we feel miserable and our eyes turn dim.

¹⁸because Zion's hill lies in ruins; foxes roam around on it.

¹⁹But You, LORD, are forever seated on Your throne.

and Your throne continues forever.

²⁰Why should You forget us forever

and forsake us for so long a time?

²¹LORD, bring us back to You, and we'll come back.

Renew our life as it was long ago—

²²or have You completely rejected us

because You have been angry with us so long?

THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

1 In the 30th year on the fifth day of the fourth month, while I was among the captives by the canal Chebar, the heavens opened, and I saw visions of God. ²On the fifth day of the month, during the fifth year of the captivity of King Jehoiachin, ³the LORD spoke to Ezekiel son of Buzi, the priest, in the land of the Chaldeans by the canal Chebar. The LORD laid His hand on me there.

A Vision of the LORD's Glory

⁴I looked and there was a storm wind blowing from the north with a large cloud, a mass of fire and a brilliant glow all around. The middle of the fire looked like gleaming bronze ⁵and out of it came the form of four living beings. They appeared to have human forms. ⁶But everyone of them had four faces and four wings. ⁷Their legs were straight, their feet were like the hooves of calves, and they glittered like polished bronze. ⁸Under their wings they had human hands on each of their four sides. As for their faces and wings—⁹one wing touched the other, and they didn't turn as they walked, but each of them went straight ahead. ¹⁰They all had human faces. But each had on the right side the face of a lion, on the left the face of a bull; each of the four also had the face of an eagle. ¹¹Their faces and their wings were spread out upward; each had two wings with which they touched one another; and the other two covered their bodies. ¹²Each of

them went straight ahead. They went wherever the spirit wanted to go without turning as they moved. ¹³As for their appearance—the living beings looked like fiery coals; it looked as if burning torches were flashing back and forth between them. The fire flashed and out of it streaked lightning. ¹⁴The living beings dashed back and forth like lightning.^a

¹⁵As I looked at the living beings there was one wheel on the ground beside each of the four living beings. ¹⁶In appearance and design the wheels looked like chrysolite. The four of them had the same shape. They appeared and were constructed as if one wheel was within another. ¹⁷Whenever they moved, they moved in one of the four directions they faced without swerving, as they moved. ¹⁸Their rims were high and frightening, the rims of all four being full of eyes all around. ¹⁹When the living beings moved, the wheels moved beside them, and when the living beings rose from the ground, the wheels rose. ²⁰Whenever the spirit wanted to go, that is where they went. They rose beside them, because the spirit of the living beings was in the wheels. ²¹When these moved, they moved. When these stood still, they stood still. And when these rose from the ground, the wheels rose with them because the spirit of the living beings was in the wheels.

²²Over the heads of the living beings was the form of a vault. If

1
1 Rv 19:11
4-5 Rv 4:6, 8
10 Rv 4:7
13 Rv 4:5
18 Rv 4:6, 8

^aSense of verse 14 uncertain; Gk omits

looked like dazzling crystal spread out above their heads. ²³Under the vault their wings were on a level with one another. Each had two wings to cover his body. ²⁴When they moved, I heard the sound of their wings: It was like the sound of torrents of water, like the thunder of the Almighty, like a storm or the noise of an army. When they stood still, they let down their wings. ²⁵There was a voice above the vault, then they stood still and let down their wings. ²⁶Above the vault over their heads was something that looked like a throne made of sapphire, and above it on the throne was a form that looked like a man. ²⁷I saw something shining that looked like fire within it and all around it. From what seemed to be His waist upward and what seemed to be his waist downward I saw something like fire with a glow around it. ²⁸The glow all around had the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds. It was like the LORD's glory. When I saw it, I kneeled with my face to the ground, and I heard Someone speaking.

2 "Son of man," He told me, "stand on your feet, and I will talk to you." ²When He talked to me, a spirit came into me and put me on my feet, and I listened as He talked to me.

The Vision of the Scroll

¹"Son of man," He told me, "I'm sending you to Israel, to a rebellious nation who have rebelled against Me. They and their ancestors have sinned against Me to this day. 'They are defiant and stubborn children. I'm sending you to them. Tell them this is what the Lord GOD says. ³Whether they will listen or

refuse to listen (they are a rebellious people) they will find out a prophet has been among them. ⁴But you, son of man, don't be afraid of them or what they say. Don't be afraid though they defy you and resist you like thorns, though you sit on scorpions. Don't let what they say frighten you. Don't let what they look like terrify you, because they are a rebellious people. ⁵Tell them what I say whether they listen or not because they are rebellious. ⁶But you, son of man, listen to what I tell you. Don't be rebellious like those rebellious people. Open your mouth and eat what I'm about to give you."

⁷I looked, and there was a hand stretched out toward me, and in it was a scroll. ⁸He spread it out before me—there was writing on the front and on the back. There were lamentations, mournings, and woes written on it.

3 "Son of man," He told me, "eat what you find. Eat this scroll. Then go and speak to Israel."

¹So I opened my mouth, and He gave me that scroll to eat. ²"Son of man," He told me, "swallow this scroll I'm giving you and fill your stomach with it." So I ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth.

³"Son of man," He said to me, "go to Israel, and tell them what I am saying. ⁴You are not sent to a people whose language is hard to understand and difficult to speak. You are sent to Israel; ⁵not to many people whose language is hard to understand and difficult to speak and whose words you don't understand. If I sent you to them, they would certainly listen to you. ⁶But the people of Israel will refuse to listen to you because they refuse

²² Rv 4:6
²⁴ Rv 1:15;
 14:2; 19:5
²⁶⁻²⁸ Rv 4:3
²
¹ Act 16:14-10;
²⁶⁻¹⁶
⁸ Rv 10:9
⁹⁻¹⁰ Rv 5:1
³
¹⁻³ Rv 10:
 9-10

to listen to Me; all the people of Israel are very determined and stubborn. ^aSo now I'm going to make you as determined as they are and your stubbornness^b as strong as theirs. ^cI will make your determination like a diamond, harder than a rock. Don't be afraid of them or let their looks terrify you, because they are a rebellious people. ^d"Son of man," He told me, "take to heart everything I tell you, and listen closely to it. ^eGo to the exiles, to your people. Talk to them and tell them. 'The Lord GOD says this,' whether they listen or refuse to listen."

^fA spirit lifted me up and I heard behind me the sound of a great rushing sound as the LORD's glory went up from its place. ^gThere was the sound of the wings of the living beings touching one another and the sound of the wheels beside them as well as the noise of a great earthquake. ^hWhen the spirit lifted me up and took me away, I went away feeling bitter because my spirit was stirred; the LORD had laid a heavy hand on me. ⁱI went to Tel-abib, to the exiles living by the canal Chebar. I sat there among them seven days quite stunned.

The Prophet a Watchman

^jAfter seven days the LORD told me: ^k"Son of man, I'm appointing you to watch over the people of Israel. Listen to what I say, and warn them from Me. ^lWhen I say to the wicked, 'you will surely die,' but you don't say anything to warn him to give up his wickedness to save his life, that wicked man will die for his sin, but I will hold you responsible for him. ^mBut if you

warn that wicked person, and still he doesn't turn from his wickedness and evil behavior, he will die for his sin, but you will have saved your life. ⁿWhen a righteous man turns from his right way of living and does wrong, I will make him stumble and he will die. Because you didn't warn him, he will die for his sin, and his righteous acts will not be remembered, but I will hold you responsible for his death. ^oBut if you warn a righteous man against sinning, and he doesn't sin, he will certainly live because he was warned, and you will have saved your life."

I Will Open Your Mouth

^pThe LORD laid His hand on me. "Get up," He told me, "and go out on the plain, and there I will talk to you." ^qI got up and went out on the plain, and there was the LORD's glory standing like the glory I saw by the canal Chebar, and I kneeled with my face to the ground. ^rBut a spirit entered into me and put me on my feet. Then He talked to me. "Go into your home," he told me, "and shut yourself in. ^sYou, son of man, will be bound with ropes so you cannot go out among them. ^tI will make your tongue cling to the roof of your mouth so that you can't talk or criticize them though they are a rebellious people. But when I talk to you, I will open your mouth, and you will tell them. ^uThe Lord GOD says this: 'Anyone who will listen may listen and anyone who refuses may refuse; they are a rebellious people.'

^bLiterally "forehead" ^cLiterally "forehead"

Foretelling the Siege of Jerusalem

4 "You, son of man, take clay, lay it before you, and trace on it a city—Jerusalem. ²Lay a siege against it, build towers against it, throw up ramparts against it, have troops ready to attack it, and plant battering rams against it all around. ³Then take an iron griddle and put it as an iron wall between you and the city, set your face against it so as to besiege it, and press the siege. This is a sign for the people of Israel.

⁴"Then lie on your left side and consider yourself responsible for Israel's sin. As many days as you lie on that side, you will bear their sin. ⁵I assign to you the years of their sin equal to the number of days, 390 days.^d So you are to bear Israel's sin. ⁶When you finish these, lie once more, this time on your right side, and bear Judah's sin 40 days, a day for each year I assign to you. ⁷Set your face and lay bare your arm for a siege of Jerusalem, and prophesy against it. ⁸I will tie you with ropes so you will not be able to turn from one side to another till you have finished the days of your siege.

⁹"Then take wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, spelt, and put them in one container, and make bread of them for yourself. Eat it as many days as you are lying on your side, 390 days.^e ¹⁰The food you eat should be weighed. Eat a weight of 20 shekels a day, throughout the day. ¹¹Drink also water by measure, a sixth of a hin. Drink it from time to time. ¹²Eat the bread in the

shape of barley loaves. Bake it with human excrement while people watch you."

¹³"So the Israelites will eat unclean bread," says the LORD "among the nations where I scatter them."

¹⁴"O Lord GOD," I said, "you see, I haven't been defiled. From my youth till now I haven't eaten anything that died by itself or was torn by wild animals, and no other unclean meat has come into my mouth."

¹⁵"Look," He said to me, "I am substituting cow manure for human excrement. Prepare your bread on it." ¹⁶"Son of man," He said to me, "I am going to cut short the supply of bread in Jerusalem so that with dread they will measure the bread they eat, and with fear measure the water they drink. ¹⁷So they will lack bread and water and be appalled as they look at one another; they will waste away because of their sin.

5 "Then, son of man, take a sharp knife, use it as a barber's razor, and cut the hair of your head and beard, and take scales to weigh and divide the hair. ²When the siege is over burn a third of it in the fire in the middle of the city. Take another third, and with the sword cut it up around the city. Then scatter the other third to the wind, and I will draw a sword to go after the hairs. ³Take a few of the hairs and wrap them in your skirts. ⁴Again, take some of them and throw them in the fire and burn them; from them a fire will go out to all Israel. ⁵The

^dThe Greek reads 190 days which corresponds closely to the number of years the Northern Kingdom existed.

^eGk "190 days"

Lord GOD says: This is Jerusalem! I have put her in the middle of the nations with other countries around her. ⁶She has rebelled against My rules and My laws by doing worse wrongs than the other nations; she has rejected My rules and doesn't live according to My laws! ⁷So the Lord GOD says this: Because you are worse than the nations around you and haven't lived according to My laws or done what I decreed or even done what is prescribed by the nations around you, ⁸the Lord GOD says: I too am against you and will punish you while the nations watch. ⁹On account of your abominations I will do in your city what I have never done before and the like of which I'll never do again: ¹⁰The fathers will eat their sons among you, and the sons will eat their fathers. I will punish you and scatter whoever is left of you to all the winds. ¹¹As I live, says the Lord GOD, because you have polluted My holy place with all your disgusting and abominable things, I too will cut you down. I will not show mercy or feel sorry for you. ¹²Pestilence will kill a third of you; they will die in the famine. The sword will cut down a third around you, and I will scatter a third of you to all the winds and draw My sword to pursue you. ¹³So My anger will spend itself, and I will satisfy My fury on you and be avenged. You will know I, the LORD, have spoken in My zeal when I have spent My fury on you. ¹⁴I will make you a wasteland and an object of scorn to the nations around you; everyone who passes by will see it. ¹⁵The nations around you will scorn and taunt you; you will be an example and a horror when I execute My judgments in anger, fury, and bitter punishment. I the LORD

say it. ¹⁶When I shoot My destructive arrows of famine at you, I will shoot to destroy you. I will increase the famine that comes on you and cut off the supply of bread. ¹⁷With the famine I will send wild beasts against you to rob you of your children. Plague and bloodshed will sweep through, and I will bring a sword against you. I the LORD say it."

Against the Mountains

6 The LORD said to me, ¹"Son of man, look sternly at the mountains of Israel and prophesy against them. ²Say this: You mountains of Israel, hear what the Lord GOD says. The Lord GOD says this to the mountains and hills, to the ravines and valleys: I will attack you with a sword and destroy your high places. ³Your altars will be destroyed, your incense burners broken down. I will throw down your slain men in front of your disgusting idols. ⁴I will lay the dead bodies of the Israelites in front of their idols and scatter your bones around your altars. ⁵Wherever you live, the cities will be ruined and the high places destroyed. It will mean the wreck and ruin of your altars, the smashing of your idols till they are all gone, and the cutting down of your incense burners so that what you have made will be wiped out. ⁶Men will fall slain among you and you will know I am the LORD. ⁷But I will let some of you escape the sword and be scattered throughout the nations. ⁸Then those of you who escape will remember Me among the nations where you are taken captive, how I was crushed by your lusty hearts that turned away from Me and Your eyes that lusted after my disgusting idols. You will hate yourselves

⁵
¹²⁻¹⁷ Rv 6,8

for the evils you did, for all your abominable ways. ¹⁰Then you will know I am the LORD and I didn't threaten in vain to bring this disaster on you. ¹¹The Lord GOD says this: Clap your hands, stamp your feet, and say: How sad are these abominable evils of Israel, because the sword, famine, and plague will strike them down. ¹²Anyone who is far away the plague will kill; anyone who is near, the sword will strike down; and anyone who is left and besieged the famine will kill; and so I will spend My fury on them. ¹³Then you will know I am the LORD when those who are slain among them will lie among their disgusting idols around their altars, on every high hill, on all the mountain tops, under every spreading tree and every leafy terebinth, wherever they made sweet fragrances for their idols. ¹⁴I will stretch out My hand against them and lay the land waste and in ruins wherever they live, from the desert to Riblah. Then they will know I am the LORD."

7 The word of the LORD came to me: ²Son of man, the Lord GOD says this to the land of Israel: *The end has come!* ³The end has come to the four corners of the land. Now you are finished; I am going to send My fury against you. I will judge you according to your ways, and punish you for all your abominations. ⁴I will not show any pity or feel sorry; I will pay you back for your ways and for the abominations you still practice. Then you will know I am the LORD.

⁵The Lord GOD says this: Look, a disaster, a unique disaster is coming. ⁶The end is coming. The end is

coming. It is stirring against you. Look, it comes. ⁷Doom is coming to you who live in the land. The time has come; the day of the confusion is near, when no joy is heard. ⁸Soon now I will pour out My fury on you and spend My anger on you. I will judge you according to your ways and pay you back for all your abominations. ⁹I will not show any pity or feel sorry. I will pay you back according to your ways and for the abominations you still practice. Then you will know I, the LORD, am striking you. ¹⁰The day is here. See, it has come. Your doom is appearing. The rod of punishment blossoms; the man of pride flourishes. ¹¹The violent one has risen against a wicked tribe. None of them will be left, none of their crowd, none of their moaning, and none of their wailing.^f ¹²The time is coming; the day is near. The buyer will not be glad, and the seller will have no regrets, because fury is on their whole crowd. ¹³The seller will not be sorry for what he sold, while there is still life in the community, because the vision holds for their whole crowd. It will not be canceled. Nobody by doing wrong will strengthen his life. ¹⁴They blow the trumpet and get everything ready, but no one will go into battle, because My fury is on their whole crowd. ¹⁵Outside is the sword, and inside are the plague and famine. The sword will kill those who are in the field; famine and plague will consume those who are in the city. ¹⁶When those who survive escape, they will flee to the hills; they will die like doves in the valleys, everyone of them for his own sin. ¹⁷All hands will hang helpless, and all

⁶
¹² ^{Rv} ⁶ ⁸
⁷
³ ^{Rv} ⁷ ¹

^fThe Hebrew of verses 10 and 11 is uncertain in meaning.

knees will be like water. ¹⁸They will gird themselves with sackcloth and shudder all over. All faces will show shame; every head will be shaved. ¹⁹They will throw their silver in the streets, and their gold will be thrust away—their silver and gold can't save them when the LORD is furious. Their hunger will never be satisfied, their stomachs will never be filled because they have fallen into sin. ²⁰They were proud of their beautiful jewels and made out of them abominable images and detestable things. That is why I will make their jewels an unclean thing for them. ²¹I will turn their jewels over to foreigners as loot and to the worst people on earth as spoil; and they will defile them.

²²I will turn My face away from them, and they will defile My secret treasure. Robbers will go in and defile it. ²³Make a chain because the country is full of bloodshed and the city is full of crime. ²⁴So I will bring the worst of the nations to take possession of their homes. I will stop the strong from feeling proud, and their holy places will be defiled. ²⁵People will shudder and look for peace, but there will be none. ²⁶One calamity after another will come and one report after another. They will want a prophet to give them a vision; priests will no more teach or elders give advice. ²⁷The king will mourn and the ruler will be overwhelmed with despair, and the hands of the common people will become feeble. I will give them what they deserve and judge them as they judged others. Then they will know I am the LORD.

Jerusalem's Sins

8 In the sixth year on the fifth day of the sixth month, I was sitting in my home and the elders of Judah were sitting in front of me. Then the Lord GOD put His hand on me, ²and I saw something that looked like a man: From what seemed to be His waist downward there was fire, and from His waist upward He shone like gleaming bronze. ³He stretched out the form of a hand and catching me by a lock of my head; the spirit carried me between the earth and sky and, in visions from God, took me to Jerusalem, to the entrance of the gate of the inner court, facing north. It was there that the image that stirs up jealousy was situated. ⁴There I saw the glory of Israel's God as in the vision I saw in the valley.

⁵"Son of man," He said to me, "look north." I looked north and there in the entrance north of the altar gate was this image of jealousy.

⁶"Son of man," He asked me, "do you see what they're doing? Israel is doing very disgusting things here so I will move far away from My holy place. But you will see other and more disgusting things."

⁷Then He took me to the door of the court. I looked, and there was a hole in the wall. ⁸"Son of man," He said to me, "please dig through the wall." And I dug through the wall, and there was a door. ⁹"Go in," He told me, "and see the wicked disgusting things they're doing here." ¹⁰I went in and looked. There was every form of loathsome reptile and animal and all the disgusting idols of Israel inscribed all around on the wall. ¹¹Before them stood 70 of the elders of Israel with Jaazaniah son

of Shaphan standing among them. Each was holding his censer in his hand, and the smell of incense went up. ¹²“Son of man,” He asked me, “do you see what the elders of Israel are doing in the dark, each in the room where his image is, and everyone thinking, ‘The LORD doesn’t see us; the LORD has forsaken the country?’”

¹³Then He said to me, “You will see still worse abominations they’re doing.”

¹⁴He brought me to the entrance of the gate of the LORD’s temple that is toward the north, and there were women sitting and weeping for Tamuz. ¹⁵“Son of man,” He asked me, “do you see this? You will see more and worse abominations than these.”

¹⁶Then He took me into the inner court of the LORD’s temple, and there at the door of the LORD’s temple, between the porch and the altar, were about 25 men who with their backs turned to the LORD’s temple were facing east and worshipping the rising sun. ¹⁷“Son of man,” He asked me, “do you see this? Isn’t it enough that Judah has done these abominable things here? Must they also fill the country with crime and provoke Me still more? And now they put the branches to their noses. ¹⁸I will be even more furious, and will not show mercy or feel sorry; though they cry ever so loud in My ears, I will not listen to them.”

9 Then He called out loud for me to hear: “Come, you who have been appointed to punish this city, each with his battle-ax in his hand.” ²So six men came from the upper

gate which faced north, each with his battle-ax in his hand, and among them was another man dressed in linen with a writer’s inkpot at his waist. They came in and stood by the bronze altar. ³Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the angels* on which it rested to the threshold of the temple. He called to the man dressed in linen with a writer’s inkpot at his waist. ⁴“Go through the city, through Jerusalem,” the LORD told him, “and mark an X on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominable things done in it.” ⁵Then He told the others while I was listening, “Follow him through the city and strike people down. Don’t show any pity or feel sorry. ⁶Kill and destroy old and young men and virgins, children and women. But keep away from anyone who has the X. ⁷Start with My holy place. So they started with the elders in front of the temple. ⁸“Defile the temple,” He told them; “fill its courts with dead people and then leave.” So they went out and struck down the people in the city.

⁹When they had struck them down and I was left, I kneeled with my face to the ground. ¹⁰“O my Lord GOD,” I cried, “will you destroy all who are left of Israel as you pour out your fury on Jerusalem?”

¹¹“The wickedness of Jerusalem and Judah is very, very great,” He answered me. “The land is filled with bloody crimes, and the city is full of injustice. They think the Lord has forsaken the country, and that He doesn’t see. ¹²So I will not show any more pity or feel sorry. I will give them what they deserve.”

¹³Then the man dressed in linen

*Heb “cherubim.” Here referring to “the living beings” of chapters 1 and 2

with the inkpot at his side reported, "I did what you ordered."

Jerusalem Will Be Burned

10 I looked, and there, above the vault over the heads of the angels appeared something like a throne, which looked like sapphire. ²He talked to the man dressed in linen. "Go among the whirling wheels under the angels," he said, "and fill your hands with burning coals from between the angels, and scatter them over the city." So he went in while I watched.

³The angels stood on the south side of the temple when the man went in, and the cloud filled the inner court. ⁴The LORD's glory rose from the angels to the threshold of the temple, the cloud filled the temple, and the brilliance of the LORD's glory filled the court. ⁵The sound of the angels' wings was heard even as far as the outer court; it was like the voice of the Almighty God when He speaks.

⁶When He ordered the man dressed in linen to take fire from between the whirling wheels and the angels, the man went in and stood beside a wheel. ⁷One of the angels reached with his hand into the fire that was between the angels and brought some fire and put it in the hands of the man dressed in linen, who took it and went out. ⁸I saw that the angels had what looked like human hands under their wings.

The Chariot Leaves

⁹Then I looked, and there were four wheels beside the angels, one wheel beside each angel, and the wheels seemed to have the color of chrysolite. ¹⁰All four looked alike, as if a wheel was within a wheel.

¹¹Whenever they moved in one of their four directions they moved without swerving; they always went in the direction they faced without swerving. ¹²Their whole bodies, their backs, hands, wings, and wheels were full of eyes all around, especially the wheels which the four had. ¹³While I listened, the wheels were told, "Whirl!" ¹⁴Each had four faces: The first was the face of an angel, the second was a human face, the third was a lion's face, and the fourth was an eagle's face.

¹⁵The angels rose (these were the living beings I saw at the canal Chebar). ¹⁶When the angels moved, the wheels moved beside them, and when the angels lifted their wings to rise from the ground, the wheels didn't leave their place beside them. ¹⁷When they stood still, these stood still, and when they rose, these rose with them, because the spirit of the living being was in them. ¹⁸Then the LORD's glory left the threshold of the temple and stood over the angels. ¹⁹The angels lifted their wings and rose from the ground. I was watching them as they left with the wheels beside them. They stood at the entrance of the east gate of the LORD's temple, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.

²⁰These are the living beings I saw under the God of Israel at the canal Chebar, and I realized they were angels. ²¹Each had four faces, four wings, and under their wings the forms of human hands. ²²The forms of their faces were those I saw by the canal Chebar: they looked the same and were the same. Each went straight ahead.

Men Who Mislead the People

11 Then a spirit lifted me up and took me to the eastern

¹⁰
² Rv 8:5
¹² Rv 4:6, 8
¹⁴ Rv 4:7

gate of the LORD's temple. the gate facing eastward. There at the entrance of the gate were 25 men. I saw among them Jaazaniah son of Azzur, and Pelatiah son of Benaiah, leaders of the people.

"Then He said to me: "Son of man, these are the men who make wicked plans and give wrong advice in this city. "They say, 'It isn't yet time to build homes. This city is the pot, and we are the meat.' "So prophesy against them, prophesy, son of man."

"The LORD's Spirit came on me and told me. "Say, the LORD says this: I know what you are saying, people of Israel, and I know what you're thinking. "You have killed many in this city and have filled its streets with dead men. "That is why the Lord GOD says: Those you killed and put in the middle of the city are indeed the meat, and the city is the pot, but I will put you outside of it. "You are afraid of the sword, and I will bring the sword on you, says the Lord GOD. "I will put you outside of it, hand you over to strangers, and give you your just punishment. "A sword will cut you down on Israel's border. When I give you your just punishment, you will know I am the LORD. "The city will not be a pot for you, and you will not be meat in it. On Israel's border I will give you your just punishment. "Then you will know I am the LORD whose rules you didn't follow, whose instructions you didn't carry out. But you did what the nations around you were doing."

"As I prophesied, Pelatiah son of Benaiah died.

Then I bowed down on my face and called out loud, "O Lord GOD,

will You wipe out all who are left of Israel?"

Comfort the Exiles

"Then the LORD spoke to me, "Son of man, the people in Jerusalem say about your fellow Israelites, your relatives, and about all the exiled people of Israel, 'They are far removed from the LORD. This country is given to us as our own.' "So tell them, the Lord GOD says, 'Although I sent them far away among the nations and scattered them over the countries, I will be their sanctuary for a little while in the countries where they've gone.' "And tell them the Lord GOD says, 'I will bring them together from the people and gather them from the countries among whom they have been scattered, and I will give them the land of Israel. "They will come there and throw out of it all the detestable things and all the abominations that are there. "I will give them one mind and put a new spirit in them, take the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh so that they will follow My rules, keep My laws and do them. Then they will be My people, and I will be their God. "But those whose hearts go after those detestable and abominable practices I will give them the punishment they deserve,' says the Lord GOD."

The Glory of God Leaves Jerusalem

"Then the angels raised their wings, with the wheels beside them and the glory of the God of Israel above them. "The LORD's glory went up from the middle of the city and came to stand on the mount east of the city.

19 2 Co 3:3

¹⁴In the vision given me by God's Spirit, a spirit lifted me up and brought me to the exiles in Babylon. And so the vision I saw left, going up from me.

¹⁵I told the exiles everything the LORD showed me.

The Exile Dramatized

12 The LORD spoke to me: ¹"Son of man, you are living in the middle of those rebellious people. They have eyes to see and cannot see, ears to hear and cannot hear because they are a rebellious people.

²"You, son of man, get the baggage ready you would need to go into exile and let them see you leave in the daytime as though you were going into exile. Let them see you go like an exile from your place to another. It may be they will understand even though they are a rebellious people. ³Let them see you in the daytime bringing out your baggage as for exile, and in the evening let them see you leave as though you were really going into exile. ⁴Let them see you dig a hole through the wall of the house and go out through it. ⁵Let them see you lift your baggage on your shoulders and carry it out in the dark. Cover your face so you won't see the country. I've made you a sign to warn the people of Israel."

⁶I did what I was ordered to do. I brought out my baggage ready for exile during the day, and in the evening I dug for myself with my hands a hole through the wall. In the dark I brought out my baggage and let them see me carry it.

⁷The next morning the LORD spoke to me: ⁸"Son of man, didn't the people of Israel, these rebellious people, ask you, 'What are you do-

ing?' ⁹Tell them, the Lord GOD says: This prophetic warning is about the ruler in Jerusalem and all the people of Israel who are there.

¹⁰Say: I am a sign to warn you. What I did will happen to you; you will go into exile and into captivity. ¹¹The ruler who is among you will lift his baggage on his shoulders in the dark and go out. They will dig a hole in the wall through which they will let him out. He will cover his face because he himself will not see the country with his eyes. ¹²I will spread my net over him to catch him in my net and bring him to Babylon, the country of the Chaldeans, but he will not see it. And there he'll die. ¹³Those who are around him to help him and all his troops I'll scatter to all the winds and draw my sword after them. ¹⁴They will know I am the LORD when I scatter them among the nations and spread them out in the countries. ¹⁵But I will let a few escape the sword, famine, and pestilence so they can tell about all their abominations to the nations where they go, and they too will know I am the LORD."

¹⁶The LORD said to me: ¹⁷"Son of man, as you eat your bread, tremble, and as you drink your water shake and be worried. ¹⁸Tell the people of the country, the Lord GOD says about the people who live in Jerusalem on Israel's soil: They will be worried as they eat their bread and terrified as they drink their water because their country will be stripped of everything for the crimes of all who live there. ¹⁹The cities where people live now will turn to ruins, and the country will be a barren waste. Then you will know I am the LORD."

²⁰The LORD said to me, ²¹"Son of man, what is this saying you have in-

¹²
2 MA 8:16

the land of Israel: Day after day goes by, and every vision ends in nothing? ²³Just tell them, the Lord GOD says: I will stop this saying, and nobody will use it in Israel anymore. Instead of it tell them: The time is near when every vision will come true. ²⁴There will be among the people of Israel no more lying visions or foretelling the future to please people. ²⁵But I the LORD will say what I want to say, and it will be done without any more delay because I will say it and do it while you're living, says the Lord GOD."

²⁶The LORD said to me, ²⁷"Son of man, you know the people of Israel are saying, 'What he foresees won't happen for a long time; what he prophesies will come in the distant future.' ²⁸Just tell them, the Lord GOD says: Everything I say will no more be delayed. What I say will be done, says the Lord GOD."

Against False Prophets

13 The LORD said to me, ²"Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel. Prophesy and say to those who make up prophecies in their own minds: Listen to what the LORD says. ³The Lord (GOD says this: Woe to the prophets, those fools who follow their own spirits without seeing a vision. ⁴Your prophets, Israel, are like foxes among the ruins. ⁵You don't step up into the gaps in the wall or build a wall for the people of Israel that will stand in battle on the day of the Lord. ⁶They see illusions and predict what doesn't come true. They say, 'The LORD said it,' when the LORD didn't send them, and yet they hope what they say will come true. ⁷Are you not the ones who see illusions and predict what doesn't come true? Don't you say, 'The

LORD said it,' when I didn't say it? ⁸So the Lord GOD says: Because of your false words and your visions that don't come true, I'm against you, says the Lord GOD. ⁹My hand is against the prophets who see illusions and predict what doesn't come true. They will not sit in the council of My people or be recorded in the records of the people of Israel or even come into Israel's country. Then you will know I am the LORD.

¹⁰"It is because they deceive My people by saying, 'All is well,' when nothing is well. When anyone builds a flimsy wall, they whitewash it. ¹¹Tell those who whitewash it, 'It will fall down.' There will be a pouring rain. You hailstones, fall, and you storms, destroy! ¹²When the wall has fallen, won't you be asked, 'Where's the whitewash you smeared on it?' ¹³So the Lord GOD says: In My fury I'll have a storm break out, in My anger a rain will pour down, and in My fury hailstones will destroy. ¹⁴I will tear down the wall you whitewashed, level it with the ground, and lay its foundation bare. When it falls, you will be crushed under it. Then you will know I am the LORD. ¹⁵I will spend My fury on the wall and on those who whitewash it. Then I will tell you: Gone is the wall and gone are those who whitewashed it. ¹⁶as well as the prophets of Israel who prophesy about Jerusalem and see for her a vision that all is well when nothing is well, says the Lord GOD.

Against Witches

¹⁷"You son of man, oppose the women of your people who make up prophecies in their own minds: prophesy against them. ¹⁸Say, the

Lord GOD says: Woe to you women who ensnare people by tying charms on every wrist and making veils for the heads of persons of every size! Would you hunt down the lives of My people and keep yourselves alive? ¹⁹You make Me unholy to My people for some handfuls of barley and pieces of bread, killing people who shouldn't die and sparing those who shouldn't live, lying to My people who are willing to listen to lies.

²⁰“So the Lord GOD says: I'm against your charms which you use to ensnare people like birds. I will tear them from your arms and free the people you're hunting like birds. ²¹I will tear off your veils and rescue My people from your hands, and no more will it be in your power to hunt them down. Then you will know I am the LORD. ²²Because you have with your lies made the righteous despair when I didn't make him despair and encouraged the wicked not to turn back from his wicked way to save his life, ²³you will no more see illusions or make your predictions. I will rescue My people from your hands. Then you will know I am the LORD.”

Against Those Who Cherish Idols

14 Some elders of Israel came to me and sat down in front of me. ²Then the Lord said to me, ³“Son of man these men cherish their idols and set up a block over which they fall into sin. Should I let them come to Me for help? ⁴Speak to them and tell them, the LORD says: Every Israelite who cherishes his idols and sets up a block over which he falls into sin, when he comes to a prophet, I, the LORD, will give him an answer, in keeping with his many idols. It will come directly from me. ⁵I will do it in

order to capture the hearts of the Israelites because their idols have made them all strangers to Me. ⁶Tell the people of Israel, the Lord GOD says: Repent and turn from your idols and don't look at any of your abominations. ⁷Every Israelite as well as the strangers in Israel turn away from Me when they worship. They cherish their idols, and set up a block over which they fall into sin. Now when such a person comes to a prophet to get Me to help him, I the LORD will give him an answer. It will be directly from Me. ⁸I will oppose that man and make him an example and a byword as I destroy him and rid My people of him. Then you will know I am the LORD. ⁹“If that prophet is misled and says something, it is I the LORD who misled him and I will stretch out My fist against him and destroy him to rid My people Israel of him. ¹⁰Both will suffer for it: The prophet will be punished for his wrong like the one who asks for help. ¹¹This is to keep the people of Israel from wandering away from Me and getting more and more unclean by all their unfaithful ways. Then they will be My people and I will be their God, says the Lord GOD.”

Noah, Daniel and Job Could Save Only Themselves

¹²The LORD said to me, ¹³“Son of man, when a country sins against Me by treacherously turning away, I will stretch out My hand against it take away its supply of bread, send a famine into it, and destroy it: people and animals. ¹⁴If these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, they would by their righteousness save only themselves, says the Lord GOD. ¹⁵If I were to send wild animals through it and empty it

and make it so forsaken no one would go through it because of the animals. ¹⁶even if these three men were in it, as I live, says the Lord GOD, they wouldn't save their own sons or daughters but only themselves, and the country would become a barren waste. ¹⁷Or if I bring a sword into that country and say: Sword, go through the country. If I were to destroy the people and the animals in it, ¹⁸as I live, says the Lord GOD, even these three men couldn't save their own sons or daughters but only themselves. ¹⁹Or if I send a plague into that country and so pour out My anger on it to kill and destroy both people and animals, ²⁰even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live, says the Lord GOD, they would, by their righteousness, save not a son or a daughter but only themselves.

²¹“The Lord GOD says: I will surely carry out on Jerusalem My four sentences of disaster: the sword, *famine*, *wild beasts*, and the *plague*. I will destroy there the cattle as well as the people. ²²But some will escape, some sons and daughters will be brought out. When they come out to you and you see how they live and what they do, you will feel assured about the disaster I have brought on Jerusalem and anything I bring on it. ²³When you see their ways and doings, you will be assured: you will know there was a reason why I did all this to it, says the Lord GOD.”

Jerusalem Like the Wood of a Vine

15 The LORD said to me: ¹“Son of man, how is the wood of the vine better than other wood in the branches on the trees in the forest? ²Does anyone take its wood

to make something out of it or make from it a peg to hang things on it? ³‘It is put as fuel in the fire. The fire burns away both ends of it and its middle is charred; can it now be used to make anything? ⁴‘If nothing could be made from it when it wasn't burned, how much less will it be used to make anything when the fire has burned and charred it?’ ⁵“So the Lord GOD says: “As I give up the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest to feed the fire, so I give up the people in Jerusalem. ⁶‘I'm opposed to them. Although they have come through a fire, fire will still consume them. Then they will know I am the LORD when I oppose them. ⁷‘I will lay the country in ruins because they have rebelled.’” says the Lord GOD.

Israel's Sinful Past

16 Again the LORD spoke to me: ¹“Son of man, show Jerusalem how abominably she has acted. ²Say, the Lord GOD says this to Jerusalem: Canaan is where you come from and where you were born. Your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. ³When you were born, your navel cord wasn't cut, you weren't washed in water to make you clean or rubbed with salt or wrapped up. ⁴No one who saw you felt sorry enough for you to do any of these things for you, to show you sympathy. But you were thrown on the open field because you were rejected when you were born.

⁵“But when I passed by you and saw you kicking around in your blood, I said to you as you lay in your blood, ‘Live.’ Yes, I said to you there in your blood, ‘Live.’ ⁶I made you grow like a plant in the field. You grew big and tall and began to

menstruate, with your breasts well-formed and your hair growing, but you were naked and bare. "Now when I passed by you and saw you, you were at the age for love, and I spread the corner of my garment over you, covering your nakedness, and I swore to you and made a covenant with you," says the Lord GOD. "And so you became mine. "I bathed you in water and washed off your blood and poured olive oil on you. "I put on you an embroidered dress and sandals of fine leather, wound a turban of fine linen around your head, and covered you with silk. "I put ornaments on you, bracelets on your wrists, and a chain around your neck. "I put a ring in your nose, earrings on your ears, and a beautiful crown on your head. "So you wore gold and silver ornaments and were dressed in fine linen, silk, and embroidery. Your food was fine flour, honey, and olive oil. You grew more and more beautiful and finally became queen. "You became famous among the nations for your beauty because it was perfect—I had put My glory on you, says the Lord GOD.

"But you trusted in your beauty and being popular, turned prostitute. You threw yourself at anyone passing by and gave him your sexual love. "You took some of your clothes and made gaily colored shrines for yourself and played the prostitute on them. Such things shouldn't happen; it ought not be. "You took your beautiful jewels of My gold and My silver that I gave you and made male images for yourself and played the prostitute with them. "You took your embroidered clothes to cover the statues, and you set My olive oil and incense in front of them. "You also set before them

as a sweet fragrance the food that I gave you to eat—fine flour, olive oil, and honey. And this is what happened," says the Lord GOD: "You took your sons and your daughters whom you bore for Me, and you sacrificed them as food to the images. Wasn't your sexual sinning enough "that you had to sacrifice My children and give them up in fire to idols? "In all your abominations and sexual sinning you didn't remember the time you were young and naked and bare, kicking around in your own blood.

"And this is what happened after all your wickedness—woe, woe to you, says the Lord GOD—"you built a mound and a platform on every street. "At the beginning of every road you built a platform to use your beauty in a disgraceful way, spreading your legs to everyone who passes by. So you increase your acts of sexual sinning. "You solicit the Egyptians, your neighbors, who are swollen with lust. So you make Me angry by increasing your sinful sexual acts.

"Now I have stretched out my hand against you to withdraw your allowance and abandon you to the greed of those women who hate you, the daughters of the Philistines who blush at your lustful ways.

"Then you prostituted yourself with the Assyrians because you weren't satisfied. You had relations with them and even then weren't satisfied. "You increased your sexual sinning with the land of traders, the Chaldeans, and even then you weren't satisfied. "How love-sick are you?" asks the Lord GOD. "You do everything a brazen prostitute does. "You build your mound at the head of every street and make your platform in every

square. And yet you aren't like other prostitutes—you don't want to be paid. ²²An adulterous wife may take strangers instead of her husband; ²³all prostitutes get gifts, but you give your gifts to all your lovers and bribe them to come to you from all directions to have you as prostitute. ²⁴You are the opposite of other women: You solicit but aren't solicited; you pay them and aren't paid; you are the very opposite."

²⁵Now then, you prostitute, listen to what the LORD says. ²⁶The Lord GOD says, "You threw away your virtue and uncovered your nakedness when you gave your body to your lovers and to all your abominable idols and gave them your children's blood. ²⁷So now I will gather all your lovers to whom you were sweet, all you loved and all you hated; I will rally them to come against you from every side; I will uncover your sexual organs for them to gaze at all of it; ²⁸I will condemn you as an adulteress, as a woman who kills innocent people; I will charge you with crimes of violence and jealous murder. ²⁹I will hand you over to them to destroy your mounds and tear down your platforms, strip off your clothes, take away your beautiful jewels, and leave you naked and bare. ³⁰They will also call an assembly against you to stone you and cut you in pieces with their swords. ³¹They will burn your homes and punish you while many women watch. I will put an end to your prostitution, and you will not pay others anymore. ³²I will then get relief from My fury, and My jealousy will turn away from you. I will find rest and not be angry anymore.

³³"Because you didn't remember the time when you were young but

stirred up My rage in all these ways, I also will make you pay for your ways, says the Lord GOD. Didn't you make wicked plans in addition to all your abominations?

"Now all those who make proverbs will say, 'Like mother, like daughter.' ³⁴You are your mother's daughter; she rejected her husband and her children. You are your sisters' sister; they rejected their husbands and their children. Your mother was a Hittite and your father an Ammorite. ³⁵Your big sister was Samaria. She and her daughters lived north of you. Your little sister who lives south of you is Sodom with her daughters. ³⁶Didn't you live as they did and do the same abominable things they did; after only a little while you were more corrupt than they in all your ways. ³⁷As I live, says the Lord GOD, your sister Sodom and her children never ever did the things you and your daughters have done. ³⁸This is what was wrong with your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were proud that they had plenty of food, and undisturbed prosperity, and she didn't help the poor and the needy. ³⁹They were proud and did abominable things before Me. When I saw it, I got rid of them.

⁴⁰"Samaria didn't do half of your sins; you did a lot more abominations than they did. All your abominations make your sisters seem righteous. ⁴¹You too must bear the disgrace of which you judged your sisters to be guilty. Since your sins are more abominable than theirs, they are judged to be better than you. Feel ashamed then and bear your disgrace for making your sisters seem righteous.

⁴²"I will restore Sodom and her

daughters, Samaria and her daughters, and you with them. ⁵⁴to make you feel your shame and disgrace for everything you did when you comforted them. ⁵⁵When your sister Sodom and her daughters return to their former life, and when Samaria and her daughters return to their former life, you and your daughters will return to your former life.

⁵⁶“Wasn’t your sister Sodom a subject for gossip in your proud days, ⁵⁷before your wickedness was uncovered? Now it is like the time when the Aramean women and their neighbors insulted you, and when the daughters of the Philistines all around despised you. ⁵⁸You must suffer for your lusting and your abominations,” says the LORD.

⁵⁹The Lord GOD says this, “I will give you what you deserve since you despised the oath and broke My covenant. ⁶⁰But I will remember the covenant I had with you when you were young and will establish it as an everlasting covenant. ⁶¹Then you will remember your ways and feel ashamed when I^b take from you your bigger and smaller sisters and give them to you as daughters, though not because of My covenant with you. ⁶²Then I will reestablish My covenant with you and you will know I am the LORD. ⁶³You will remember and feel ashamed and never again open your mouth on account of your disgrace, when I forgive you for everything you did,” says the Lord GOD.

A Story with a Hidden Meaning

17 The LORD said to me: ²“Son of man, tell the people of

^bSyriac: Heb “you”

Israel a story with a hidden meaning. ³Say, the Lord GOD says this: A great eagle with large wings, widespread pinions, and full of colored feathers, came to Lebanon. He snatched the top of the cedars ⁴and broke off the highest twig, carried it to a land of trade, and laid it down in a city of business men. ⁵Then he took a seedling of that country and planted it in a fertile field, putting it like a willow by much water. ⁶It grew and became a low, spreading vine with its branches turning to him and its roots growing down. So it became a vine, produced boughs, and grew leafy branches.

⁷“There was another great eagle with large wings and many feathers. And this vine hungrily stretched its roots toward him, and from the terraces where it was planted it stretched out its branches for him to water it. ⁸It was planted in good soil beside much water so that it could grow branches and bear fruit, to be a wonderful vine.

⁹“Say: The Lord GOD asks, ‘Can this vine flourish? Won’t he pull up its roots, tear off its fruit and let it dry up? All its fresh growing branches will wither. It won’t take a strong arm or a great army to pull it up by its roots. ¹⁰Now that it is planted, can it flourish? Will it not wither as if struck by the east wind? It will indeed wither on the terraces where it is growing!’”

¹¹The LORD said to me: ¹²“Tell this rebellious people: Don’t you know what this means? Tell them, the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, took its king and its leaders and brought them home with him to Babylon. ¹³Then he picked one of

the king's family, made a treaty with him, putting him under oath, and took away the leading men of the country "so that it would remain a lowly country and not become ambitious but hold its place by keeping its treaty. "But he rebelled against the king of Babylon by sending his men to Egypt to get horses and a large army. Can he succeed? Can anyone who does this escape? Can he break a treaty and go free? "As I live, says the Lord GOD, in the land of the king who made him king, whose oath he despised and whose treaty he broke, there in Babylon he will die. "And with his strong army and large horde Pharaoh will do nothing for him in the battle when mounds are thrown up and siege walls are built with the loss of many lives. "He scorned the oath and broke the treaty to which he had given his hand as a pledge; and having done all these things, he can't escape."

"So the Lord GOD says, "As I live, for scorning My oath and breaking My treaty I will certainly punish him. "And I will spread My net over him to catch him in My snare and take him to Babylon and try him there for rebelling against Me. "The sword will cut down the best of all his troops, and any who are left will be scattered in every direction the wind blows. Then you will know I the LORD said this."

"The Lord GOD says, "I too will take a branch from the top of the highest cedar and plant it. I will break off a tender twig from those on top and plant it on a high and lofty hill. "I will plant it on the high mountain of Israel to produce branches and grow fruit, to be a wonderful cedar. *In it will live every kind of bird, finding a home in the*

shade of its branches. "Then all the trees in the field will know I the LORD put down tall trees, raise up low trees, dry up green trees, and make dry trees blossom. I the LORD said it and will do it."

You're Responsible Only for Your Own Sins

18 The LORD said to me: "What do you mean when you use this saying in the land of Israel, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth feel numb'? "As I live," says the Lord GOD, "you will certainly not use this saying anymore in Israel. 'All persons belong to Me, so a son and father are alike to me. The one who sins will die.

"If a man is righteous he will do what is just and right, "he will not feast at hill-shrines and honor Israel's idols, or sexually pollute his neighbor's wife, or have relations with a menstruous woman. "He will not exploit anyone, or fail to return something given as security for a loan. He will not rob anyone, but will give food to the hungry and cover the naked with clothes. "Nor will he lend money on interest or take back more goods than loaned. He keeps his hand from doing wrong and makes honest judgments between one man and another. "He lives according to My rules, and carries out My instructions faithfully. Such a man is righteous and will certainly live," says the Lord GOD.

"If a man has a son who robs, murders, and does any of these things—"while he, himself has done none of them—a son who feasts at the hill-shrines, sexually pollutes his neighbor's wife, "exploits the poor and needy and fails to return

17
23 Mt 13:22,
Mk 4:32,
Lk 13:19

something given as security for a loan, who looks up to idols and does abominable things, ¹³who lends money for interest and takes back more goods than loaned—will he live? He will not live. Because he does all these abominations he must die and be punished for his wrong.

¹⁴“If a man has a son who sees all the sins his father has done, and being afraid, doesn’t do them, ¹⁵if he doesn’t feast at the hill-shrines and honor Israel’s idols or sexually pollute his neighbor’s wife, ¹⁶exploit or rob people or take pledges, but gives his food to the hungry and covers the naked with clothes, ¹⁷keeps his hand from hurting the poor, or taking interest or extra goods for a loan, but carries out My instructions and lives according to My rules—he mustn’t die for his father’s sins. He will certainly live.

¹⁸“His father will die for his sin, for exploiting others, robbing fellow Israelites, and doing what is wrong among his people. ¹⁹Yet you ask, ‘Why shouldn’t a son suffer for his father’s sin?’ Because the son does what is right and honest, obeys and keeps all My laws, he will certainly live. ²⁰The one who sins must die. A son is not to be punished for his father’s sin, and a father is not to be punished for his son’s sin. A righteous person is credited for his righteousness, and a wicked person suffers for his wickedness.

The End Decides

²¹“When a wicked person turns away from all the sin he did and keeps all My laws and does what is right and honest, he will certainly live and not die. ²²None of the wrongs he did will be counted against him. For the righteous things he did he will live. ²³Do I

want the wicked to die?” asks the Lord GOD. “Don’t I want him to turn from his ways and live?”

²⁴“But when a righteous person turns from his righteousness and does wrong, committing every abomination the wicked man does, will he live? None of the righteous things he did will be remembered because he is unfaithful and has sinned—for these he must die.

²⁵“And yet you say, ‘The LORD’s way isn’t fair.’ Listen, Israel, is My way unfair? No, it’s your way that’s unfair. ²⁶When a righteous man turns from his righteousness, does wrong and dies, he dies for the wrong he did. ²⁷When a wicked person turns from the wickedness he did and does what is right and honest, he saves his life. ²⁸If he understands and turns from the wrong he did—he will certainly live and not die.

²⁹“And yet Israel says, ‘The LORD’s way is unfair.’ Is My way unfair, Israel? Aren’t your ways unfair? ³⁰I will judge everyone of you according to his deeds, Israel,” says the LORD. “Come back, turn from all your wrongs or your sin will ruin you. ³¹Get rid of all your wrongs you have done and get yourselves a new heart and spirit. Why should you die, Israel? ³²I don’t want anyone to die,” says the Lord GOD. “Turn, then, and live.”

Mourn Over the Rulers of Israel

19 Sing a song of mourning over the rulers of Israel, ²and say:

What a lioness your mother was
among the lions!

She lay down among the lions.

She had many cubs.

³She raised one of her cubs.

He became a young lion

and learned to catch prey;
he devoured people.

- ⁴The nations heard about him,
caught him in their pit,
and led him with hooks to Egypt.
- ⁵When she saw she was
thwarted,
she lost hope.
Then she took another of her
cubs
and made him a young lion.
- ⁶Prowling back and forth among
the lions,
he grew into a young lion
and learned to catch prey; he
also devoured people.
- ⁷He destroyed their strongholds
and turned their cities to ruins.
The country and all who were in
it
were terrified at the noise of his
roaring.
- ⁸From the provinces all around
the nations hired allies against
him.
They spread their net over him,
and caught him in their pit.
- ⁹With hooks they put him in a
cage
and took him to the king of Bab-
ylon.
They put him in a fortress
so that his roar wouldn't be
heard anymore
in the hills of Israel.
- ¹⁰Your mother was the same kind
of vine as you.
She was planted beside water.
She had much fruit and many
branches
because there was plenty of
water.
- ¹¹Her strong branches were fit to
be used
as scepters by rulers.
She grew to be high above the
thick foliage around her
and her mass of branches could

be seen standing high.

- ¹²But in anger she was plucked up
and thrown on the ground.
The east wind dried up her fruit.
Her strong branches broke off,
withered, and were burned.
- ¹³Now she's replanted in the
wilderness
in a dry and thirsty ground.
- ¹⁴Fire came out from beneath her
branches
and devoured her fruit.
Then there was no strong bough
on her
that could be used as a scepter
by a ruler.

This is a song of mourning and it
was used as a dirge.

A Record of Israel's Sins

20 On the 10th day of the fifth
month of the seventh year
some elders of Israel came to get
information from the LORD, and
they sat before me.

²The LORD said to me: ³"Son of
man, speak to the elders of Israel,
and tell them, the Lord GOD asks:
Are you coming to consult Me? As I
live, says the Lord GOD, I will not be
consulted by you.

⁴"Will you be their judge? Will
you be their judge, son of man?
Show them what abominable things
their fathers did.

⁵"Tell them, the Lord GOD says:
When I chose Israel, I swore with
My hand raised to those born of
Jacob's family, and I showed Myself
to them in Egypt; with My hand
raised I swore to them and said: I
am the LORD your God. ⁶On that
day with My hand raised I swore to
take them out of Egypt to a country I
chose for them; the most beautiful of
all the countries flowing with milk
and honey.

7"I told them, throw out the filthy gods you're gazing at and don't defile yourselves with the disgusting idols of Egypt. I am the LORD your God. 8But they rebelled against Me and refused to listen to Me. Not one of them threw out the filthy gods he was gazing at or gave up the disgusting idols of Egypt. So I was going to pour out My fury on them and let them feel all My anger in Egypt. 9But I acted to keep My name from being defiled among the nations among whom they were living; I had revealed Myself to them as the One who would take them out of Egypt while those nations were watching.

10"So I took them out of Egypt and brought them into the wilderness. 11I gave them My laws and taught them My rules in which there is life for those who keep them. 12I also gave them My sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, to let them know it is I, the LORD, who makes them holy.

13"But Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness. They didn't live according to My laws and rejected My instructions in which there is life for those who keep them. They made My sabbaths very unholy. I was going to pour out My fury on them in the wilderness to wipe them out. 14But I acted to keep My name from being defiled in the sight of the nations who had seen Me bring them out. 15With My hand raised I also swore to them in the wilderness that I would not bring them into the country I had given them, the most beautiful of all the countries flowing with milk and honey. 16They had rejected My rules and hadn't lived according to My laws; they had made My sabbaths unholy because their hearts were running after disgusting idols. 17But looking on them

with pity I didn't destroy them or completely wipe them out in the desert.

18"I told their sons in the wilderness: Don't live according to the rules of your fathers, don't keep their ways, or dirty yourselves with their filthy idols. 19I am the LORD your God. Live according to My laws, keep My instructions and do them. 20Keep My sabbaths holy and they will become a sign between Me and you to show that I am the LORD your God.

21"But their sons also rebelled against Me; they didn't live according to My laws, and weren't careful to follow My instructions, in which there is life for those who keep them. They made My sabbaths unholy. So I was going to pour out My fury on them and let them feel all My anger in the wilderness. 22But I held back My hand and acted to keep My name from being defiled in the sight of the nations who had seen me bring them out.

23"With My hand raised I also swore to them in the wilderness to scatter them among the nations and spread them out in the different countries. 24because they had disobeyed My instructions, rejected My laws, made My sabbaths unholy, and were looking to their fathers' disgusting idols.

25"Then I too gave them instructions that were no good and laws that brought no life. 26I let them defile themselves with their gifts in sacrificing all their firstborn sons. So I terrified them so they would know I am the LORD.

27"Then speak to Israel, son of man, and tell them the Lord GOD says: Your fathers blasphemed Me again by being disloyal to Me. 28I brought them to the country I sol-

emly swore to give them. When they saw any high hill or any leafy tree, they made their sacrifices and brought offerings there to make Me angry. There they made their sweet fragrance rise, and there they poured out their drink offerings. ²⁹Then I asked them, 'What is this high place where you're going?' They still call it Bamahⁱ today.

³⁰'So, tell Israel, the LORD says: When you defile yourselves the way your fathers did and go lusting after their filthy gods, ³¹when you bring your gifts by sacrificing your children in fire, defiling yourselves with all your idols to this day—should I then let you consult Me, Israel? As I live, says the Lord GOD, I will not let you consult Me. ³²What you have in mind will never be when you think that you want to be like other nations, like the different people in other countries and worship wood and stone. ³³As I live, says the Lord GOD, By a strong hand, a stretched-out arm, and by pouring out fury I will be king over you. ³⁴I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you from the countries where you've been scattered by My strong hand, stretched-out arm, and poured-out fury. ³⁵I will bring you to the Desert of the Peoples and face to face put you on trial there. ³⁶As I put your fathers on trial in the desert near Egypt, so I will put you on trial, says the Lord GOD. ³⁷Then I will make you pass under the rod and bring you into the discipline of the covenant. ³⁸I will rid you of rebels and those who wrong Me. I will take them out of the country where they are living, but they will not come into the land of Israel. Then you will know I am the LORD.

³⁹'As for you people of Israel, the Lord GOD says: Go on each of you, serve your idols; but as I live, you will eventually listen to me. You will no more defile My holy name with your gifts and your disgusting idols.

⁴⁰'On My holy mountain, the high hill of Israel, says the Lord GOD, that is where all Israel, everyone in the land, will worship Me. There I will accept them and there I will ask for your offerings, your best gifts and all your consecrated presents. ⁴¹I will be pleased with you as a sweet fragrance when I bring you out from the nations and gather you from the countries where you were scattered. Through you I will prove Myself holy to the nations who are watching. ⁴²You will know I am the LORD when I bring you to the land of Israel that I solemnly swore to give to your fathers. ⁴³There you will remember your ways and all you did to defile yourselves, and you will loathe yourselves for every wrong you did. ⁴⁴Then you will know I am the LORD when I have dealt with you so as to honor My name, and not according to your evil ways and corrupt doings. O people of Israel, says the Lord GOD.'

⁴⁵The LORD said to me: ⁴⁶'Son of man, look south, preach against the south, and tell what God says against the forest in the Negeb. ⁴⁷Say to the forest in the Negeb: Listen to what the LORD says: The Lord GOD says: I will start a fire in you to burn up every green tree in you and every dry tree. The blazing fire will not go out and will sear all faces from the Negeb to the north. ⁴⁸Everybody will know I the LORD started the fire—it will never go out.'

²⁰
⁴¹ Ep 5:2
Phl 4:18

ⁱHigh Place

⁹Then I said, "O Lord GOD, they say about me, 'Isn't he only a story teller?'"

The Sword of the LORD

21 The LORD told me, ²"Son of man, look at Jerusalem, preach against the holy places, and tell what God says against the land of Israel. ³Tell the land of Israel, the LORD says this: I am against you. I will take My sword out of its scabbard to kill off the righteous and the wicked among you. ⁴Because I'm going to kill off the righteous and the wicked among you, My sword will leave its scabbard to go against everybody from the Negeb to the north. ⁵All will know I the LORD have taken My sword from its scabbard and will not put it back again.

⁶"You, son of man, groan with a breaking heart, groan with bitter weeping while they watch you. ⁷When they ask you, 'Why are you groaning?' answer, 'News has come that will discourage everybody. They will drop their hands helplessly and be in despair; their knees will get as weak as water. It has come. It has happened, says the Lord GOD.'"

⁸The LORD said to me:

⁹"Son of man, prophesy and say, the LORD says:

¹⁰A sword, a sword,
sharpened and polished,
sharpened to kill,
polished to flash like lightning!
(How can we be happy,
the sceptre of my son rejects
every rod?)¹

¹¹He will hand it over to be polished,
then to be taken in hand.

The sword is sharpened and polished;

it is put in the hand of a killer.

¹²Cry and wail, son of man,
because it will fall on My people,
on all the rulers of Israel.
I have abandoned the rulers
and My people to the sword.
In your grief, then, strike your
thigh.

¹³For a testing is made,
and why, if you reject the rod,
should it not take place?
says the Lord GOD.

¹⁴And you, son of man, speak for
God.

Clap your hands—let the sword
double its force,
let the sword that kills triple its
force,

the great sword that kills,
as it closes in on its victims.

¹⁵To make hearts sink and many
fall,

I have put My terrifying sword
at all their gates.

Oh how it is prepared to flash
like lightning,
how polished it is to kill!

¹⁶Make a sharp cut to the right!
Jab it toward the left!

Or wherever it is aimed.

¹⁷I too will clap My hands
and unload My fury.
I the LORD say it."

The King of Babylon at the Crossroads

¹⁸The LORD spoke to me: ¹⁹"You son of man, trace out two roads for the sword of the king of Babylon to take, both of them starting from the same country. Make a sign, and put it where the road starts to go to the city. ²⁰Trace a road for the sword to go to Rabbah of the Ammonites

¹The sentence in parenthesis does not seem to fit this context

and to Judah, to the fortified city of Jerusalem. ²¹The king of Babylon stops at the parting of the ways, at the fork of the two roads to draw lots. He shakes the arrows, asks the house gods, and examines animal livers. ²²Into his right hand drops the lot marked. 'To Jerusalem,': there to set up his battering rams, call for a slaughter, raise a battle cry, aim the battering rams against the gates, heap up mounds, and build siege towers. ²³The people will think the lot is lying, even though (God) has sworn solemn oaths to them that He remembers their wrong so that they will be captured. ²⁴That is why the Lord GOD says: It is because you remind Me of your sinfulness by your open rebellion and show your sins in everything you do. So I will remember you and you will be taken by force.

²⁵'You unholy and wicked ruler of Israel, your time will come when you will finally be punished. ²⁶The Lord GOD says: Take away the turban and get rid of the crown; they will not continue. The low will be high, and the high will be low. ²⁷A ruin, a ruin. I will make it a ruin, and this place will be no more till the Just One comes; then I will give it to Him.

Against the Ammonites

²⁸'Now you son of man, speak for Me and say, the Lord GOD says this: About the Ammonites and their insults, say:

O sword, sword drawn to kill,
polished to devour, and flash
like lightning!

²⁹Men see visions about you that are not true

and make auguries about you that are false,
to put you on the necks of defiled
and wicked men.

for whom the time of final punishment has come.

³⁰Return to your^k scabbard.

In the place where you were made,

the country you came from,
there I will judge you.

³¹I will pour out My fury on you
and make My anger blaze
against you,

and I will put you in the hands of
brutish men
with skill to destroy.

³²You will be fuel for the fire to burn.

and your blood will be in the
middle of the country.

Nobody will remember you
because I the LORD say so."

²¹
²⁶ Lk 1:52

Crimes in Jerusalem

22 The LORD said to me: ¹"You son of man, will you judge, will you judge the bloody city? Then tell her about all her abominations. ²Say this: The Lord GOD says: O city that murders people who are in you, bringing on your doom and polluting yourself with filthy idols! ³The blood you poured out made you guilty and the filthy idols you made defiled you. You have brought nearer your final days and come to the end of your years. That is why I will make you a disgrace to the nations and a joke in every country. ⁴Those near and those far away will mock you—your name is defiled and you're filled with noisy confusion.

⁵"See how each of the rulers of Israel within you has used his strength to murder people. ⁷With-

^kHebrew "her" or "its"

in you a father and a mother are dishonored; within you a stranger is oppressed; within you an orphan and a widow are wronged. ⁸You have despised what is holy to Me and defiled My sabbaths. ⁹Within you are the slanderers who try to kill people, who eat food sacrificed to idols on the hills, and sin sexually. ¹⁰Within you men have sexual relations with their stepmothers. Within you they sexually pollute a woman when she's menstruating; ¹¹men do the shameful things with the wives of their neighbors; another sexually pollutes his daughter-in-law; another within you has sex relations with his sister, his father's daughter. ¹²Some within you take bribes to murder people. You take interest and exact usury. You squeeze a dishonest profit out of your neighbor. And Me you have forgotten, says the Lord GOD.

¹³"I clap my hands at the dishonest profits you have made and the murders among you. ¹⁴Will you still have courage and act strong when I deal with you? I the LORD say it and will do it. ¹⁵I will scatter you among the nations and spread you out in the other countries and get rid of your filth. ¹⁶Then you will be defiled in the sight of the nations and know I am the LORD.

¹⁷The LORD said to me, ¹⁸"Son of man, the people of Israel have become dross as far as I am concerned. They are all like copper, tin, iron, and lead in a smelting furnace or the dross of silver. That is why the Lord GOD says: ¹⁹Because all of you have turned to dross, I will gather you in Jerusalem. ²⁰As silver, copper, iron, lead, and tin are put together in a smelting

furnace where a forced flame melts them, so I will in My anger and fury gather you, put you in, and melt you. ²¹Yes, I will gather you, blow on you with the fire of My fury, and melt you in it. ²²As silver is melted in a furnace, so you will be melted in it. Then you will know I the LORD have poured out My fury on you."

²³The LORD said to me, ²⁴"Son of man, tell her, she is a country that has received neither rain^l nor shower on the day of My anger. ²⁵Her rulers^m within her are like a lion roaring and tearing his prey in pieces. They devour people and take their treasures and precious belongings. They make many women within her widows. ²⁶Her priests violate My law and defile what I consider holy. They don't distinguish between what is holy and unholy or teach the difference between unclean and clean. They shut their eyes to My sabbaths and I am defiled among them. ²⁷Her leaders within her are like wolves tearing their prey in pieces; they are out to murder and destroy people to make dishonest profits. ²⁸Her prophets smear whitewash over these things, providing for them lying visions and false prophecies; saying, 'The Lord GOD said this' when the LORD didn't say it. ²⁹The people of the country oppress and rob, wrong the poor and the needy, and without a reason oppress strangers.

³⁰"When I looked for someone among them who might build the wall or stand in the gap before Me in behalf of the country to keep it from being destroyed, I couldn't find anyone. ³¹So I will pour out My anger on them and with the fire of My fury consume them; I will give

^lGk: Heb "cleansing" ^mGk: Heb "the conspiracy of her prophets"

them what they deserve, says the Lord GOD."

An Allegory

23 The LORD said to me: "Son of man, there were two women, the daughters of one mother. They became prostitutes in Egypt when they were young. There men pressed their breasts and fondled their virgin nipples.

"The big girl's name was Oholah, and her sister's was Oholibah.^a I married them, and they had sons and daughters. Oholah is the name for Samaria, and Oholibah is the name for Jerusalem. ³Though mine, Oholah turned to prostitution and longed for her Assyrian lovers who were nearby. ⁴governors and high officers dressed in purple, all of them handsome young men, cavalry men riding on horses. ⁵She gave herself sexually to them, to all the best of the Assyrians; she defiled herself with the disgusting idols of all those with whom she fell in love. ⁶She didn't give up her prostitution that she started in Egypt; when she was young they lay with her, fondled her virgin nipples, and poured out their sexual passion on her.

"So I handed her over to her lovers and put her in the hands of the Assyrians with whom she had fallen in love. ¹⁰They uncovered her sex organs, took away her sons and daughters, and killed her with a sword. When she was punished she became a subject for gossip by the women.

"When her sister Oholibah saw this, her lust was more shameful;

her prostitution was even worse than her sister's. ¹²She fell in love with the Assyrians who were nearby, governors and high officers, perfectly dressed, cavalry men riding on horses, all of them handsome young men. ¹³I saw that she was polluting herself—both sisters were doing the same things. ¹⁴But she went still further in her prostitution and looked at men pictured on the walls, the figures of Chaldeans painted in red, ¹⁵with belts around their waists and flowing turbans on their heads, all of them looking like officers, like Babylonian men, natives of Chaldea where they were born. ¹⁶She fell in love with them at first sight and sent messengers to them in Chaldea. ¹⁷Then men of Babylon came to visit her on her love-bed and polluted her with their lust. After they had polluted her, she turned away from them in disgust.

"When she carried on her prostitution so openly and uncovered her sex organs, I turned away from her in disgust as I had turned from her sister. ¹⁸She practiced even more prostitution, recalling how she had been a prostitute in Egypt when she was young, ¹⁹longing to mate with those who have the sex organs of jackasses and the emission of horses. ²¹So you tried again to be immoral as in your youth when Egyptians fondled your nipples because you had young breasts.

"That is why, Oholibah, the Lord GOD says: I'm going to stir up your lovers against you from whom you turn away in disgust. From all around I will bring them against

^aOholah means "Her-tabernacle" Oholibah means "my-tabernacle is in her" Samaria had her own tabernacle or temple for idols, Jerusalem had God's temple in it.

you. ²³the Babylonians and Chaldeans, the men of Pekod and Shoa and Koa, with all the Assyrians, handsome young men, all of them governors and high officials, military officers and important men riding horses. ²⁴They will come against you from the north,^o with chariots and wagons and with a horde of troops. From all around they will come against you with small and large shields and with helmets. I have commissioned them to judge you; they will judge and pronounce their verdicts. ²⁵I will set My jealous anger against you. They will deal with you in fury, cutting off your noses and ears and striking down with the sword those that remain. They will take away your sons and your daughters and burn up what is left behind. ²⁶They will strip off your clothes and take away your beautiful jewels. ²⁷I will make you stop your lusting and prostitution that started in Egypt. You won't look at them or remember the Egyptians anymore. ²⁸The Lord GOD says: I'm putting you in the hands of those you hate and those you turn away from in disgust. ²⁹They will treat you hatefully, rob you of all your earnings, and leave you naked and bare. The shame of your prostitution will be exposed. ³⁰Your lusting and prostitution has done this to you because you went whoring after the nations and defiled yourself with their idols. ³¹You've done what your sister did, so I will put her cup in your hand.

³²The LORD says this:

You will drink your sister's cup,
a cup that is deep and wide
and overflowing with scorn and
mockery.

³³You will get drunk and weary
on a cup full of destruction and
terror,

the cup of your sister Samaria.

³⁴You will drink it and drain it,
gnaw on its fragments,
and tear at your breasts.

for I have spoken says the Lord
GOD.

³⁵"So the Lord GOD says: Because you have forgotten Me and thrown Me behind your back, you will have to suffer for your lusting and prostitution."

³⁶The LORD also said to me, "Son of man, are you willing to judge Oholah and Oholibah and tell them about their abominations? ³⁷They are guilty of adultery; their hands are bloody. They practiced adultery, and the sons they bore for Me they have given as burnt offerings to idols. ³⁸They did even more to Me: They defiled My holy place in that day and made My sabbaths unholy. ³⁹On the very day they killed their children for their idols, they came into My holy place to defile it. See, that is what they've done in My temple. ⁴⁰More than this—you sent for men to come from far away. When the messenger you sent reached them, they came, so you washed yourself for them, painted your eyes, and put on jewels. ⁴¹You sat on your ornate couch with a table spread in front of it, and you set My incense and My olive oil on it. ⁴²There was the noise of a reckless crowd; drunken men from a horde of desert dwellers who came and put bracelets on the women's wrists and beautiful crowns on their heads. ⁴³Then I thought of her who was wornout with adulteries: Even now her pros-

^oGk: The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain

titution continues. "Men came to her as to a prostitute; just as they came to those lusting women, Oholah and Oholibah. "Just men will judge them as adulteresses and as murderers because they are adulteresses and their hands are bloody.

"The Lord GOD says: Bring together an assembly to deal with them, to assign them to horror and spoil. "Then the assembly should stone them, cut them down with their swords, kill their sons and daughters, and burn their homes. "So I will stop the lusting in the land, and all the women will be warned not to lust like them. "You will be punished for your immorality and suffer for your idolatrous sinning. Then you will know I am the Lord GOD."

Jerusalem—A Boiling Pot

24 The LORD spoke to me on the 10th day of the 10th month in the ninth year^P: "Son of man, write down the date of this day. Today the king of Babylon laid siege to Jerusalem. "Give the rebellious people a picture of it.

"Tell them, the Lord GOD says:

Set on a pot over a fire.

Set it on and pour in water.

"Put in it pieces of meat, good pieces of thigh and shoulder.

Fill it with the best of bones,

⁵selected from the best sheep.

Also pile wood under it.

Boil it vigorously.

Cook well the bones that are in it.

"So the Lord GOD says:

Woe to that bloody city,
that rusty pot.

Its rust will not come off.

Take out of her piece after piece without casting a lot for any
⁷for her blood is still in her.

She has put it on a bare rock.

She didn't pour it on the ground
to be covered with dust.

⁸In order to stir up My fury
and pay her back,

I have put her blood on a bare
rock

so it wouldn't be covered.

⁹So the Lord GOD says:

Woe to the bloody city!

I too will make a big pile of
wood.

¹⁰Pile it up and light the fire!

Cook the meat thoroughly, stir
the mixture,

and let the bones burn.

¹¹Then I will set it empty on the
coals

to get it hot and make its copper
glow,

to burn away its uncleanness
inside,

and get rid of its rust.

¹²"She has worn Me out with work:

yet even the fire will not take away
her thick rust. "I have tried to

cleanse you of your filthy lust, but
you haven't gotten rid of your filth.

You will never get clean till I spend
My fury on you. "I the LORD say

it—it will happen; I will do it. I will
not hold back or pity or change My

mind. I will punish you according to
how you live and give you what you

deserve, says the Lord GOD."

Ezekiel's Personal Troubles— A Portent

¹⁵Then the LORD said to me:

¹⁶"Son of man, with a blow I'm going
to take away from you the one your

eyes delight to see. But you must not

^PThe ninth year of Zedekiah

mourn or cry or let your tears flow. ¹⁷Quietly sigh but don't mourn for the dead. Wind your turban around your head and put on your sandals. Don't put your hand to your upper lip, or eat the food of mourning."

¹⁸I talked to the people in the morning and that evening my wife died. The next morning I did as I was told.

¹⁹The people asked me, "Won't you tell us what it means for us that you're acting like this?"

²⁰I told them, "The LORD said to me: ²¹Tell the people of Israel, the Lord GOD says: I will defile My holy place, the pride of your strength, the place you delight to see and long for. The sword will cut down the sons and daughters you left behind. ²²Now do as I did: Don't cover your upper lip, or eat the food of mourning. ²³Keep your turbans on your heads and your sandals on your feet. Don't mourn or cry; only pine away in your guilt and groan to one another. ²⁴Ezekiel is a warning sign to you. When it happens, do everything he has done. Then you will know I am the Lord GOD.

²⁵"And you, son of man, will be unable to speak^q on the day I take away from them their beautiful and joyous stronghold, what their eyes delight to see and their hearts long for, along with their sons and daughters. ²⁶On that day a fugitive will come to you to tell you the news. ²⁷On that very day your mouth will be opened and you will talk to the fugitive. You will speak and not be silent anymore. You will be a warning sign to them. Then they will know I am the LORD."

Against the Ammonites

25 The LORD said to me, "'Son of man, look at the Ammonites and speak against them for Me. ¹Tell the Ammonites: Listen to what the Lord GOD says. The Lord GOD says: Because you cried 'Aha!' when My holy place was defiled and Israel's land was laid in ruins and the people of Judah went into exile. ²I will hand you over to the eastern tribes. They will occupy your land with their tent-villages and settle among you. They will eat what you produce and drink your milk. ³I will make Rabbah a pasture for camels, and Ammon a place where sheep lie down. Then you will know I am the LORD. ⁴The Lord GOD says: Because you clapped your hands and stamped your feet and were delighted, feeling every contempt for Israel's country, ⁵I will stretch out My fist against you, hand you over as spoil to the nations, eliminate you from the nations, wipe you out as a country and destroy you. Then you will know I am the LORD.

Against Moab

¹"The Lord GOD says: Because Moab and Seir say, 'The people of Judah are like all the other nations,' ²I will open Moab's flank so that their cities shall be laid bare throughout the country, the beautiful country of Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim. ³Along with the Ammonites I will allow Moab to be occupied by the eastern people, so that neither they nor the Ammonites will be remembered among the nations. ⁴I will punish

^qHeb uncertain

Moab and then they will know I am the LORD.

Against Edom

10“‘The Lord God says: Because of what Edom did when it took revenge on the people of Judah, loading themselves with guilt as they took revenge. 11the Lord GOD says: I will stretch out My fist against Edom, wipe out man and beast and turn the country to ruins from Teman to Dedan. They will be struck down by the sword. 12I will use My people Israel to take revenge on Edom; they will handle Edom according to My anger and My fury. Then they will know My revenge, says the Lord GOD.

Against the Philistines

13“‘The Lord GOD says: Because of what the Philistines did in taking revenge, feeling contemptuous, meaning to destroy in a never-ending hate. 14the Lord GOD says: I will stretch out My fist against the Philistines, wipe out the Cherethites, and destroy the people that are left on the sea coast. 15I will take fierce revenge on them with furious punishments. When I take revenge on them they will know I am the LORD.”

Against Tyre

26 On the first day of the month in the eleventh year the LORD said to me, 2“‘Son of man, Tyre has said against Jerusalem, ‘Aha, the city that was the gate for the nations is broken and swung open to me. I’ll get rich now that she’s ruined’; 3that is why the Lord GOD says: I am against you, Tyre, and will bring many nations

against you as the sea dashes its waves against the shore. 4They will destroy the walls of Tyre, tear down her towers. I will scrape the soil off her and make her a bare rock. 5In the middle of the sea she will be a place for men to spread their nets, for I have spoken, says the Lord GOD. She will become spoil taken by the nations. 6On the mainland the sword will kill off the towns depending on her. Then they will know I am the LORD.

7“‘The Lord GOD says, ‘I’m going to bring against Tyre from the north Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, the king of kings, with horses, chariots, war horses, a horde of people and many troops. 8He will put to the sword the towns on the mainland depending on you. He will build siegeworks against you, throw up ramparts against you, and raise against you grappling hooks.’ 9He will aim his battering rams against your walls and with his axes cut down your towers. 10His horses will be so many their dust will cover you. The noise of the war horses, wagon wheels, and chariots will shake your walls when he enters your gates as men enter a conquered city. 11With his horses’ hoofs he’ll trample on all your streets. He will kill your people with the sword, and your strong pillars will fall to the ground. 12They will plunder your riches and take your goods as spoil. They will destroy your walls and tear down your delightful homes. They will dump your stones, lumber, and soil into the water.

13“‘I will silence your noisy songs, and no music will be heard from your lyres anymore. 14I will make

¹³or, “shields”

you a bare rock. You will be a place to spread fishing nets. You will never be built again for I the LORD have spoken, says the Lord GOD.

¹⁵“The Lord GOD says to Tyre: Won’t the crash when you fall shake the people who live by the sea? The wounded will groan and people will be killed. ¹⁶Then all who rule the coastal lands will step down from their thrones, lay aside their robes and take off their richly woven garments. Dressed with terror, they will sit on the ground trembling every moment and shuddering over you. ¹⁷Then they will sing a lament over you and say to you:

O how you have been destroyed,
you have been shattered by the sea.

O city that was praised,
you and your kings were stronger than the sea;
all your kings spread abroad their terror.

¹⁸But now your fall will make the people who live by the sea tremble,
and the end of you will terrify the coastal lands.

¹⁹“The Lord GOD says: When I make you a city of ruins like the towns where no one lives, when I bring over you the ocean depths and the great sea covers you, ²⁰then I will bring you down with those who descend to the grave, to the people of long ago. I will make you live in the netherworld, like the ancient ruins, with those who go down to the grave. You will never return and be restored to the land of the living. ²¹I will make you a terror, and you will be no more. People may look for you but will never find you again, says the Lord GOD.”

A Dirge Over Tyre

27 The LORD said to me: “Son of man, sing a dirge over Tyre. Tell Tyre, which is situated in a harbor doing business with the people on many coasts, the Lord GOD says:

O Tyre, you used to say,
‘I’m a perfect beauty!’

“Your borders were surrounded by the sea.

Those who built you made you a perfect beauty.

“They made all your planks from pines of Mount Hermon and took a cedar from Lebanon to put up a mast on you.

“They made your oars of oaks from Bashan.

your deck of boxwood from the shores of Cyprus.

inlaid it with ivory.

“Your sail that serves also as an ensign is made of fine woven linen from Egypt.

Your awning is violet and purple from the coasts of Elishah.

“Men from Sidon and Arvad are rowing for you.

Skilled men, O Tyre, are within you:

they are your sailors.

“Master craftsmen from Gebal are within you:

they caulk your seams.

All the ships on the sea with their seamen

are within you to do business.

¹⁰Men from Persia, Lud, and Put

are soldiers in your army;

they hang their shields and helmets within you,

making you look splendid.

¹¹“Men of Arvad and Helech are on your walls all around, and men of Gammad are on your towers. They

¹⁷ Rv 18:9-10
¹⁹ Rv 18:19
²¹ Rv 18:21

hang their shields on your walls all around, making you a perfect beauty. ¹²Tarshish is doing business with you because you are so very rich. They give you silver, iron, tin, and lead for your goods. ¹³The Greeks, Tubal, and Meshech, doing business with you, give you slaves and copper articles for your goods. ¹⁴Men of Togarmah give you horses, chariot-horses and mules for your goods. ¹⁵Men of Dedan do business with you. You trade with many lands by the sea, and they bring you ivory tusks and ebony as tribute. ¹⁶Because you manufacture so many goods, Aram^a is doing business with you. They give you jewels, purple goods, richly woven cloth, linen, corals, and rubies for your goods. ¹⁷Judah and the country of Israel do business with you. They give you wheat from Minnith, baked goods, honey, olive oil, and balsam. ¹⁸Because you manufacture so many goods and are so very rich, Damascus does business with you, bringing wine from Helbon and wool from Sahar. ¹⁹Rhodes and Greece go away^t having given iron objects, cinnamon, and sweet cane for your goods. ²⁰Dedan does business with you bringing saddlecloths. ²¹Arabia and all the rulers of Kedar do business with you trading in lambs, rams, and he-goats. ²²The traders of Sheba and Raamah do business with you, giving the finest spices, every kind of precious stone, and gold for your goods. ²³Haran, Canneh, Eden, the traders of Sheba, Asshur, and Kilmad do business with you. ²⁴They trade in your market places for splendid clothes, purple robes, richly woven cloth,

rugs of colored yarn, and strong twisted cords. ²⁵Ships of Tarshish are the caravans bringing your goods.

²⁶You are filled and loaded down in the middle of the sea.

The rowers will take you into deep waters, and a wind from the east will wreck you in the middle of the sea.

²⁷Your wealth, your goods, and your wares, your seamen and your sailors, your caulkers and your businessmen,

all the soldiers who are on board with your whole crew will go down into the sea when you fall.

²⁸When your sailors yell the land nearby will tremble.

²⁹All who handle the oars, the sailors and all the seafarers will step down from their ships and stand on the shore.

³⁰They will lift their voices over you and cry out bitterly, put dust on their heads, and cover themselves with ashes,

³¹have their heads for you, fasten on sackcloth with a belt, and with bitter mourning weep over you.

³²With wailing, they will sing a dirge over you and continue to mourn: Who is like Tyre, so silent, in the middle of the sea?

³³When your goods went out by sea, you filled many people with your

27
13 Rv 18
12-13
23 Rv 18
12-13
27-29 Rv
18:18
30-32 Rv 18
11, 15, 16-19

^aSome Heb manuscripts read "Edom"
^t"Rhodes . . . away" Heb uncertain

great wealth and your goods
and made the kings of the world
rich.

¹⁰Now the sea will wreck you
with its deep water.
Your goods and your whole crew
will sink down in the middle of
you.

¹¹All the people who live by the
sea
will be terrified about you.
Their kings will be horrified
and look thunder-struck.

¹²The traders among the people
will jeer you.
You will come to an awful end
and will be no more forever.

28 The LORD said to me, ¹³"Son
of man, tell the ruler of
Tyre, the Lord GOD says:

You imagine you're very im-
portant and say,

¹⁴'I'm a god. I sit on God's throne
in the middle of the sea.'
But you're only a man and not a
god,
yet you try to think like God.

¹⁵You are wiser than Daniel,
no secret is hidden from you.

¹⁶Because you are shrewd and
intelligent you've gotten rich
and put gold and silver in your
treasuries.

¹⁷By being shrewd in your busi-
ness you made yourself very
rich,
and your wealth has made you
arrogant.

¹⁸So the Lord God says:
Since you think you are like God,

¹⁹I will bring foreigners against
you,
the most ruthless of the nations.
They will draw their swords
against your clever beauty
and soil your splendor.

²⁰You will be thrown down into
the pit,
and die as one slaughtered in
the middle of the sea.

²¹'Will you still say 'I'm a god'
when you face those who kill
you?

You're not a god but a man,
in the hands of those who will
kill you.

²²You will die the death of the
uncircumcised
at the hands of strangers—
because I say so, says the
LORD."

²³The LORD told me, ²⁴"Son of
man, sing a dirge over the king of
Tyre, and say to him: The Lord GOD
says:

You were the seal of perfection,
very wise, and perfect in beau-
ty.

²⁵You were in Eden, God's garden:
you were covered with every
kind of precious stone,
ruby, chrysolite, diamond,
beryl, onyx, jasper, sapphire,
garnet, emerald, and gold.

The workmanship of your set-
tings and your sockets
was prepared on the day you
were created.

²⁶You were an anointed guardian
angel:

I appointed you.
You were on God's holy hill,
walking among fiery stones.

²⁷Your behavior was perfect
from the time you were created
till you were found doing wrong.

²⁸Because of all your trading,
crime filled your heart
and you fell into sin.

So I threw you from God's hill a
an unholy thing.

I wiped you out, O guardian
angel,
from among the fiery stones.

¹⁷You were proud of your beauty.
You corrupted your wisdom to
increase your splendor.

I threw you on the ground
and laid you before kings
for them to gaze at you.

¹⁸With all the wrong you did in
your crooked business
you defiled your own holy
places.

I kindled a fire within you
to consume you.

I turned you to ashes on the
ground
in the presence of all who looked
on.

¹⁹All the people who know you are
terrified over you.

You have come to a terrible end;
you will exist no more forever."

Against Sidon

¹⁰The LORD said to me, ¹¹"Son of
man, look at Sidon and speak
against her for Me. ¹²Say, the Lord
GOD says:

I'm against you, Sidon,
and will show My glory through
you.

People will know I am the LORD
when I punish her and show how
holy I am.

²¹I will send a plague against her
and blood will flow on her
streets.

Her dead will fall;
the sword will come against her
from every side.

Then they will know I am the
LORD.

²⁴The people of Israel will no more
be hurt by a thorn that pricks
them

or a painful brier from every-
body around them.

Then they too will know I am the
Lord GOD."

²⁵The Lord GOD said, "When I

gather Israel from the nations
among whom they were scattered, I
will show my holiness among them
while the nations watch. They will
live in their own land, the land I
gave to My servant Jacob. ²⁶They
will live there securely, build
homes, and plant vineyards. They
will live in safety when I punish all
the surrounding people who despise
them. Then they will know I am the
LORD their God."

Against Egypt

29 On the 12th day of the 10th
month of the 10th year the
LORD said to me, ²"Son of man,
look at Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and
speak against him for Me and
against all Egypt. ³Say, the Lord
GOD says:

I'm against you, Pharaoh, king of
Egypt.

you big crocodile lying in the
middle of the streams of the
Nile.

You say 'The Nile is mine. I
made it for myself.'

⁴I will put hooks in your jaws
and make the fish in your
streams stick to your scales.

I will pull you out of your
streams
with all the fish in your streams
sticking to your scales.

⁵I will throw you down in the
desert,
you and all the fish in your
streams.

You will fall on the open field,
and nobody will pick you up or
gather you.

I will give you as food
to the beasts of the field and the
birds of the air.

⁶Then all the people in Egypt will
know I am the LORD,

for Egypt has become to the people of Israel

a walking staff made out of a reed.

⁷When Israel grabbed it,

it splintered and injured their shoulders.

When they leaned on it, it broke and made their legs stumble.

⁸“So the Lord GOD says: I will bring a sword against you to cut down man and beast. ⁹The country of Egypt will be laid waste and turned to ruins. Then you will know I am the LORD. Because you say, ‘The Nile is mine, and I made it,’ ¹⁰I’m against you and the streams of your Nile. I will turn the country of Egypt into ruins, a barren waste, from Migdol to Syene^u and to the border of Ethiopia. ¹¹No human being will walk through it, no animal will walk through it, and nobody will live there for 40 years. ¹²I will make the country of Egypt a barren waste among all the desolate countries; among the ruined cities her cities will lie in ruins for 40 years. I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and spread them out among the countries.

¹³“The Lord God says: After 40 years I will gather the Egyptians from the people where I scattered them. ¹⁴I will restore the Egyptians and bring them back to Pathros,^v the land they came from. There they will be a small kingdom, ¹⁵more lowly than any other, and will not again raise their head above the other nations. I will make them so small they will never again rule over the nations. ¹⁶Israel will never again trust Egypt, remembering how wrong they were whenever they

turned to follow them. Then they will know I am the Lord GOD.”

¹⁷On the first day of the first month of the 27th year the LORD said to me, ¹⁸“Son of man, Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon made his army work hard against Tyre—every head was worn bald and every shoulder rubbed bare. There was no reward for him and his army in Tyre for the hard work he did against it. ¹⁹So the Lord GOD says I will give Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon the land of Egypt, so he can carry off her wealth, take the spoils from her, and plunder her; that will be the pay his army gets. ²⁰As pay for his work I will give him the land of Egypt, because they worked for Me, says the Lord GOD.

²¹“On that day I will make a horn sprout up from the people of Israel and give you, Ezekiel, something to say among them. Then they will know I am the LORD.”

30 The LORD said to me, ²²“Son of man, speak for Me and say, the Lord GOD says:

Wail for the day!

³Because the day is near, the day of the LORD is near.

It will be a cloudy day, a time of doom for the nations.

⁴A sword will come into Egypt and anguish into Ethiopia, a time when people will fall down dead in Egypt,

her wealth will be taken away, and her foundations torn up.

⁵With them Ethiopia, Put, Lud, all the Arabs, Libyans,^w and men from the countries bound to Egypt by treaty will be cut down by the sword.

^uAsswan ^vSouthern Egypt

^wConjecture on basis of the Gk: Heb “Cub”

*The LORD says:

Those who support Egypt will fall.

The power she's proud of will go down.

The sword will cut them down from Migdol to Syene, says the Lord GOD.

†Her allies will lose their populations among the other forsaken countries, and their cities will be among the other ruined cities. †Then they will know I am the LORD when I kindle a fire in Egypt and all who help her are crushed. †On that day messengers will come from Me in ships to terrify the carefree Ethiopians, and they will be in anguish on the day of Egypt's doom. It is coming—now!

††The Lord GOD says: I will have Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon put an end to Egypt's masses. ††He and his troops with him, the most ruthless among the nations, will be brought in to destroy the country. They will draw their swords against Egypt and fill the country with dead bodies. ††I will dry up the streams of the Nile and put the country into wicked hands. I will have strangers lay waste the country and everything in it. I, the Lord have spoken.

†††The Lord GOD says: I will destroy the idols and put an end to the gods of Noph.^x Never again will a ruler rise from Egypt. I will put fear into the country of Egypt. †††I will lay Pathros in ruins, set Zoan on fire and execute sentences against No.^y †††I will pour out My fury on Sin.^z Egypt's fortress, and cut off the population of No. †††I will set a fire to Egypt—Sin will be in anguish, No will be broken into pieces, and Noph will be oppressed every day. †††A

sword will cut down the young men in On^a and Pi-beseth^b and these cities will go into exile. ††In Tahpanhes the day will turn dark when I break the yoke of Egypt there. Her proud strength will come to an end, a cloud will cover her, and her hamlets will go into exile. ††When I punish the Egyptians, they will know I am the LORD.††

†††On the seventh day of the first month of the 11th year the LORD said to me. †††Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt. It isn't bandaged so as to heal and have enough strength to handle a sword.

††††So the Lord GOD says: I'm against Pharaoh king of Egypt and will break both of his arms, the sound one and the broken one, and make the sword drop from his hands. ††††I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and spread them out in other countries. ††††I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, put My sword in his hand, and break Pharaoh's arms to make him groan before him like one mortally wounded. ††††I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but Pharaoh's arms will drop. People will know I am the LORD when I put My sword in the hand of the king of Babylon and he strikes the land of Egypt with it. ††††I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and spread them out in other countries. Then they will know I am the LORD.††††

Assyria, a Warning to Egypt

31 On the first day of the third month of the 11th year the LORD said to me, †††Son of man,

^xMemphis ^yThebes ^zPelusium ^aHeliopolis ^bBubastis

say to Pharaoh king of Egypt and his horde:

To whom are you to be compared in your splendor?

¹Look at Assyria: it was a cedar in Lebanon, with fine branches making a shady woodland, with a tall trunk and its head among the clouds.

⁴Water made it grow, and underground streams gave it height; its streams trickled around the place where it was planted, channeling water to all the other trees around it.

⁵That is how it had grown taller than all the other trees; adding many branches and lengthening its boughs because plenty of water reached the stock.

⁶All the birds of the air made their nests in its branches; under the branches the animals of the field had their young; in its shade people of many nations settled.

⁷So, with its long branches, it was beautiful in its splendor because its roots could get at abundant water.

⁸No cedar in God's garden could equal it.

Pines couldn't match its branches, and plane-trees had nothing like its boughs.

There wasn't a tree in God's garden to match its beauty.

⁹It was I who made it beautiful with its many branches.

It was the envy of all the trees in Eden,

all that were in God's garden.

¹⁰"So the Lord GOD says: Because it grew so tall and held its head among the clouds, and was proud of being so tall, ¹¹I delivered it to the mighty prince of the nations to deal with it. For its wickedness I drove it out. ¹²Foreigners, the most ruthless of the nations, cut it down and threw it away. Its branches fell on the hills and in all the valleys. Its boughs lie broken in all the ravines of the land. All the nations in the world came down from under its shade and let it lie there. ¹³All the birds of the air settled down on its fallen trunk and all the animals of the field came to its branches

¹⁴This happened to keep other trees growing by the water from being proud of their height and holding their heads among the clouds. The mightiest of them, though well-watered, shall no longer stand erect, because they are all doomed to die and descend to the netherworld to join others who have gone down in the grave.

¹⁵"The Lord GOD says: When he went down in the grave, I made the deep mourn as I covered him, holding back its streams till the great waters were stopped. I made Lebanon mourn for him and all the other trees in the field droop as they grieved over him. ¹⁶By the crash of his fall I shook the nations when I brought him down to the grave to join those who have descended to the abyss. Then all the trees of Eden, the choice ones and the best on Lebanon, all that are well-watered were comforted in the netherworld. ¹⁷They had gone down with him in the grave to join others the sword had cut down; and those who

31
6 Mt 13:32.
Mt 4:32.
Lk 13:19.
Rev 7:7

⁶Gk leaves out "as I covered"

lived in his shade were scattered^d among the nations.

¹⁶“To which of the trees of Eden shall you be likened in glory and splendor? But you will be brought down with the trees of Eden to the netherworld; you will lie among the uncircumcised with those the sword has cut down. This means Pharaoh and all his horde of people, says the Lord GOD.”

32 On the first day of the 12th month of the 12th year the LORD said to me, ²“Son of man, sing a dirge over Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say to him:

You are ruined, O lion among the nations.

You're like a crocodile in the water,

snorting with your nostrils, stirring up water with your feet; making the streams muddy.

³“The Lord GOD says: I will spread My net over you, and use a horde from many nations to pull you out in My net. ⁴I will throw you on the ground, hurl you on an open field. I will make all the birds of the air settle on you and the animals of the whole earth gorge themselves on you. ⁵I will lay your flesh on the hills and fill the valleys with your rotting carcass. ⁶I will drench the earth with what flows from you, with your blood; even the hills and the ravines will be full of it.

⁷“When I put out your light, I will cover the heavens and darken the stars. I will cover the sun with a cloud and the moon will not shine anymore. ⁸I will darken all the lights shining in the sky above you. I put darkness over your land, says the Lord GOD.

⁹“I will trouble the hearts of many peoples when I bring your people who were taken captive^e among the nations to lands you don't know. ¹⁰I will terrify many people about you; their kings will shudder when I brandish My sword in their faces. When you fall, each person will tremble for his life every moment.

¹¹“The Lord GOD says, The sword of the king of Babylon will come upon you. ¹²I will cut down your crowd by the swords of warriors, all of them the most ruthless of the nations. They will smash the pomp of Egypt and destroy its horde of people. ¹³I will also destroy all its animals on the shores of many waters. No human foot or animal's hoof will stir up the waters anymore. ¹⁴Then I will make their waters clear up and make their streams flow like oil, says the Lord GOD. ¹⁵When I lay Egypt waste and turn it to ruins, making it a country that has lost everything it had, when I strike down all the people in it, then they will know I am the LORD.

¹⁶“This is a dirge. The women of the nations will sing it. They will sing it as they mourn over Egypt and its horde of people, says the Lord GOD.”

Pharaoh and His Army in the Grave

¹⁷On the 15th day of the month in the 12th year the LORD said to me, ¹⁸“Son of man, you and the daughters of the nations should weep over Egypt's horde of people whom I bring down, for I will bring them down to the netherworld to be with those who have gone down to the grave.

32
7-8 MI 24-29;
MR 13:24-
25; LK 21
25; RV 6
12-13; 8:12

^dHeb uncertain ^eGk; Heb “your broken (army?)”

¹⁹“Are you more beautiful than anyone else? Go down and join the uncircumcised.

²⁰“The Egyptians will lie among those slain by the sword, cut down by the sword that was intended for them. Pull down Egypt with all her horde of people. ²¹The mightiest of the warriors will speak to Pharaoh in the grave: ‘You and those who help you^f have come down to lie with the uncircumcised who were struck down by the sword.’

²²“Assyria and all her army are there with their graves round about, all of them dead, cut down by the sword. ²³Assyria was buried in the back recesses of the abyss, and her army was placed around her burial-place, all of them dead, cut down by the sword—they who had brought terror to the land of the living.

²⁴“Elam with all her army around her grave is there, all of them dead, cut down by the sword. They went down uncircumcised into the land below—they had brought terror to the land of the living and now bear their disgrace with the others who have gone down to the grave. ²⁵ Elam with all her horde was given a bed among the slain. Round about their graves are all the uncircumcised, cut down by the sword because they terrified others in the land of the living. Now they bear their disgrace with those who have gone down to the grave; they have been laid among the slain.

²⁶“Meshech, Tubal, and all their hordes were there, with their graves round about. They were all uncircumcised and were cut down by the sword because they terrified others in the land of the living. ²⁷Don’t they lie with the uncircum-

cised heroes who fell and went down to the grave with their weapons of war, whose swords were put under their heads and whose shields^g were put beside their bones, for as heroes they terrified the land of the living.

²⁸“So you too will be smashed with the uncircumcised and lie with those cut down by the sword.

²⁹“Edom is there with her kings and her rulers, who despite all their heroism were put with those cut down by the sword. They lie there with the uncircumcised and others who have gone down to the grave.

³⁰“All the rulers of the north and all the Sidonians are there. They too came down with the slain, feeling ashamed of the terror they brought by their heroism, and they lie uncircumcised with those cut down by the sword and bear their disgrace with others who went down to the grave.

³¹“When Pharaoh sees all these he will be consoled over all his horde that were cut down by the sword, Pharaoh and his whole army, says the Lord GOD. ³²I have put My terror in the land of the living, and Pharaoh will be laid among the uncircumcised with those cut down by the sword, he and all his crowd, says the Lord GOD.

Ezekiel as Watchman

33 The LORD told me: ¹“Son of man, speak to your people and tell them: When I cause an enemy to come with the sword to attack a country, and the people of the country choose one of their men and make him their watchman, ²if he sees the enemy coming and he blows his trumpet to warn the peo-

^fGk: Heb uncertain ^gHeb “their wrongs”

ple. "then if they hear the trumpet but ignore the warning, they will be responsible for their own death if the enemy comes and takes them. "They heard the trumpet blow but ignored its warning: They are responsible for their own deaths. But if they take the warning then they will save their lives.

⁸"But if the watchman who sees the enemy with the sword coming doesn't blow his trumpet, and so fails to warn the people and the enemy comes and kills any of them, such a person must die for his wrong. I will hold that watchman responsible for their death.

⁷"So I have appointed you, son of man, as a watchman for Israel; listen to what I say and warn them for Me. "When I tell the wicked man, 'You will certainly die, wicked man,' and you say nothing to warn the wicked man to stop what he's doing, that wicked man will die for his wrong, but I will hold you responsible for his death. "But when you warn a wicked man to stop and repent, but he doesn't repent, then he shall die for his wrong, but you have saved your life.

¹⁰"Son of man, tell Israel: You say, 'Our sins and our wrongs weigh on us; they cause us to waste away. How can we go on living?' "Tell them: As I live, says the LORD, I don't want the wicked man to die; I want him to repent and live. Turn, turn from your wicked ways! Why do you want to die, people of Israel?

¹¹"Son of man, tell your people: The righteousness of the righteous man will not save him when he sins. When the wicked man turns away from his wickedness he will no longer stumble in it, but the righteousness of the righteous can't keep him alive when he sins. ¹¹When I

promise the righteous man that he will surely live, but he, trusting in his righteousness, does wrong, none of his righteousness will be remembered, but the wrong he does will kill him. "When I tell the wicked, 'You will surely die,' but he turns from his sin and does what is just and right, ¹⁵if he gives back what he holds as a pledge, pays back what he robbed, lives by the laws of life and keeps from doing wrong, then he will surely live and not die. ¹⁶None of the sins he did will be held against him. He has done what is just and right: He will surely live.

¹⁷"But your people say, 'The Lord doesn't treat us fairly,' when really they're the ones not acting fairly. ¹⁸When the righteous man turns away from his righteousness and does wrong, he will die for it. ¹⁹When the wicked turns away from his wickedness and does what is just and right, he will live because of it. ²⁰Still you say, 'The Lord doesn't treat us fairly.' I will judge everyone of you by what you do, O Israel."

Jerusalem Is Captured

²¹It happened on the fifth day of the 10th month of the 12th year of our captivity. A man who had escaped from Jerusalem came to me. "The city is destroyed," he said.

²²The evening before the morning the fugitive arrived, the LORD put His hand on me and opened my mouth. So my mouth was opened and I wasn't silent anymore. ²³Then the LORD told me, ²⁴"Son of man, the people living in those ruins of the land of Israel are saying, 'Abraham was alone when he got the land. Now the land is given to us and we're many.' ²⁵So, tell them the Lord GOD says this: You eat

meat with blood still in it. You lift up your eyes to your idols and commit murder. Now do you expect to get the land? ²⁶You depend on your swords. You do detestable things; you defile each other's wives. Now do you expect to get the land? ²⁷Tell them, the Lord GOD says this: As I live, the sword will certainly strike down those who are among the ruins. Those who are in the open fields I will give as food to the wild beasts. And the plague will kill those who are in fortified places and caves. ²⁸I will make the land a terrible waste. No longer will it take pride in its strength. The hills of Israel will be so barren nobody will go through them. ²⁹They will know I am the LORD when I make the land an appalling waste on account of the detestable things they do.

The People Hear But Will Not Do

³⁰“Now son of man, your people are talking about you near the walls and in the doorways of their homes. One is saying to another, ‘Come and hear the message that comes from the LORD.’ ³¹My people will come crowding in to you and sit down in front of you. They will listen to what you say but will not do it. While they talk so lovingly with their mouths, in their hearts they are out for selfish gain. ³²You are to them like a love song, like one who has a pleasing voice and can play well on an instrument. Though they hear what you say, they will not do it. ³³But when it happens—and it will happen—then they will know a prophet has been among them.”

Against the Rulers of Israel

34 The LORD told me: ¹“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and

tell these shepherds: The Lord GOD says this: Woe to you shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves. Shouldn't shepherds feed their sheep? ²You consume milk and dress in wool. You butcher the fat animals. You haven't fed the sheep, ³strengthened the weak, healed the sick or bandaged broken limbs; nor have you brought back those that were driven away, or looked for the lost, but you have ruled them with force and violence. ⁴So they were scattered because there was no Shepherd. They became prey for all the beasts of the field and were scattered. ⁵My sheep wandered through all the mountains and over every high hill. They were scattered all over the earth, and there was no one searching for them or trying to find them.

⁶“So, O shepherds, hear what the LORD says: ⁷As I live, says the LORD, since My sheep are without a shepherd and have become a prey and are devoured by the beasts of the field and since My shepherds haven't searched for My sheep but have fed themselves and not My sheep, ⁸then hear O shepherds, what the LORD says: ⁹the Lord GOD says this: I'm against the shepherds and will demand My sheep from their hands and not let them be shepherds of My sheep anymore. The shepherds will not feed themselves anymore. I will rescue My sheep from their mouths, and they shall not devour them.

¹⁰“The Lord GOD says this: Look! I, even I, will search for My sheep and look after them. ¹¹As a shepherd looks after his flock when they are scattered around him, so I will take care of my flock and rescue them from every place where they may be scattered on cloudy and

34
5 Mt 9:36;
Mk 6:34;
1 Pt 2:25

gloomy days. ¹¹I will bring them away from those peoples, gather them from those countries, bring them to their own land. I will feed them on the hills of Israel, by the streams, and in all the places of that land where it is so good to live. ¹⁴I will feed them in good pasture, and their grazing land shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they will rest in a good place and graze in a rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵I will feed My sheep and let them rest, says the Lord GOD. ¹⁶I will look for the lost, bring back what was driven away, bandage broken limbs and strengthen the sick. I will preserve^h the fat and strong ones and feed them properly.

¹⁷And as for you, My sheep, the Lord GOD says this: I will judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and he-goats. ¹⁸Is it not enough for you to feed on the best pasture, must you trample on the rest? You drink clear water, must you make what is left muddy with your feet? ¹⁹So My sheep have to eat what your feet have trampled on and drink what your feet have made muddy. ²⁰So the Lord GOD says this: Look! I, even I, will judge between the fat and the lean sheep. ²¹You with your flanks and shoulders push away all the weak animals and gore them with your horns till you have scattered them far and wide. ²²Therefore I will rescue My flock so that they will no more be a prey, and I will judge between one sheep and another.

One Shepherd and a Covenant of Peace

²³I will raise up one shepherd

over them, My Servant David, who will feed them. He will feed them and be their Shepherd. ²⁴I the LORD will be their God, and My Servant David will be the Ruler among them. I the LORD say so. ²⁵I will make a covenant of peace with them and remove the wild beasts from the land so that people will live safely even in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. ²⁶I will make them a blessing all around My hill. I will make the rain come down in its season; there will be showers of blessing. ²⁷Then the trees in the field will produce their fruit, the land will yield its products, and the people will live safely on their land. They will know I am the LORD when I have broken the bars of their yokes and rescued them from those who made slaves of them. ²⁸They will no more be a prey to the nations, nor will the beasts of field devour them. They will live securely, and nobody will frighten them. ²⁹I will cause their crops to thrive, and no more will famine in the land destroy them. They will no longer suffer the insults of the nations. ³⁰They will know I the LORD their God am with them and they, Israel, are My people, says the Lord GOD. ³¹You, My sheep, are the flock of men that I pasture. I am your God, says the Lord GOD.

Against Edom

35 The LORD told me: ¹Son of man, set your face against Mount Seir and prophesy against it. ²Say to it, the Lord GOD says this:

I'm against you, Mount Seir;

^hVersions and some Heb manuscripts. Other Heb manuscripts read "I will destroy"

I will stretch out My hand
against you
and lay you completely in ruins.
‘I will turn your cities into ruins,
and you will be a barren waste
so that you will know I am the
LORD.

‘You have always hated Israel,
and you turned them over to the
sword
when they were in trouble,
when their final punishment had
come.

‘That is why, as I live, says the
LORD.

I have destined you for slaugh-
ter,
and the slaughterer will pursue
you.

Because you didn’t hate blood-
shed, blood will pursue you.

‘I will turn Mount Seir into a
barren waste
and destroy everyone who
comes or goes there.

‘I will cover your mountains and
hills
and fill your valleys with slain
people.

Those slain by the sword will
fall into all your streams.

‘I will turn you into a permanent
ruin.

Nobody will be living in your
cities.

Then you will know I am the
LORD.

‘You said, ‘These two nations
and two countries where the LORD
was will be ours, and we’ll take
them.’ ‘That is why, as I live, says
the Lord GOD, I will do as you did in
your anger and jealousy because
you hated them. I will show Israel
who I am when I punish you.
‘Then you’ll know I the LORD heard
all the insults you spoke against the
hills of Israel when you said,

‘They’re deserted and given to us to
devour.’ ‘You bragged and talked
continually against Me. I heard you.
‘The Lord GOD says this: The whole
world will be glad when I make you
a barren waste. ‘Since you were
delighted to see Israel’s heritage
laid waste I will do the same to you.
You will become a barren waste,
Mount Seir, and so will all Edom.
Then you will know I am the LORD.

The Mountains of Israel

36 ‘Son of man, prophesy to the
mountains of Israel and say:
Mountains of Israel, listen to what
the LORD says. ‘The Lord GOD
says this: Since the enemy has spok-
en against you saying, ‘Aha! ‘The
ancient high places have become
our possession.’ ‘So prophesy that
the Lord GOD says: Since you, O
mountains of Israel, have been laid
waste and crushed on all sides, and
the rest of the nations have taken
possession of you and people have
talked and gossiped about you,
‘listen to what the Lord GOD says:
The Lord GOD says this to the
mountains and hills, to the ravines
and valleys, the desolate ruins and
deserted cities that have become a
prey and a mockery to the rest of the
nations living around you. ‘The
Lord GOD says this: Surely in My
fiery zeal I have spoken against the
rest of the nations and all of Edom,
who have taken My land to them-
selves for a possession with glee
and deep contempt, to drive out the
people as their prey. ‘So prophesy
about the land of Israel, and say to
the mountains and hills, the ravines
and valleys, the Lord GOD says this:
Look! In My zeal and fury I have
spoken because you have had to
endure the scorn of the nations.
‘That is why the Lord GOD says

this: I raise My hand and swear: Surely the nations around you will be punished for the scorn they had for others.

"But you mountains of Israel shall produce branches and bear fruit for My people Israel because they will soon come home. "Look, I am for you! I will turn to you and you will be cultivated and sown. "I will put on you a large population, all the people of Israel. People will live in the cities, and the ruins will be rebuilt. "I will have many people and animals live on you; they will thrive and reproduce. I will make you inhabited as you once were and treat you better than the first time. Then you will know I am the LORD. "I will have My people Israel live on you. They will own you, and you will be their heritage. You will no more rob them of their children. "The Lord GOD says this: They say of you that you devour people and rob your nation of their children. "So you will no more devour people or lead your nation into sin, says the Lord GOD. "I will not let the nations talk scornfully of you anymore; and you will no more suffer the scorn of the nations or cause your own nation to sin, says the Lord GOD."

"The LORD said to me, "Son of man, while the people of Israel were living in their land, they defiled it by the way they lived and behaved. Their way of life was to Me like the uncleanness of a menstruating woman. "So I poured out My fury on them for pouring out blood on the land and polluting it with their idols. "I scattered them among the nations, spread them out in those countries and punished them in keeping with their ways and deeds. "When they came to those nations

they defiled My holy name and people said of them, 'These are the LORD's people, and yet they have left His land.' "But I will spare Israel for the sake of My holy name which they defiled among the people where they went.

"So tell Israel, the Lord GOD says this: I'm not doing this for you, O Israel, but for My holy name that you have defiled among the people wherever you went. "I will make holy My great name that you have defiled among the nations. Those nations will know I am the LORD, says the Lord GOD, when I let them see how I make Myself holy among you. "I will take you from these nations, gather you from all the countries, and bring you to your own land. "I will sprinkle clean water on you to cleanse you from all your uncleanness. I will also cleanse you from all your idols. "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. "I will put My Spirit in you and move you to follow my orders and carefully keep my laws. "You will live in the land I gave your fathers and be My people, and I will be your God. "I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will call for the grain and make it plentiful and lay no famine on you. "I will make trees bear fruit plentifully and the fields yield much food so you will no more be disgraced among the nations by famine. "When you remember your evil ways and wicked actions you will loathe yourselves for all your wrongs and abominations. "I'm not doing this for your sake, says the Lord GOD; you should know that. Your ways, people of Israel, should

36
26 2 Co 3:3
27 1 Th 4:8
Rv 11:11
28 2 Co 6:16
Rv 21:3

make you feel ashamed and humiliated.

³⁶“The Lord GOD says this: When I cleanse you from all your wickedness, I will have people live in your cities again and your ruins will be rebuilt. ³⁷“The land that was desolate will be cultivated instead of lying waste for everyone passing by to see. ³⁸Then they will say, ‘This land that was laid waste is now like the garden of Eden, and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.’ ³⁹Then the nations that are left around you will know it is I the LORD who rebuilt the ruined places and planted the land that was laid waste. I the LORD say it and will do it.

⁴⁰“The Lord GOD says this: I will also let Israel ask Me to do this for them. I will make them as numerous as a flock; ⁴¹like a flock of holy sheep, like a flock at the festivals in Jerusalem. So their ruined cities will be filled with flocks of people and they will know I am the LORD.”

The Dry Bones

37 The LORD laid His hand on me and by His Spirit took me out and put me down in the middle of a valley that was full of bones. ²He led me past them all around: There were a great number lying on the floor of the valley, and they were very dry.

³“Son of man,” He asked me, “can these bones become alive?”

“Lord GOD,” I answered, “You know.”

⁴“Prophecy about these bones,” He told me, “and say to them: Dry bones, listen to what the LORD says.

‘The Lord GOD says this to these bones: I will make *breath*ⁱ enter into you, and you will live. ‘I will put sinews on you, have flesh come on you, cover you with skin, and put *breath*ⁱ in you so you will live and know I am the LORD.’”

⁵I prophesied as I was ordered, and as I prophesied, there was a noise and a rustling as the bones came together, one bone to another. ⁶I saw sinews coming on them, flesh came on them, and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them.

⁷“Prophecy to the wind.” He told me. “Prophecy, son of man, and tell the wind, the Lord GOD says this: Come from the four directions, O wind, and breathe on these slain people so they will live.” ⁸So I prophesied as He ordered me, and breath entered into them and they stood on their feet—a very great army.

⁹“Son of man,” He said to me, “these bones are all the people of Israel. They are saying, ‘Our bones are dry, and we’ve lost all hope. We’re completely cut off.’” ¹⁰So prophecy and tell them, the Lord GOD says this: I will open your graves and raise you out of them. O My people, and bring you to the land of Israel. ¹¹Then you will know I am the LORD when I open your graves and raise you. O My people, ¹²“I will put My Spirit in you so you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know I the LORD said it and I did it, says the LORD.”

¹³Then the LORD said to me, ¹⁴“Son of man, take a piece of wood, and write on it, ‘Judah and the other

37
5-6 1 Th 4:8
8 Rev 11:11
9 Rev 7:1
10 1 Th 4:8
11 Rev 11:11

ⁱThe same Hebrew word means “breath,” “wind” and “spirit.” See verses 9 and 14.

Israelites who are with him.' Then take another piece of wood for Ephraim and write on it, 'Joseph and all the Israelites who are with him.' 'Join both pieces and make them one piece in your hand. When your people ask you, "Tell us what you mean by these things?" "say to them: The Lord GOD says this: I'm going to take Joseph's piece of wood which is now under Ephraim's control and the rest of the tribes of Israel who are with him, and I'm going to put them with Judah's piece of wood and make them one piece in My hand. "Hold the pieces of wood you write on in your hand so they can see them. "Then tell them, the Lord GOD says this: I'm going to take Israel out of the nations where they've gone, gather them from everywhere, and bring them to their land. "I will make them one nation on the soil and mountains of Israel. They shall all have one king. They will no longer be two peoples or divided into two kingdoms. "They will no longer defile themselves with filthy idols, disgusting practices and their other sins. I will save them from all their backsliding by which they have sinned. I will make them clean so they will be My people and I will be their God. "My Servant David will be their king; they will all have one Shepherd. They will live by My rules and carefully do what I order. "They will live in the land I gave My servant Jacob, the land where your forefathers lived. They, their children, and their future generations will live in it forever, and My Servant David will rule them forever. "I will make a covenant of peace with them and it will be an everlasting covenant. I will establish them, increase them, and put My holy place among them forever.

"My dwelling place will be above them; I will be their God and they will be My people. "Then the nations will know that I the LORD sanctify Israel when My holy place is among them forever."

Against Gog the Prince of Meshech and Tubal

38 The LORD told me: "Son of man, set your face against Gog in the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him. "Say, the Lord GOD says this: I am against you, Gog, leading prince of Meshech and Tubal. "I will turn you around and put hooks in your jaws. I will lead you out with all your army, horses and riders, a mighty company in full armor, with large and small shields, able to handle swords. "Persia, Ethiopia and Libya are with you; they too have shields and helmets; "Gomer with all his hordes, Togarmah's people in the farthest north with all his hordes—these many people are with you. "Ready yourself and be prepared with the whole army that has gathered to you, and be their leader. "After a long time you will be summoned; in the years to come you will enter a country of people who were brought back from the sword's destruction and gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel, mountains that have been lying waste for a long time. Those people were brought out from the nations and now all of them live securely. "You will advance, coming in like a storm, covering the land like a cloud; your whole horde and vast army will be with you.

"The Lord GOD says this: On that day a thought will come to your mind, and you will make a wicked

²³ 2 Co 6:16;
^{Rv} 21:3
²⁶ Heb 12:20
²⁷ 2 Co 6:16
^{Rv} 21:3
³⁸
² Rv 20:8

plan. "You will say, 'I'll march against a country with open villages; I'll attack a peaceful people living without fear of danger, living without walls, locks or gates.'
 "You will come in order to rob them of their goods and plunder them, to stretch out your hand against the ruins that are again inhabited and against a people gathered from the nations who are gaining possessions and wealth and live in the center of the world. "Sheba, Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, and all their villages will ask you, 'Did you come to rob them of their goods? Did you gather your company to plunder them, to carry away silver and gold, to take possession and wealth, to take spoil?'

"Therefore, son of man, prophesy and tell Gog: the Lord God says: On that day when My people Israel live without fear of danger, will you not be aware of it "and come from your place in the farthest north, you and many people with you, all riding on horses, a great company, a mighty army? "You will march against My people Israel, covering the land like a cloud. In days to come I will let you attack My country so that the nations will acknowledge Me when they see Me show My holiness against you, O Gog.

"The Lord GOD says this: Wasn't it you I spoke of long ago by My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied for years that I would let you attack them? "On the day Gog attacks the land of Israel, says the Lord GOD, My fury will rise in My nostrils. "In My zeal and fiery anger I declare: On that day there will be a great earthquake in the land of Israel. "The fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the animals of the field, everything creeping on

the ground and all people on earth will tremble before Me. The mountains will be torn down, the cliffs will tumble down, and every wall will fall to the ground. "I will call for everyone who wields a sword to go against him, says the Lord GOD: every man's sword will be against his brother. "I will punish him with pestilence and bloodshed and send down on him and on his hordes and on the great army with him torrents of rain, great hailstones, fire and burning sulfur. "So I will show My greatness and My holiness and reveal Myself to many nations, and they will know I am the LORD.

39 "Son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, the Lord GOD says this: I am against you, Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal. "I will turn you away and lead you on, bring you from the farthest north, and let you attack the mountains of Israel. "I will strike your bow out of your left hand and make your arrows drop out of your right. "You will fall on the mountains of Israel, you, all of your hordes, and the people with you. I will give you to all the birds of prey and to animals of the field to be devoured. "You will fall on the open field because I say so, says the Lord GOD. "I will send fire on Magog and those who live without fear of danger in the lands by the sea, so they will know I am the LORD. "I will make My holy name known among My people Israel and no longer let them defile it. Then the nations will know I am the LORD, the holy One of Israel.

"This will certainly happen: it will be done, says the Lord GOD. This is the day I spoke of.

"The people living in the cities of

19 Rv 11:13
 22 Rv 8:7.
 14:10
 29
 4 Rv 19:17-
 18, 21

Israel will go out and set fire to the weapons and burn them, the small and the large shields, the bows and arrows, the clubs and spears, and they will burn them for seven years.

¹⁰They will not need to get wood from the field or cut it down in the woods. They will make fires with the weapons and take away the goods of those who took theirs and plunder those who plundered them, says the Lord GOD. ¹¹On that day I will give Gog a place where he can be buried in Israel, the valley of Abarim east of the Dead Sea; it will block the travelers who pass through. There they will bury Gog and his whole crowd. People will call it the valley of Gog's crowd. ¹²For seven months the people of Israel will bury them to purify the land. ¹³All the people of the land will be busy burying. The day I am glorified will be a day remembered by them, says the Lord GOD. ¹⁴They will appoint men whose regular job will be to pass through the land and with the help of others who travel there they will bury those that are still on the ground in order to cleanse it. At the end of seven months they will start searching. ¹⁵When they pass through the land and one of them sees a man's bones, he will set up a stone beside it till the men who bury have buried it in the valley of Gog's crowd. ¹⁶The name of the burial place will be 'Crowd.' So they will purify the land.

¹⁷"Son of man, the Lord GOD says this: Tell every kind of bird and all the animals of the field: Come and gather together from everywhere for My sacrificial dinner I'm preparing for you, a great sacrificial dinner on the mountains of Israel:

you will eat flesh and drink blood.
¹⁸*You will eat the flesh of heroes and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, lambs, goats, bulls and all the fat animals of Bashan.*
¹⁹*You will eat fat till you are full and drink blood till you are drunk at My sacrificial dinner that I will prepare for you.* ²⁰*At My table you will be filled with horses and riders, with heroes and warriors of every kind,* says the Lord GOD.

²¹"I will establish My glory among the nations so that all the nations will see how I did what I decreed, how I struck them with My hand. ²²After that day the people of Israel will know I am the LORD their God. ²³Then the nations will know the people of Israel went into exile because they did wrong and were unfaithful to Me. So I hid My face from them and put them in their enemies' hands, and the sword struck them all down. ²⁴I gave them what they deserved for their uncleanness and sins when I hid My face from them.

²⁵"So the Lord GOD says this: Now I will bring back Jacob's exiles and have pity on all the people of Israel. I will be zealous for My holy name. ²⁶They will forget their shame and all the treachery they have shown against Me when they live safely in their land with nobody to frighten them. ²⁷When I've brought them back from the other nations and gathered them from the countries of their enemies then I will let many nations see My holiness through them. ²⁸Then they will know I am the LORD their God because I who sent them into exile among the nations bring them back again in their land and leave none of

¹⁷⁻²⁰ ^{Rv 19}
^{17-18, 21}

iOr "carry their shame"

them behind. "I will no more hide My face from them, because I will pour out My Spirit on the people of Israel, says the Lord GOD."

The Ideal Temple

40 In the 25th year of our exile, in the beginning of the year, on the 10th day of the month, in the 14th year after the city had been destroyed—on that day the LORD's hand was on me, and He brought me there. "In visions God gave me He brought me to the land of Israel and set me down on a very high mountain. South of it were some buildings like those of a city. "When He brought me there, a man was there who had the appearance of bronze. He had in his hand a cord made of flax and a measuring rod, and he stood in the gateway. "'Son of man," he said to me, "look and listen! Pay close attention to everything I'm going to show you because you were brought here to be shown these things. Tell the people of Israel everything you see."

2 2b 27-30
3 2b 17-1
4 2b 25
5 2b 17-1
27-30

The Outer Wall

"There was an outer wall all around the temple.

In the man's hand was a measuring rod 6 cubits long. The cubit being a forearm and a handbreadth. He measured the wall: It was 60 cubits wide and 6 cubits high.

The Eastern Gate

"Then he went into the gateway that faced east. He went up its steps and measured the threshold of the gateway: It was 6 cubits wide, and the

other threshold was 6 cubits wide. "Each side room was 6 cubits long and 6 cubits wide. The space between the side rooms was 5 cubits. And the threshold of the gateway by the porch facing the temple was 6 cubits. "He also measured the porch of the gateway facing the temple: It was 6 cubits. "He measured the porch of the gateway:⁴ It was 8 cubits. Its pilasters were 2 cubits. The gateway's porch faced the temple.

"There were in the eastern gateway three side rooms on one side and three on the other side. All three were of the same size, and the pilasters on each side were of the same size.

"He measured how broad the entrance of the gateway was—10 cubits, and the gateway itself was 13 cubits long. "There was a curbstone of one cubit in front of each side room. The side rooms were 6 cubits square.

"He measured the gateway from the back of one side room to the other: it was 25 cubits wide; and door faced door. "He made the porch 20 cubits,⁵ and in front of the porch⁶ of the gateway was a court on all sides.

"The distance from the front of the gateway on the outside to the front of the gateway's porch on the inside was 50 cubits.

"Latticed windows were in the side rooms and pilasters were inside the gateway all around. The porch also had windows all around on the inside. And on each pilaster there were palm trees.

⁴The versions and some Hebrew manuscripts omit verse 8 and the first clause of 9.

⁵Gk: Heb "the pilasters 60 cubits"

⁶Conjectural Heb "in front of a pilaster, the court, the gateway on all sides"

The Outer Court

¹⁷Then he took me into the outer court and here there were rooms and a pavement made all around the court—30 rooms on the pavement. ¹⁸The pavement in the lower court ran alongside the gateways, as broad as they were long. ¹⁹Then he measured the distance from the front of the lower gateway to the outside of the inner court: It was 100 cubits.

The Northern Gate

²⁰Then he measured to see how long and wide the northern gate of the outer court was. ²¹It had three rooms on each side together with its pilasters and its porch. In size it was the same as the first gateway, 50 cubits long and 25 cubits wide. ²²Its windows, pilasters, and palm trees were of the same size as those of the eastern gateway. Seven steps went up to it and led to its porch. ²³The inner court had a gateway directly opposite the northern gate like^a the eastern gateway; the distance from gate to gate was 100 cubits.

The Southern Gate

²⁴Then he took me south, and here there was a gateway facing south. He measured its side rooms,^o pilasters and its porch. They were the same size as the others. ²⁵The gateway and its porch had windows on all sides like the windows in the others. It was 50 cubits long and 25 wide. ²⁶Seven steps went up to it and led to its porch. On its pilasters it had palm trees, one on each side. ²⁷The inner court had a southern gateway. He measured the distance

from gate to gate from the southern side; it was 100 cubits.

The Inner Court

²⁸Then he took me to the inner court through the southern gateway and measured the southern gateway; it was the same size as the others. ²⁹Its side rooms, pilasters, and porch were the same size as the others. The rooms and its porch had windows on all sides. It was 50 cubits long and 25 wide. ³⁰There were porches on all sides, 25 cubits long and 5 cubits wide. ³¹Their porches faced the outer court, and palm trees were on their pilasters, and eight steps led up to it.

The Eastern Gate

³²Then he took me to the inner court on the eastern side and measured the gateway; it was the same size as the others. ³³Its side rooms, pilasters, and porch were the same size as the others. Its rooms and porch had windows on all sides. It was 50 cubits long and 25 wide. ³⁴Its porch faced the outer court. There were palm trees on its pilasters on both sides. And 8 steps led up to it.

The Northern Gate

³⁵Then he took me to the northern gateway, and he measured it; it was the same size as the others. ³⁶Also its rooms, pilasters, and porch. There were windows in it on all sides. It was 50 cubits long and 25 wide. ³⁷Its pilasters faced the outer court. There were palm trees on its pilasters on every side. And 8 steps led up to it.

^aGk: Heb "and the eastern gate" ^o"side rooms" Gk: Heb omits

The Offerings

"There was a room with a door that opened to the porch of the gateway where the burnt offerings were washed. "In the porch of the gateway there were two tables on each side on which the burnt offerings, sin offerings, and guilt offerings were slaughtered.

"On the outside corner, as one goes up to the entrance of the northern gateway there were two tables, and on the other side of the porch of the gateway there were two tables. "There were four tables on each corner of the gateway, eight tables in all, on which the sacrifices were slaughtered. "There were four tables for burnt offerings made of hewn stone. They were 1½ cubits long, 1½ cubits wide, and one cubit high. On these they laid the utensils with which they slaughtered burnt offerings and the sacrifices. "There were ledges the width of a hand facing inward on all sides, and on the tables was put the meat of the sacrifices. "Outside the gateways to the inner court were the rooms for the singers in the inner court, one at the corner of the northern gateway facing south and the other at the corner of the southern gateway facing north.

The Priests

"He told me, "This room facing south is for the priests who serve in the temple, "and the other room facing north is for the priests who serve at the altar. It is for Zadok's descendants, the only descendants

of Levi who may come to the LORD and serve Him."

"He measured the court: It was a square, 100 cubits long and 100 wide. And the altar was in front of the temple.

The Porch of the Temple

"Then he took me to the porch of the temple and measured a pilaster of the porch. It was 5 cubits on each side. And the width of the gateway was 14 cubits and the walls^g on each side were 3 cubits. "The porch was 20 cubits long and 12 cubits wide. And steps led up to it. Pillars stood by the pilasters, one on each side.

The Temple

41 Then he took me into the holy place of the temple and measured the pilasters; they were 6 cubits wide on each side. "The door was 10 cubits wide, and on each side of the door the walls were 5 cubits wide. Then he measured its length; it was 40 cubits long and 20 cubits broad.

"He went inside and measured the doorpost; it was 2 cubits thick. The entrance was 6 cubits, and its walls on both sides were 7 cubits.^h "Then he measured the room at the end of the holy place; it was 20 cubits long and 20 cubits broad. Then he told me, "This is the most holy place."

"He measured the temple wall; it was 6 cubits. The width of each side room around the temple was 4 cubits. "There were rooms arranged in three stories, 30 rooms in each story. These rooms came to

^g "14 cubits and the walls" from the Gk; locking in Heb

^h "its walls on both sides" according to Gk; Heb "and the width of the door was 7 cubits"

rest on the temple wall all around but they were not fastened to the wall. ⁷The side rooms got wider all around as one went up from story to story. The surrounding structure went from story to story all around the temple, so the structure got wider as one went higher. One could go from the lowest story through the middle one to the top story.^f

⁸I also saw a raised pavement all around the temple on which the side rooms rested as a foundation; it measured the full length of the measuring rod, 6 cubits, to the place it joined the temple.^g ⁹The outside wall of the side rooms was 5 cubits thick. There was an open area next to the side rooms that were connected to the temple. ¹⁰The distance between the priests rooms that were around the temple was 20 cubits. ¹¹The doors of the side rooms opened into the open area, one door to the north and the other to the south. The open area was 5 cubits wide all around.

¹²West of the temple was a building 70 cubits broad facing the open area. The wall of the building was 5 cubits thick all around, and it was 90 cubits long.

¹³He measured the temple; it was 100 cubits long; including the open area with its building and walls, it was all 100 cubits long. ¹⁴Also the eastern front of the temple with the open area was 100 cubits wide. ¹⁵He also measured the building in front of the open area with its galleries on both sides; it was 100 cubits long.

¹⁶The holy place, the most holy place and the porches on the out-

side, were panelled.¹ At the thresholds of these three and at the latticed windows and galleries there were wood panels from the ground to the windows (the windows were covered). ¹⁷From the space above the door to the most holy place and its wall, and the whole wall all around inside and outside ¹⁸there were carvings of angels. Palm trees stood between each angel and each had two faces. ¹⁹In one direction a man's face was looking at a palm, and in the other a lion's face was looking at a palm. Such carving was around the whole temple. ²⁰From the floor to the space above the door there were carved angels and palm trees, and also on the wall of the holy place. The doorposts in the holy place were square. ²¹In front of the most holy place was something that looked like ²²a wooden altar, 3 cubits high and 2 cubits wide. Its corners and its sides were of wood. Then he told me, "This is the table that is before the LORD."

²³The holy place and the most holy place had two doors. ²⁴each a double door having two swinging leaves, a pair for each of the two doors. ²⁵On the doors of the holy place were carved angels and palm trees just as they were carved on the walls. A wooden cornice was on the front of the porch outside. ²⁶There were latticed windows and palm trees on both sides of the porch; they were also on the side rooms of the temple and on the cornices.

^fthe Heb of verse 7 is uncertain ^g"to the place . . . temple" is conjecture

¹"on the outside were panelled" with Gk; Heb "the porches of the court, the thresholds"

Rooms for the Priests

42 He took me to the outer court on the northern road and brought me to the rooms opposite the open area and facing the northern building ¹which was 100 cubits long on the north side and 50 cubits wide. ²Opposite an area of 20 cubits of the inner court and facing the pavement of the outer court were galleries matching each other at the third level. ³In front of the rooms was a walk, 10 cubits wide and 100 cubits long^a that went to the inner court. The doors of these rooms faced north.

⁴The rooms in the upper story were narrower than those in the lower or middle stories of the building because the galleries took space from them. ⁵They were in three stories and had no pillars like the pillars in the courts. That is why the lower and middle levels were set back from the ground up. ⁶An outer wall 50 cubits long ran alongside the rooms, in front of them, in the direction of the outer court. ⁷The row of rooms of the outer court was 50 cubits long while the row in front of the temple was 100 cubits. ⁸Below these rooms was an entrance from the east as one came to them from the outer court.

⁹Built into the wall of the court on the south^v side, in front of the open area and the building were more rooms with a walk in front of them. ¹⁰They looked like the rooms on the north side; they were as long and as broad as they were, with the same exits, arrangements, and doors. ¹¹So were the doors to the rooms on the south side: There was a door where the walk started in

front of the corresponding wall, as one went eastward.

¹²Then he told me, "The northern and southern rooms opposite the open area are the holy rooms where the priests who come near the LORD eat the most holy food. There they put the most holy offerings: the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering because the place is holy. ¹³When the priests go in, they should not leave the holy place to go into the outer court without leaving there the clothes in which they serve because the clothes are holy. They are to put on other clothes when they can go to the places where the people are."

¹⁴When he finished measuring the inner part of the temple area, he took me out through the gate that faces east, and he measured the area all around. ¹⁵He measured the east side with a measuring rod: it was 500 cubits as measured by the measuring rod all around. ¹⁶He measured the north side: it was 500 cubits as measured by the measuring rod all around. ¹⁷He measured the south side: it was 500 cubits according to the measuring rod. ¹⁸He came around to the west side and measured it: it was 500 cubits according to the measuring rod. ¹⁹So he measured all four sides. There was a wall all around it; it was 500 cubits long and 500 broad—to separate the holy from what is common.

The Glory of the LORD Returns

43 Then he took me to the gate that faces east. ²And the glory of the God of Israel came from the east; the sound of His coming was like the roar of the ocean, and

^aGk: Heb "a way of one cubit" ^vGk: Heb "east"

His glory made the earth shine. ³The vision was like the one I saw when He came to destroy the city, and the sights were like those I saw by the river Chebar. ⁴So I knelt with my face to the ground. The LORD's glory came into the temple by the gate that was facing east.

⁵A spirit lifted me and took me into the inner court; there the LORD's glory filled the temple. ⁶And I heard Someone talking to me from the temple while a man was standing by me. ⁷"Son of man," He said to me, "this is the place of My throne and the stool for My feet where I will live among the people of Israel forever. Then the people of Israel and their kings will no more defile My holy name by sexual sins and the dead bodies of their kings when they die. ⁸They put their threshold by My threshold and their doorposts by My doorposts with only a wall between Me and them and so defiled My holy name by their abominable practices. So I wiped them out in My fury. ⁹Now they should put away from Me their sexual sins and the dead bodies of their kings. Then I will live among them forever. ¹⁰You son of man, show the temple to the people of Israel, to make them ashamed of their wrongs. Let them measure the plan, ¹¹and if they are ashamed of everything they've done, show them the design of the temple, its arrangements, its doors through which people go in and out, its entire design and all its regulations, and instructions. Draw the design for them to see so they can follow it and keep all its regulations."

¹²This is the law of the temple on the top of the mountain: The whole area all around is most holy. Yes, this is the law of the temple.

The Altar

¹³Here are the measurements of the altar in cubits. The length of the cubit was a cubit and a handbreadth. The base was a cubit high and a cubit wide with a rim all around its edge measuring one span. This was the height of the altar: ¹⁴From the base on the ground to the lower ledge it was 2 cubits, and from the lower ledge to the upper ledge it was 4 cubits, ¹⁵and the hearth was 4 cubits high. Above the hearth there arose four horns. ¹⁶The hearth was 12 cubits by 12 cubits square. ¹⁷The upper ledge was 14 cubits long and 14 cubits wide on all four sides. It had a rim around it that was a half cubit. Its base was a cubit all around. The steps to the altar faced east.

¹⁸He said to me, "Son of man the Lord GOD says: These are the instructions concerning the altar when it has been made ready for burnt offerings and blood to be splashed against it. ¹⁹Give the priests—men of the tribe of Levi descended from Zadok who come near Me to serve Me—a young bull for a sin offering. ²⁰Take some of its blood and put it on the altar's four horns, on the four corners of the ledge, and on the rim around it to free it from sin and cleanse it. ²¹Take the young bull for the sin offering and burn it in the place appointed near the temple outside its holy area. ²²On the second day bring a perfect he-goat for a sin offering and cleanse the altar from sin as it was cleansed by the young bull. ²³When you finish the cleansing from sin, offer a perfect young bull and a perfect ram from the flock. ²⁴Offer them to the LORD, and the priests should throw

salt on them and offer them as a burnt offering for the LORD. "Every day for seven days sacrifice a goat, a young bull and a ram from the flock for a sin offering. They are to be perfect animals. "Seven days they should atone for the altar and cleanse it and so consecrate it. "When those days are over, on the eighth day and after that, the priests should sacrifice on the altar burnt offerings and shared offerings, and I will accept them, says the Lord GOD."

The East Gate Shut

44 Then he brought me back to the outer gateway of the holy place facing east, and it was shut. "The LORD said to me, "This gate will be shut and not opened, and nobody may go through it because the Lord GOD of Israel went through it. It must be kept shut. "Only the ruler, the ruler himself, may sit there to eat before the LORD. He will come in through the porch of the gateway and leave the same way."

"He took me through the northern gateway to the front of the temple. I looked and saw the LORD's glory filling the LORD's temple. Then I knelt with my face to the ground.

Serving in the Temple

"Son of man," the LORD said to me, "pay attention, look, and listen to everything I'm going to tell you, all the regulations of the LORD's temple and all its laws. Mark well all who come into the temple and go out from the holy place. "Tell the rebellious people of Israel, the Lord GOD says: Let's have no more of your abominations, people of Israel, your bringing strangers, whose hearts and bodies haven't been cir-

cumcised, to be in My holy place. You defile My temple when you offer Me fat and blood as My food but at the same time break My covenant with all your abominations. "You didn't do the job required of you in My holy place but got others to come into My holy place to do the job for you. "The Lord GOD says: No stranger living among the people of Israel, whose heart and body isn't circumcised, may go into My holy place.

The Levites

"Levi's descendants who turned away from Me when Israel wandered far off to follow their disgusting idols, must be punished for their wrongs. "They are to serve in My holy place, taking charge of the gateways of the temple. They are to serve the temple by killing the burnt offering and the sacrifices for the people, and they are to stand before the people to serve them. "Because they ministered to the people by standing before their disgusting idols and made Israel fall into sin, I raise My hand to swear, says the Lord GOD, they will be punished for their wrongs. "They will not come near Me to serve Me as priests or come near any of My holy things or most holy things. They must bear the shame of their abominable practices. "I appoint them to do the work in the temple, that is, all its heavy work and everything that has to be done there.

The Priests

"But the priests who have descended from Levi and from Zadok who did the work in My holy place when the people of Israel wandered away from Me, they should come near Me to serve Me and stand

before Me to bring to Me fat and blood, says the Lord GOD. ¹⁶They should come into My holy place, come near My table to serve Me, and do the work I give them. ¹⁷And when they come into the gateways of the inner court, they should wear linen clothes—they should have no wool on them—while they serve in the gateways of the inner court and in the temple. ¹⁸They should have linen turbans on their heads and wear linen breeches but put on nothing that makes them sweat. ¹⁹When they go out among the people in the outer court, they should take off their clothes in which they were serving and not sanctify the people in those clothes but lay them down in the rooms of the holy place and put on other clothes. ²⁰They should neither shave their heads nor let their hair grow long. They should only trim the hair on their heads. ²¹No priest should drink wine when he goes into the inner court. ²²They shouldn't marry widows or divorced women but only virgins descended from Israel or the widow of a priest. ²³They should teach My people the difference between what is holy and unholy and show them how to distinguish between the unclean and the clean. ²⁴In quarrels they should act as judges, giving My decisions. They should keep My laws and My regulations at all My festivals and keep My sabbaths holy.

²⁵They should not come near any dead person to make themselves unclean, but for a father, mother, son, daughter, brother, or sister who has no husband they may get unclean. ²⁶After a person is cleansed, seven days should pass, ²⁷then when he

comes to the holy place, into the inner court, to serve in the holy place, he should bring his sin offering, says the Lord GOD.

²⁸The priests shall have no heritage for I am their heritage. Don't give them any property in Israel. They have Me. ²⁹They will eat the grain offering, sin offering, and guilt offering, and everything devoted to the LORD in Israel will be theirs. ³⁰The priests should have the best of all the first-ripe fruits. The best of every gift of all your contributions should go to the priests, and the best of your dough should go to the priests so that a blessing may rest on your home. ³¹The priests shouldn't eat any bird or animal that dies by itself or what is torn by beasts.

The Division of the Land

45 "When you divide the land by lot as property to be inherited, set aside as sacred for the LORD an area 25,000 cubits long and 20,000^w wide. Every part of the area is to be holy. ²Of this 500 square cubits is for the holy place with an open space 50 cubits wide around it. ³Measure off an area 25,000 cubits long and 10,000 wide; in this will be the sanctuary, the most holy place. ⁴It will be a holy part of the country belonging to the priests who serve in the holy place, who come near to serve the LORD. They will use the place for homes and as a place set apart for the sanctuary. ⁵Another area 25,000 cubits long and 10,000 wide will belong to the Levites who serve the temple; here they may dwell in towns.^x ⁶You are to give the city as its possession an area 5000

^wGk: Heb "10,000 cubits" ^x"here . . . towns" Gk; Heb uncertain

cubits by 25,000 cubits alongside the holy area assigned to the LORD. It will belong to all the people of Israel.

The Ruler's Portion

⁷"The royal leader will have all the land stretching west and east, next to the holy area given to the LORD and the property belonging to the city, fronting the LORD's area and the city's property. This territory shall match in length one of the areas allotted to a tribe, from the western border to the eastern border ⁸of the country. It will be his possession in Israel. Then My royal leaders should no more oppress My people but give the land to the people of Israel according to their tribes.

Honest Measures and Weights

⁹"The Lord GOD says: It's enough, leaders of Israel. Get rid of violence and oppression and do what is just and right. Stop driving My people from their homes and property, says the Lord GOD. ¹⁰You should have honest scales, an honest bushely and an honest liquid measure. ¹¹The bushel and the liquid measure should be the same, a bushel and its liquid equivalent should hold one tenth of a homer. The homer is the standard measure. ¹²One shekel will be 20 gerahs. A mina shall consist of a 10 shekel^z weight, a 25 shekel and a 15 shekel weight.

Offerings

¹³"This is what you should give the LORD: A sixth of a bushel from every homer of wheat and a sixth of a bushel from every homer of barley. ¹⁴The portion of oil: one tenth,

that is, one bath from every cor of oil. (Ten baths equal a cor or a homer.) ¹⁵One sheep out of every flock of 200 from the well-watered pastures of Israel for the grain offerings, burnt offerings, and shared offerings to atone for you, says the Lord GOD. ¹⁶All the people in the country will give this to the royal leader in Israel. ¹⁷Then the leader will have to provide the burnt offerings, the grain and drink offerings at the festivals, the first-of-the-month celebrations, the Sabbaths, and all the other festivals of the people of Israel. He will prepare the sin offerings, grain offerings, burnt offerings, and the shared offerings to atone for the people of Israel.

Festivals

¹⁸"The Lord GOD says: On the first day of the first month take a perfect young bull to cleanse the holy place from sin. ¹⁹The priest should take some of the blood of the sin offering and put it on the doorposts of the temple, on the four corners of the ledge of the altar, and on the posts of the gateways of the inner court. ²⁰You will do the same on the seventh day of the month for everyone who sins in error or ignorance. So you will atone for the temple.

²¹"On the 14th day of the first month you will have the Passover, a festival of seven days when bread without yeast is eaten. ²²On that day the leader will prepare for himself and for all the people in the country a young bull for a sin offering. ²³Every day of the seven festival days he will make a burnt offering for the LORD, 7 perfect young bulls and 7 perfect rams and a he-

^yThat is, an ephah ^zConjectural Heb "20 shekel"

goat every day for a sin offering. ²⁴He will also prepare a grain offering, one bushel for each young bull and one bushel for each ram with a hin of olive oil for every bushel. ²⁵On the 15th day of the 7th month, at the festival, he must do the same as in those seven days with the sin offering, burnt offering, grain offering, and the olive oil."

The Sabbath and the New Moon Festival

46 The Lord GOD said, "The east gateway of the inner court shall be closed on the six working days, but on the Sabbath day it is to be opened. Also on the first of the month it is to be opened.

¹"The royal leader must come in from the outside through the porch of the gateway and stand by the post of the gateway while the priest prepares his burnt offerings and shared offerings. He should worship on the threshold of the gateway and then leave, but the gateway shall not be closed till evening. ²The people of the country shall worship at the door of the gateway before the LORD on the Sabbaths and on the first of the month.

³"The burnt offering the royal leader brings to the LORD on the Sabbath day shall be 6 perfect lambs and a perfect ram. ⁴The grain offering shall be a bushel with the ram; with the lambs it shall be whatever anyone can give. A hin of olive oil shall be given with each bushel. ⁵On the first day of the month the burnt offering shall be a young bull, 6 lambs and a ram, all perfect animals. ⁶He shall prepare a grain offering of one bushel with the young bull, a bushel with the ram, and with the lambs whatever

he can give, and a hin of olive oil with each bushel.

Other Instructions

⁷"When the royal leader arrives, he should come in through the porch of the gateway and leave the same way. ⁸But when the people come before the LORD at their festivals, anyone who comes in through the north gateway to worship should leave through the south gateway, and anyone who comes in through the south gateway should leave through the north gateway. He shouldn't go back through the gateway through which he came in but go straight ahead. ⁹When the people go in, the royal leader will go in with them, and when they go out, they will go out together.

¹⁰"On the festival days and solemn meetings with God, a grain offering of one bushel shall be given with each young bull and a bushel with each ram but with the lambs whatever anyone can give. A hin of olive oil shall be given with each bushel.

¹¹"When the royal leader prepares a voluntary burnt offering or a shared offering to the LORD, the east gate should be opened for him, and his burnt offering and shared offering should be presented as is done on the Sabbath day. When he leaves, the gateway should be closed after him.

¹²"Prepare a perfect lamb, a year old, every day for a burnt offering to the LORD. Prepare it every morning. ¹³Prepare a grain offering with it every morning, a sixth of a bushel of grain and a hin of olive oil to moisten the fine flour as a grain offering to the LORD; this is a permanent regulation and is to be made regularly. ¹⁴Prepare the lamb and

the grain offering and the olive oil every morning as a regular burnt offering."

The Ruler's Inheritance

¹⁶The Lord GOD says, "If the royal leader gives a gift from his property to any of his sons, it will belong to his sons because it is their heritage. ¹⁷But if he takes something from his property and gives it to any of his servants, it will belong to the servant till the year of freedom; then it will go back to the royal ruler. Only his sons can inherit his property. ¹⁸The royal leader shouldn't take any of the inherited property of the people by forcing them to give up their property. He shall give his own property as an inheritance to his sons to keep My people from losing their property and being scattered."

¹⁹Then he took me through the passage beside the gateway to the sacred rooms facing north, reserved for the priests. There I saw a place in the extreme western end of them. ²⁰He told me, "This is the place where the priests shall boil the meat of the guilt offering and the sin offering and where they are to bake the grain offering so they won't have to bring it into the outer court and sanctify the people."

²¹He brought me to the outer court and took me by the four corners of the court, and there in each corner of the court was another court. ²²In each of the four corners of the court there was a closed court 30 cubits by 40 cubits. All four in their corners were of the same size. ²³A stone wall was around the four courts, and they were equipped with places for cooking next to the walls all around.

²⁴Then he told me, "This is where

those who serve the temple shall boil the people's sacrifices."

Water Flowing from the Temple

47 He took me back to the door of the temple, and there water was flowing from under the threshold toward the east (the temple was facing east). The water was flowing down from under the right side of the temple, south of the altar. ²Then he took me out through the north gateway and around outside to the outer gateway facing east, and there I saw the gurgling water coming out of the south side.

³Going east with a line in his hand, he measured 1000 cubits, and there he had me wade through water up to my ankles. ⁴He measured another 1000 and there he had me wade through water up to my knees. He measured another 1000 and had me wade through water up to my hips. ⁵When he measured another 1000—it was a stream I couldn't wade through, the water was so deep, a stream deep enough to swim in and too deep to wade through. ⁶Then he asked me, "Do you see this, son of man?"

⁷Then he led me back along the river bank. On the way back I saw on both banks of the river many trees.

⁸Then he said to me, "This water is flowing out into the eastern lowland and down to the Jordan valley and into the Dead Sea. When the water flows out and reaches the Sea, those waters will become fresh. ⁹Everywhere the stream flows the living things that swim around will thrive. There will be many fish because anywhere the stream goes it will bring healing and life. ¹⁰Fishermen will be standing

47
1-2 Jn 7:38
Rv 22:1-2
7-8 Jn 7:38
Rv 22:1-2

by its shore with their nets spread out, from En-gedi to En-eglaim. Many kinds of fish will be plentiful, like those in the Mediterranean Sea. ¹¹But the swamps and marshes will not be fresh but be given over to salt. ¹²On both sides of the stream there will grow every kind of tree used for food. Their leaves will not wither, and they will not fail to have fruit. Each month they will produce fresh fruit because this water flows from the holy place. The fruit will be good food and its leaves will provide healing."

The Borders of the Land

¹³The Lord GOD says, "These are the border lines by which you will divide the country as an heritage for the 12 tribes of Israel, Joseph getting two parts. ¹⁴Your heritage should be the same for each of you. ^{12 Jn 7:38} ^{Rv 22:1-2} With My hand raised I swore to give the land to your fathers, so you should divide it by lot as your heritage.

¹⁵"This is the border of the country. In the north, from the Mediterranean Sea along the way of Hethlon to the Hamath Pass,^a on to Zedad, ¹⁶Berothah and Sibram which are between the border of Damascus and that of Hamath, on to Hazerhatticon, which is by the border of Hauran. ¹⁷So the border will run from the sea to Hazar-enon on the border of Damascus with the border of Hamath on the north. This is the north side.

¹⁸"On the east side it will be between Hauran and Damascus and between Gilead and the land of Israel. Measure it from the border along the Jordan to the Dead Sea in the east.^b This is the east side.

¹⁹"On the south side it will run from Tamar as far as the water of Meribah at Kadesh along the ravine to the Mediterranean Sea. This is the southern border.

²⁰"On the west side the Mediterranean Sea is the border up to a point opposite the Hamath Pass. This is the west side.

²¹"Divide this country among yourselves according to the tribes of Israel. ²²You will divide it by lot to be an heritage for you and the strangers living among you, who have borne children among you. They should be treated as children of Israel born in the country and should receive by lot an heritage with you among the tribes of Israel. ²³In whatever tribe a stranger lives, there you will give him his heritage," says the Lord GOD.

48 "These are the names of the tribes: Beginning in the north along the way of Hethlon to the Hamath Pass and Hazar-enon (on the northern border of Damascus near Hamath), from the east to the west, one part for Dan. ²Bordering on Dan from the east to the west one part for Asher. ³Bordering on Asher from the east to the west one part for Naphtali. ⁴Bordering on Naphtali from the east to the west one part for Manasseh. ⁵Bordering on Manasseh from the east to the west one part for Ephraim. ⁶Bordering on Ephraim from the east to the west one part for Reuben. ⁷Bordering on Reuben from the east to the west one part for Judah.

⁸"Bordering on Judah from the east to the west will be the land you set aside, 25,000 cubits wide and as

^aGk: Heb reads "entrance of Zedad, Hamath" ^bGk reads, "to Tamar"

long as one of the sections of the tribes from the east to the west with the holy place in the center of it. ⁹The land you set aside for the LORD will be 25,000 cubits long and 10,000 cubits wide. ¹⁰It will be a holy land belonging to the priests, on the north side 25,000 cubits, on the west side 10,000 cubits wide, and on the east side 10,000 cubits, and on the south side 25,000 cubits long, and the LORD's holy place will be in the center of this. ¹¹This hallowed section will belong to the priests descended from Zadok who did My work instead of wandering away with the people of Israel as the Levites did. ¹²It will be to them a special, most holy territory, a part of the land set aside for the LORD, next to the territory belonging to the Levites. ¹³Alongside the territory of the priests the Levites will also have a territory 25,000 cubits long and 10,000 cubits wide. Its whole length will be 25,000 cubits and its breadth 10,000 cubits. ¹⁴They shouldn't sell any of it, or trade it off, or let others get the best part of the land because it is the LORD's holy land.

¹⁵"What is left, a strip 5000 cubits by 25,000, will be for the ordinary use of the city, for homes and pasture, and the city will be in the center of it. ¹⁶These will be its measurements: On the north side it will be 4500 cubits, on the south side 4500, on the east side 4500, and on the west side 4500 cubits. ¹⁷The city will have pasture land, 250 cubits to the north, 250 to the south, 250 to the east, and 250 cubits to the west. ¹⁸The rest of the length alongside the land reserved for the LORD, 10,000 cubits to the east and 10,000 to the west (parallel to the holy area set aside) will be

used to provide food for the workers in the city. ¹⁹The workers of the city, from all the tribes in Israel, will work the ground.

²⁰"The whole area set aside will be 25,000 cubits square. You will set it aside as an area holy to the LORD along with the city property.

²¹"What is left will belong to the royal leader, on both sides of the holy area and the city property, extending east of the 25,000 cubit holy area as far as the eastern border and west of it as far as the western border, parallel to the areas allotted to the royal ruler. It will be a holy area set aside for the LORD and the holy place, and the temple will be in the center of it. ²²So the property of the Levites and the city property will be in the center of the royal leader's. What is between Judah's border and Benjamin's will belong to the royal leader.

²³"In regard to the rest of the tribes—from the east to the west one part for Benjamin. ²⁴Bordering on Benjamin from the east to the west one part for Simeon. ²⁵Bordering on Simeon from the east to the west one part for Issachar. ²⁶Bordering on Issachar from the east to the west one part for Zebulun. ²⁷Bordering on Zebulun from the east to the west one part for Gad. ²⁸Bordering on Gad, along the edge of the Negeb running toward the south, the border will go from Tamar to the waters of Meribah at Kadesh, to the ravine, and on to the Mediterranean Sea. ²⁹This is the country you will divide as an heritage among the tribes of Israel, and these are their areas," says the Lord GOD.

³⁰"These are the outer borders of the city: The northern side will measure 4500 cubits. ³¹The gates

of the city will be named according to the names of Israel's tribes: Three gates in the north, one will be Reuben's gate, one Judah's, one Levi's. ³¹⁻³⁴ ⁴⁸ ^{Rv 21} The eastern side will be 4500 cubits with three gates, one Joseph's, one Benjamin's, one Dan's. ³⁵ ¹²⁻¹³ ^{Rv 3 12} The southern side will be 4500

cubits with three gates, one Simeon's, one Issachar's, one Zebulun's. ³⁴ The western side will be 4500 cubits with their three gates, one Gad's, one Asher's, one Naphthali's. ³⁵ The perimeter will be 18,000 cubits. The city's name from then on will be The-LORD-is-there."

DANIEL

1 In the third year of the rule of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem and besieged it. ²The Lord put Jehoiakim, king of Judah, in his hands with some utensils from God's temple, which he took to Babylonia to the temple of his god, putting the utensils in the storehouse of his god.

³The king ordered Ashpenaz, the head of his officers, to select some of the Israelite boys who were qualified, of the royal family and the nobility, "who were also physically fit, good-looking, skilled in all branches of learning, well informed, and intelligent, to serve in the king's palace. They were to be taught the literature and language of the Chaldeans.

⁴The king arranged for them to get a daily allowance of the king's food and his table wine. They were to be trained for three years and after that to serve the king. ⁵Among these were some boys of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. ⁷The head of the officers also gave them names: He called Daniel, Belteshazzar; Hananiah, Shadrach; Mishael, Meshach; and Azariah, Abednego.

⁸But Daniel made up his mind not to make himself unclean with the king's food and tablewine, and he asked the head of the officers to let him keep himself clean.

⁹God made the head of the officers kind and sympathetic to Daniel. ¹⁰"I'm afraid of my master, the king," the chief officer told Daniel: "he assigned your food and

drink. If the king should see you looking more haggard than the other boys your age, you could cost me my head."

"Then Daniel told the overseer whom the chief officer had put in charge of himself, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: ¹²"Test your servants, please, for ten days, and let us have vegetables to eat and water to drink. ¹³And then see how we look and how the boys look who are eating the king's food, and on the basis of what you see decide what you do with your servants."

¹⁴He listened to them in this matter and tested them ten days.

¹⁵After ten days they looked healthier and better fed than the other boys who were eating the king's food.

¹⁶So the caretaker took away the king's food and wine and gave them vegetables.

¹⁷God gave these four boys intelligence, understanding of all the literature, and wisdom; and Daniel understood all kinds of visions and dreams.

¹⁸At the end of the time the king had set to bring them in, the head of the officers brought them to Nebuchadnezzar. ¹⁹The king talked to them, and among all of them there was none found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; so they started to serve the king. ²⁰And when the king asked them about things that took understanding and wisdom, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom.

²¹Daniel continued there till the first year of King Cyrus.

¹² Rv 2:10
¹⁴ Rv 2:10

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

2 In the second year of the rule of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had some dreams. He was deeply troubled and couldn't sleep. ³The king sent for the wise men, sorcerers, magicians, and learned Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. And so they came and stood before the king.

⁴"I had a dream," the king told them. "and I'm deeply troubled to know what the dream was."

⁵These Chaldeans spoke to the king in Aramaic: "King, live forever! Tell your servants the dream and we'll tell you what it means."

⁶The king answered these Chaldeans. "I mean what I say. if you don't tell me the dream and what it means, you will be cut in pieces, and your homes will be turned to ruins. ⁷But if you tell the dream and what it means, I will give you gifts, a reward, and high honor. Now tell me the dream and what it means."

⁸Again they said. "The king should tell his servants the dream, and we'll tell what it means."

⁹"I'm sure you're trying to gain time," the king answered, "because you see I mean what I say ¹⁰that if you don't tell me the dream, there's one verdict for you. You have agreed to give me a lying answer hoping things will change. Now tell me the dream, and I'll know you can tell me what it means."

¹¹"Nobody on earth," the Chaldeans answered the king, "can tell the king what he asks. No other king, however great and powerful, has ever asked such a thing of any wise man, sorcerer, and Chaldean. ¹²What the king asks is hard, and nobody else can tell the king except

the gods who don't live with human beings."

¹³This made the king so angry and furious he gave the order to kill all the wise men in Babylon. ¹⁴The decree went out to kill the wise men, and some were looking for Daniel and his friends in order to kill them.

¹⁵Then Daniel with good sense and taste answered Arioch, the captain of the king's executioners who had gone out to kill the wise men in Babylon. ¹⁶He asked Arioch, the king's captain, "Why is the decree from the king so harsh?" Then Arioch explained it to Daniel.

¹⁷Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time and he would tell the king the meaning. ¹⁸Then Daniel went home and told his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah about it ¹⁹to get them to ask God in heaven to be merciful about this secret and not let Daniel and his friends perish with the rest of the wise men in Babylon.

²⁰Then in a vision at night the secret was revealed to Daniel. After that, Daniel praised the God of heaven. ²¹Daniel said, "Praise God's name from everlasting to everlasting because He is wise and powerful. ²²He controls times and seasons, makes kings and removes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. ²³He reveals deep and secret things. He knows what is in the dark, and light dwells with Him. ²⁴To You, God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise for giving me wisdom and ability and now telling me what we asked You; You have told us what the king wants to know."

²⁵And so Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to kill the wise men in Babylon. He went

²
¹⁹ ¹¹ ¹³
¹⁶ ¹¹

and told him, "Don't kill the wise men in Babylon. Take me to the king, and I'll tell the king the meaning."

"Immediately Arioch hurried to take Daniel to the king, and he told him, "I've found a man of the captive people of Judah who can tell the king the meaning."

"The king asked Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Can you tell me the dream I saw and what it means?"

"The secret the king asks," Daniel answered the king, "no wise men, sorcerers, learned persons, and astrologers can tell the king.

"But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He will tell King Nebuchadnezzar what is going to happen in the last time. Your dream and the visions of your head as you lay on your bed were these.

"You, King, were on your bed thinking of what would happen in the future, and He who reveals secrets will tell you what it will be.

"This secret was revealed to me not because I'm wiser than anyone else alive but to tell the king the meaning and let you know what you were thinking in your heart. You, King, saw a tall statue. "This statue, huge and dazzling bright, stood before you, and it looked terrifying.

"The head of this statue was fine gold. Its chest and arms were silver. Its belly and hips were bronze.

"Its legs were iron. Its feet were partly iron and partly clay.

"You were looking till a stone cut without human hand struck the statue on its iron-and-clay feet and smashed them. "Then with one blow the iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold were smashed and became like chaff coming from a threshing-floor in summer, and the wind carried them away and no trace of them

could be found. But the stone that struck the statue grew into a great mountain and filled the whole world. "This is the dream, and we'll tell the king what it means.

"You, King, are a king of kings to whom God in heaven gave the kingdom with power, strength, and glory. "He has put into your hands people, beasts, and birds in the sky and has made you ruler over all of them—you are the head of gold.

"After you will come another kingdom lower than you; then a third, a kingdom of bronze that will rule over the whole world.

"And the fourth kingdom will be as strong as iron because iron smashes and shatters everything: like iron it will smash and break all these things in pieces.

"And as you saw the feet and toes, partly potters' clay and partly iron, there will be a divided kingdom in which there will be some of the firmness of iron because you saw iron mixed with earthenware.

"The toes were partly iron and partly clay: A part of the kingdom will be strong and a part will be brittle.

"Since you saw the iron mixed with earthenware, they will mix by intermarrying but will not hold together just as iron won't mix with clay.

"At the time of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed; no other people will ever be permitted to rule over it; it will smash and bring to an end all these kingdoms and will stand forever. "Just as you saw a stone cut from the mountain without human hands and smashing the iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold, the great God has told the king what will happen in the future. The dream is true, and you can trust its meaning."

"Then King Nebuchadnezzar

28-29 24:6
30 12:7
31 27:8
32 1:1, 7:8
33 22:8
34 12:8
35 20:11
36 11:32
37 11:32
38 17:19
39 20:6
40 13:7
41 17:8
42 21:29

bowed down on the ground and worshiped Daniel and told men to offer him food offerings and incense. "The king told Daniel, "It is certain your God is God of gods, the Lord of kings, who can tell secrets because you could tell this secret."

"Then the king promoted Daniel, gave him many great gifts, and made him governor of the whole province of Babylon, and chief manager of all the wise men in Babylon. "Daniel asked the king to appoint Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the affairs of the province of Babylon. But Daniel stayed at the king's court.

Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Statue

3 King Nebuchadnezzar made a golden statue 90 feet high and 9 feet wide. He set it up in the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon. "And King Nebuchadnezzar sent men to bring together the satraps, generals, governors, military advisers, treasurers, judges, sheriffs, and all the other officials of the provinces to come and dedicate the statue King Nebuchadnezzar set up. "Then the satraps, generals, governors, military advisers, treasurers, judges, sheriffs, and all the other officials of the provinces were brought together to dedicate the statue King Nebuchadnezzar set up, and they stood before the statue Nebuchadnezzar set up.

"The herald called out loud, "Peoples, nations, and those of different languages, you are told: "When you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lute, lyre, harp, bagpipe, and any other kind of music, bow down and worship the golden statue King Nebuchadnezzar set up.

"And anyone who doesn't bow down and worship will immediately be thrown into the flaming fire of a furnace." "And so as soon as all the people heard the sound of the horn, pipe, lute, lyre, harp, and every other kind of music, all the peoples, nations, and those of different languages bowed down and worshiped the golden statue King Nebuchadnezzar set up."

"When that happened, some Chaldeans came and slandered the Jews. "They addressed King Nebuchadnezzar, "King, live forever! "You, King, gave an order that everybody who hears the sound of the horn, pipe, lute, lyre, harp, bagpipe, and any other kinds of music should bow down and worship the golden statue. "And anyone who doesn't bow down and worship will be thrown into the flaming fire of a furnace. "There are certain Jews you put in charge of the work of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. These men don't pay any attention to you, King. They don't serve your gods or worship the statue you set up."

"Then Nebuchadnezzar, angry and furious, told men to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and immediately these men were brought to the king. "Nebuchadnezzar asked them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, you aren't serving my gods or worshiping the golden statue I set up? "Are you ready, when you hear the sound of the horn, pipe, lute, lyre, harp, bagpipe, and all other kinds of music to bow down and worship the golden statue I made? If you don't worship it, you will immediately be thrown into the flaming fire of a furnace. And who is the god that will save you from my hands?"

47 Rv 17 14
19 16
3
4 Rv 10 11
5-6 Rv 12 15
7 Rv 10 11

¹⁶Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered King Nebuchadnezzar, "We don't need to answer your question. ¹⁷If our God whom we serve can save us from the furnace with its flaming fire and from your hands, He will save us, King. ¹⁸But if He doesn't, you should know, King, we won't serve your gods or worship the golden statue you set up."

¹⁹Then Nebuchadnezzar's face was distorted with the rage he felt toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and he told men to heat the furnace seven times hotter than usual. ²⁰He told some strong men of his army to tie Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and throw them into the flaming fire of the furnace. ²¹Then these men were bound in their outer and inner clothes and caps and their other clothing and were thrown into the flaming fire of the furnace. ²²The king's order was so urgent and the furnace so extremely hot, those men who took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were killed by the flaming fire. ²³So these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the flaming fire of the furnace.

²⁴Then Nebuchadnezzar was amazed and sprang to his feet in fear and asked his ministers, "Didn't we throw three bound men into the fire?"

"Right, King," they answered.

²⁵"Look," he said, "I see four men, not bound, walking in the middle of the fire, and they aren't hurt. And the fourth looks like a son of God."

²⁶Then Nebuchadnezzar went to the door of the flaming furnace and said, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out and come here."

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the fire.

²⁷The king's satraps, generals, governors, and ministers gathered and saw the fire had no effect on the bodies of these men. The hair on their heads wasn't singed, their outer clothes were the same, and there wasn't any smell of fire on them.

²⁸Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who sent His angel and rescued His servants who trusted Him. They disobeyed the king, and gave up their bodies in order not to serve or worship any god but their own. ²⁹And so I order that any nation, tribe, or people of different languages who say anything bad about the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego will be cut in pieces and their homes turned to ruins because there is no other god who can rescue like this."

³⁰Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar Is Humbled

4 "King Nebuchadnezzar to all the nations, tribes, and people of different languages living all over the earth: May everything be very well with you!

²"I thought it good to tell about the miracles and wonders the Most High God did to me. ³How great are His miracles, how mighty His wonders! He is King forever and rules throughout the ages.

⁴"I Nebuchadnezzar was living without a worry in my home and prospering in my palace ⁵when I had a dream that frightened me. What I imagined on my bed and the visions of my head terrified me. ⁶So I ordered all the wise men in

Babylon to be brought to me to tell me what the dream meant. ⁷Then the wise men, sorcerers, Chaldeans, and astrologers came, and I told them the dream, but they didn't tell me what it meant. ⁸At last Daniel came in. He was named Belteshazzar after my god (Bel). The Spirit of the holy God is in him. And I told him the dream: ⁹"Belteshazzar, head of the wise men, I know the Spirit of the holy God is in you. No secret is too hard for you. Tell me the visions I had in my dream and what it means. ¹⁰"These are the visions of my head that I had on my bed: I saw a tree in the middle of the earth, and it was very tall. ¹¹The tree grew and got strong and tall enough to reach the sky and could be seen in the farthest part of the world. ¹²It had beautiful leaves and plenty of fruit, enough to feed everybody. The animals in the field found shade under it, and the birds in the sky came to live in its branches. It fed every living being.

¹³"As I was seeing the visions of my head on my bed, I saw a guardian and a holy one come down from heaven. ¹⁴He shouted out loud, 'Cut down the tree, and cut off its branches, strip off its leaves, and scatter its fruit. The animals under it should run away, and the birds fly from its branches. ¹⁵But leave the stump with its roots in the ground. Leave him on a chain of iron and bronze in the grass in the field and let the dew under the sky drench him. And let him get his share of the grass on the ground with the animals. ¹⁶Let him lose his human mind and be given the mind of an animal. And let him remain like this for seven seasons. ¹⁷The guardians have decided this, and the holy ones have announced it that every

living thing may know the Most High God has the power over human dominion to give it to whom He wants to give it, and He may put over it the lowest of men. ¹⁸This is the dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar saw. And you, Belteshazzar, tell what it means because the wise men in my kingdom can't tell me what it means, but you can because you have the Spirit of the holy God."

¹⁹Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was stunned for a while, and what he was thinking frightened him. The king told him, "Belteshazzar, don't let the dream and what it means terrify you."

"My lord," Belteshazzar answered, "The dream will please those who hate you, and its meaning please your enemies. ²⁰The tree you saw growing and getting strong and high enough to reach the sky, that could be seen all over the world, ²¹that has beautiful leaves and plenty of fruit, enough to feed everybody, under which the animals of the field come to live, and in whose branches the birds in the sky have their nests—²²it is you, King, who has grown big and strong and great till you have reached the sky and rule the most distant part of the world. ²³And the king saw a guardian and a holy one come down from heaven, saying, 'Cut down the tree and destroy it but leave the stump with its roots in the ground. Leave him on a chain of iron and bronze in the grass of the field and let the dew under the sky drench him and let him get his share with the animals in the field till seven seasons have passed.' ²⁴This is what it means, King. The Most High God has decided it should happen to my lord, the king: ²⁵You will be driven from men and live with the

⁴
¹² Mt 13:32;
 Mk 4:32;
 Lk 13:19
²¹ Mt 13:32;
 Mk 4:32;
 Lk 13:19

animals in the field; you will be made to eat grass like cattle, the dew under the sky will wet you, and seven seasons will pass over you till you realize the Most High God has power over human dominion and gives it to whom He wants to give it. ²⁶And since it was said that the stump was to be left with the roots of the tree, you are to be king again as soon as you realize heaven rules.

²⁷“And so, King, take my advice: Get rid of your sins by doing right, and your wrongs by having pity on the poor. Perhaps you will live happily for a longer time.”

²⁸All this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar. ²⁹Twelve months later he was walking on the wall of the royal palace in Babylon. ³⁰The king was moved to say, “Isn’t this the great Babylon and royal palace I built by my own great power and for my great glory?” ³¹While the king was still speaking, a voice came from heaven: “King Nebuchadnezzar, you are told: You aren’t king anymore. ³²You will be driven from men and live with the animals in the field. You will be made to eat grass like cattle, and seven seasons will pass before you realize the Most High God has power over human dominion and gives it to whom He wants to give it.” ³³Just then the prediction came true in regard to Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven from men and ate grass like cattle. Dew under open sky wet his body till his hair grew like eagles’ feathers and his nails like birds’ claws.

³⁴“At the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up to heaven, my mind came back to me, and I blessed the Most High God, praised and honored Him who lives forever because He rules forever and is King throughout the ages. ³⁵All

who live on earth are as nothing, and He does what He likes with the army of heaven and with those who live on the earth. There is nobody who can stop Him or ask Him, ‘What are you doing?’

³⁶“Just then my mind came back to me: my glory and my splendor were also restored to me for the honor of my kingdom. My ministers and my lords came to me for help. I was again put in charge of my kingdom and made extraordinarily great. ³⁷Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, honor, and glorify the King of heaven because all He does is true, and His ways are right, and He can put down those who act proud.”

The Writing on the Wall

5 King Belshazzar gave a big banquet to a thousand lords and drank in front of the thousand. ²As he drank the wine, Belshazzar told men to bring the golden and silver utensils his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple in Jerusalem so that the king, his lords, his wives and his concubines might drink from them.

³And so they brought in the golden utensils that had been taken from God’s temple in Jerusalem, and the king with his wives and concubines drank from them. ⁴They drank the wine and praised their gods of gold and silver, of bronze and iron, wood and stone.

⁵Just then the fingers of a man’s hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king’s palace, and the king saw the hand that wrote. ⁶Then the king turned pale and his thoughts terrified him, the joints in his hips became loose, and his knees knocked against each other. ⁷The king called out loud for the

³⁰ Rv 14:8
16:12, 17:5
19:2, 10:21
³⁴ Rv 4:9
10:5-6
5
4 Rv 9:20

sorcerers, Chaldeans, astrologers, and the king told these wise men of Babylon. "Anyone who reads this writing and tells me what it means will be dressed in purple, wear a golden chain on his neck, and rule as third highest in the kingdom." "When all the king's wise men had come in, they couldn't read the writing or tell the king what it meant. "Then King Belshazzar was terribly frightened, his face turned pale, and his lords were confused.

¹⁰What the king and his lords said brought the queen to the banquet hall. "King, live forever!" the queen said. "Don't let your thoughts frighten you, and don't turn pale. "There's a man in your kingdom who has the Spirit of the holy God. In the days of your grandfather enlightenment, understanding, and wisdom like God's wisdom was found in him, and your grandfather, King Nebuchadnezzar, made him head of the wise men, sorcerers, Chaldeans, and astrologers. ¹²There was found in this Daniel whom the king called Belteshazzar, an unusually fine spirit, knowledge, understanding, ability to interpret dreams, explain riddles, solve problems. Now, call Daniel, and he will tell what it means."

¹³Then Daniel was taken to the king. "You are Daniel," the king said to him. "one of the people of Judah who were taken captive and whom my grandfather brought from Judah? ¹⁴I've heard you have God's Spirit, and light, understanding, and unusual wisdom have been found in you. ¹⁵Now the wise men, the sorcerers, were brought to me to read this writing and tell me what it means, but they couldn't tell what it means. ¹⁶I have heard you can explain such things and solve prob-

lems. Now if you can read the writing and tell me what it means, you will wear purple, a golden chain on your neck, and rule as third highest in the kingdom."

¹⁷"Keep your gifts," Daniel told the king, "and give your rewards to somebody else. I will without them read the writing for the king and tell what it means.

¹⁸"You King, the Most High God made your grandfather Nebuchadnezzar king and gave him greatness, honor, and glory. ¹⁹And because He made him great, all the nations, tribes, and people of different languages trembled and were afraid of him. He killed whom He wanted to kill, kept alive whom He wanted to keep alive, honored whom He wanted to honor, and put down whom He wanted to put down. ²⁰But when he felt so proud and got so stubborn that he was bragging, he was taken down from his throne, and his glory was taken away from him. ²¹He was driven away from people and mentally became like an animal, living with the wild donkeys, being fed grass like cattle, and his body was wet with dew under the open sky till he realized the Most High God has power over human government to put in charge of it anyone He wishes. ²²And you, his grandson, Belshazzar, didn't humble yourself even though you knew all this. ²³But you set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. The utensils of His temple were brought to you, and you, your lords, your wives and concubines have drunk wine from them and praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, that can't see or hear or know anything, and you didn't honor God who holds your breath in His hand and to whom all

23 Rv 9 20

your ways belong. ²⁴Then He sent the hand and wrote this inscription. ²⁵This is the writing that is inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, and PHARSIN. ²⁶This is what it means, MENE—God has counted the days of your kingdom and ended it. ²⁷TEKEL—you have been weighed on a scale and found lacking. ²⁸PERES—your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

²⁹Then Belshazzar had men dress Daniel in purple, put a golden chain on his neck, and proclaim he should rule as third highest in the kingdom.

³⁰That night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was killed. ³¹Darius, the Mede, was made king when he was 62 years old.

Daniel in the Lions' Den

6 Darius thought it good to appoint over his kingdom 120 governors who were to be in all parts of the kingdom; ²and over these were three ministers of whom Daniel was one. Those governors were to report to them so that the king wouldn't suffer any loss.

³Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the other ministers and the governors because there was an unusually fine Spirit in him; and the king thought of setting him over the whole kingdom. ⁴Then the other ministers and the governors tried to find something to accuse Daniel of, something in regard to the work in the kingdom, but they couldn't find any reason to complain or any fault, because he could be trusted and no neglect or fault could be found in him. ⁵"We'll find nothing to accuse this Daniel of," these men said, "unless we find it in regard to the rules by which he worships God."

⁶And so these ministers and governors came rushing to the king: "King Darius, live forever!" they said to him. ⁷"All the ministers of the kingdom, generals, governors, counselors, and administrators have planned to have the king pass a law and enforce a decree that anyone who for 30 days asks for anything from any god or man except from you, King, should be thrown into the lions' den. ⁸Now, King, issue an order in writing according to the law of the Medes and Persians that can't be canceled." ⁹And so Darius signed the writing with the decree.

¹⁰When Daniel heard the writing had been signed, he went to his home, which had windows in its upper room open toward Jerusalem; and he got down on his knees three times a day to pray to his God and praise Him just as he had done before.

¹¹Then those men rushed in and found Daniel praying and pleading before his God. ¹²And then they went and talked to the king about his decree: "Didn't you sign a decree that every man who for 30 days asks anything from any god or man except from you, King, will be thrown into the lions' den?"

"That's true," the king answered "according to the law of the Medes and Persians that can't be canceled."

¹³"Daniel," they answered him "one of the people who were taken away captive from Judah, pays no attention to you, King, or the decree you signed. Every day he prays three times."

¹⁴The king was very displeased to hear this and planned to save Daniel and tried hard till sunset to rescue him.

¹⁵Then those men rushed to the king. "Remember, King," they told him. "the Medes and Persians have a law that no decree or law the king makes can be changed."

¹⁶So the king gave the order, and Daniel was brought and thrown into the lions' den. "May your God," the king told Daniel. "whom you always worship save you!"

¹⁷A stone was brought and laid over the opening of the den, and the king sealed it with his ring and with the rings of his lords so that nothing in regard to Daniel would be changed.

¹⁸Then the king went to his palace and spent the night without eating. Nothing was brought to him to entertain him; and he couldn't sleep. ¹⁹At dawn, as soon as it was light, the king got up and hurried to the lions' den. ²⁰As he came near the den where Daniel was, the king called Daniel with a loud voice: "Daniel, you servant of the living God, you are God, whom you always worship, able to save you from the lions?"

²¹Then Daniel spoke to the king: "King, live forever: ²²My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they didn't hurt me, because I was innocent before Him — yes, you too know, King, I haven't done anything wrong."

²³Then the king was very glad and had Daniel taken out of the den. When he was taken out of the den, he was found to be completely unharmed because he trusted his God.

²⁴The king ordered those men who had viciously accused Daniel to be brought, and they, their children, and their wives were thrown into the lions' den, and before they touched the bottom of the den, the

lions grabbed them and crushed all their bones.

²⁵Then King Darius wrote to all the nations, tribes, and people of different languages living all over the world: "May everything be very well with you! ²⁶I am making a decree: In every part of my kingdom people should tremble with fear before Daniel's God. He is the God who lives and continues forever, and His kingdom will never be overthrown; He will rule to the end. ²⁷He saves and rescues and does miracles and wonders in heaven and on earth. He saved Daniel from the lions."

²⁸This same Daniel prospered while Darius was king, and also while Cyrus, the Persian, was king.

Four Animals and the Son of Man

7 In the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon, Daniel in a dream had visions in his head while lying on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream and told the main parts of it.

¹"In my visions at night," Daniel said, "I saw the four winds of the sky stirring up The Great Sea. ²And four big animals came out of the sea different from one another. 'The first was like a lion but had the wings of an eagle. I watched till its wings were plucked off and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man and was given a human mind. ³I saw a second and different animal, like a bear, and raised on one side. It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. ⁴And it was told, "Get up, devour much flesh." After this I saw there was another like a leopard with four wings of a bird on its sides. The animal also had four heads. And it was given power to

6
20 2 Tm 4 17
22 2 Tm 4 17
26 Rv 4 9
10 5 6
27 2 Tm 4 17
7
2 Rv 7 1
3 Rv 11 7
13 1 17 8
4 6 Rv 13 2

rule. ⁷After this I saw in the visions during the night a fourth animal, dreadful, terrifying, and extraordinarily strong. It had big iron teeth, and it devoured, crushed, and tramped underfoot what was left. It acted differently from all the other animals that were before it, and it had ten horns. ⁸While I was watching the horns, there came up among them another horn, a little one, and it plucked out three of the first horns. This horn had eyes like human eyes and a mouth talking proud things.

⁹I was watching till thrones were placed and Ancient of Days sat down. His clothes as white as snow and the hair on His head like pure wool. His throne was fiery flames and its wheels a blazing fire. ¹⁰A stream of fire flowed, coming from Him. Thousands upon thousands served Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court sat in judgment, and the books were opened.

¹¹I was watching then because the horn had said such proud things. I kept watching till the animal was killed and its body destroyed, handed over to be burned in fire. ¹²As for the rest of the animals, their power to rule was taken away, but they were allowed to live longer for a season and a time.

¹³In the visions during the night I saw One coming with the clouds of the heavens like the Son of Man, and He came to Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. ¹⁴And He was given glory, power to rule, and a kingdom, so that all peoples, nations, and those of every language should serve Him. His authority is everlasting and will not pass away, and His kingdom one that will not be destroyed.

¹⁵As for me, Daniel—within me my spirit was anxious and the visions in my head frightened me. ¹⁶I went to one of those standing there and asked him for the truth about all this. So he told me and gave me its meaning: ¹⁷“These big animals, of which there are four, are four kings rising out of the earth. ¹⁸But the holy people of the Most High God will get the kingdom and keep the kingdom forever and ever.”

¹⁹Then I wanted to know the truth about the fourth animal, so different from all the others, very terrifying, with iron teeth and bronze claws, it devoured and crushed, tramping underfoot what was left; ²⁰and about the ten horns on its head and the other horn that came up and before which three horns fell. The horn had eyes and a mouth talking big things, and it looked bigger than the others. ²¹I saw this horn fighting against the holy people and winning over them ²²till Ancient of Days came and decided what was right for the holy people of the Most High God and the time came when the holy people got the kingdom.

²³“The fourth animal,” he said, “will be the fourth kingdom on earth, different from all other kingdoms. It will devour the whole world, tramp on it, and crush it. ²⁴As for the ten horns—out of this kingdom ten kings will rise. And another will rise after them. It will be different from those that were before it and will put down three kings. ²⁵He will talk against the Most High God and wear out the holy people of the Most High and plan to change seasons and the law, and they will be put in his hands for a season and seasons and half a season. ²⁶But the court will sit in judgment, and his power to rule will be taken away to be con-

7 Rv 12 3
13 1 17 3
8 Rv 13 5
9 Rv 20 4 11
9 Rv 1 14
10 Rv 5 11
10 Rv 20 12
11 Rv 13 5
13 14 Mt 24
20 26 64
Mk 13 26
14 62
Lk 21 27
22 69
Rv 1 7 13
14 14
14 Rv 10 11
14 Rv 11 15
18 1Co 6 2
Rv 5 10
20 4 6 22 5
20 Rv 17 12
20 Rv 13 5
21 Rv 11 7
13 7
22 1Co 6 2
Rv 5 10
20 4 6 22 5
24 Rv 17 12
25 Rv 12 14

sumed and destroyed forever. "And the dominion, power, and greatness of the kingdoms all over the world will be given to the holy people of the Most High God. Their kingdom is everlasting, and all other authorities will serve and obey them."

"Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel—my thoughts frightened me very much, and I turned pale but kept this in my mind.

The Ram and the He-Goat

8 In the third year of King Belshazzar's rule I, Daniel, saw a vision, after the one I saw earlier. "This is what I saw: In my vision I was in Susa, the capital, in the province of Elam. In the vision I saw myself at the Ulai river. "I looked up and saw a single ram standing alongside the river. It had two horns, both of them high, but one was higher than the other, and was growing behind it. "I saw the ram pushing west, north, and south, and no animal could stand before him, and nobody could escape from his power. He did anything he pleased and grew very great.

"As I was watching closely, there was a he-goat coming from the west over the whole world without touching the ground, and the goat had a horn standing prominently between his eyes. "He was coming toward the two-horned ram I saw standing alongside the river. With his furious power he ran at him. "I saw him coming closer to the ram and in a bitter rage attack him. He struck the ram and smashed both of his horns. The ram didn't have the strength to stand up against him. He was thrown down on the ground and trampled on, the ram having nobody to rescue him from his power. "The

he-goat did some very great things, but when he had grown powerful, the big horn was broken and in its place there grew prominently four horns pointing in the four directions of the sky. "Out of one of them came a horn that started out small but grew very big toward the south, the east, and toward the Beautiful Country. "It grew bigger till it reached the army of heaven, and some of the army and these stars of heaven it threw down on the ground and trampled on them. "Then it grew so big it reached the Ruler of the army and took away from Him the daily burnt offering and wrecked His temple and army. "And it reckoned the daily burnt offering as an offense and threw truth on the ground. So this is the way it acted and was successful.

"Then I heard a holy one speaking. And another holy one said to whoever was speaking, "How far ahead does this vision reach—about the daily sacrifice, the wrong that destroys, the surrender of the holy place and the army being trampled on?"

"For 2300 evenings and mornings," he told me. "Then the holy place will be purified."

"Now when I, Daniel, saw the vision and tried to find out what it meant, there stood before me one who looked like a man. "And I heard the voice of a man between the banks of the Ulai calling and saying, "Gabriel, tell this man what the vision means."

"He came near where I stood, and when he came, I felt terrified and I bowed down on the ground.

"Understand, son of man," he told me, "that the vision is about the time of the end." "As he spoke to me, I fell into a deep sleep on the

²⁷ 1 Co 6:2
^{Rv} 5:10
²⁰ 4:6, 22:5
¹⁰ Rv 12:4

ground, but he touched me and made me stand up straight. ¹⁹He said, "I will tell you what will happen in the latter part of the time when God is angry because the set time has an end. ²⁰The ram you saw with the two horns means the kings of Media and Persia. ²¹And the hairy he-goat is the king of Greece, and the big horn between his eyes is the first king. ²²After it was broken, four horns grew in its place; so four kingdoms will come out of the nation but not as strong as he was. ²³In the later part of their rule when wrongdoers have finished their work, a king, bold and crafty, will come forward. ²⁴He will be very strong but not by his own strength and will destroy in an extraordinary way. He will be successful in what he does and destroy those who are powerful and some of the holy people. ²⁵He will succeed in all his clever and treacherous ways. In his own opinion he will do big things and destroy many when they don't expect it. He will stand up against the Ruler of rulers, but he will be broken and not by a human hand. ²⁶And the vision of evenings and mornings that was told is true. But you, keep the vision because it is about something far in the future."

²⁷I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for some days. Then I got up and worked for the king. The vision amazed me, and nobody understood it.

Daniel Prays

9 In the first year of Darius, Xerxes' son, who was born a Mede and made king over the country of the Chaldeans, ²in the first

year of his rule, I, Daniel, saw in the books the number of years, as the LORD told the prophet Jeremiah, Jerusalem would have to lie in ruins: 70 years.^a ³So I turned to the Lord God to get help by praying, pleading, fasting in sackcloth and ashes.

⁴I prayed to the LORD my God, confessed, and said, "O, Lord, great and fearful God, You are faithful to the covenant and kind to those who love You and do what You order. ⁵We have sinned, done wrong, acted wickedly, rebelled, and turned away from Your orders and regulations. ⁶We didn't listen to Your servants, the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our officers, our fathers, and all the people of the country. ⁷You, Lord are righteous, but we blush with shame today, we, the men of Judah, those who live in Jerusalem, and all Israel near and far, in all the countries where You have driven them because they have been disloyal to You. ⁸Lord, we blush with shame—our kings, our leaders, and our fathers—because we have sinned against You. ⁹But the Lord our God is merciful and forgives although we have rebelled against Him. ¹⁰We didn't listen to the LORD our God and live according to the law He laid before us by His servants, the prophets. ¹¹All Israel has broken Your law, refused to listen to You, and the curses You swore as it is written in the law of Moses, God's servant, have been poured out on us because we have sinned against You. ¹²He did what He threatened to do to us and to our rulers by bringing on us a great disaster; nowhere in the world has anything happened like this in Jerusalem.

⁹
6 Rv 11:18
10 Rv 11:18

^aJer 25:11-12; 29:10

"Just as it is written in the law of Moses, this whole disaster has come on us, and still we haven't tried to win the good will of the LORD our God by turning from our wrongs and devoting ourselves to Your truth. ¹⁴And so the LORD kept watch to bring this disaster on us. The LORD our God is righteous in everything He does, but we didn't listen to Him.

¹⁵"And now, Lord our God, You took Your people out of Egypt with a strong hand, and You made a name for Yourself as it is today—we have sinned; we have been wicked. ¹⁶Lord, since You are very righteous, please stop being angry and furious with Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for our sins and the wrongs of our fathers Jerusalem and Your people are insulted by all who are around us. ¹⁷Now, our God, listen to what I, Your servant, am praying and pleading, and for Your sake, O Lord make Your face shine on Your holy place lying in ruins. ¹⁸My God, listen and hear; open Your eyes and look on our ruins and on the city called by Your name. We are not pleading before You because we are righteous, but because You are very merciful. ¹⁹Hear, Lord; forgive, Lord; listen and act and don't delay; for Your own sake, my God, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name."

Seventy Weeks

²⁰While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sins and the sins of my people Israel, and humbly laying before the LORD my God my plea for mercy for the holy mountain of my God, ²¹while I was expressing the prayer, the man Gabriel whom I had already seen in a vision came to me flying swiftly, about the

time of the evening sacrifice. ²²He instructed me and said, "Daniel, this time I have come to give you insight and understanding. ²³When you started pleading a message went out and I have come to tell it to you because you are loved very much. So examine the message and understand the vision.

²⁴"Seventy weeks are decreed for your people and your holy city to hold back the crime, stop sin, forgive wrong, bring in everlasting righteousness, to confirm the vision of prophets, and to anoint the Most Holy. ²⁵Learn, then, and see that from the coming of the message to restore and rebuild Jerusalem till the anointed Prince will be seven weeks and 62 weeks; it will be built again with wide streets and moats, but in a time of trouble. ²⁶But after the 62 weeks the Anointed will be cut off and have nothing, and the troops of a prince who will come will destroy the city and the holy place which will be finally overwhelmed as by a flood till the end of the war that is decreed with its destruction. ²⁷He will make a strong covenant with many for one week. In the middle of the week he will stop the sacrifices and food offerings, and at the climax of these abominable things there will come one who destroys till finally the doom that is decreed is poured out on this one who destroys.

God's Messenger

10 In the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia, a message was revealed to Daniel, who was called Belteshazzar. The message was true. He was under a great strain as he paid close attention to the message and understood the vision.

²⁷ Mt 26:15
Mk 13:14

²In those days I, Daniel, mourned three whole weeks. ³I didn't eat any tasty food or put any meat or wine in my mouth. I didn't anoint myself till the three whole weeks were over.

⁴On the 24th day of the first month I was by the great river Tigris. ⁵When I looked up, I saw a man dressed in linen, and he had around his waist a belt of gold from Uphaz. ⁶His body was like a precious stone. His face looked like lightning. His eyes were like flaming torches. His arms and His legs looked like gleaming brass, and when He spoke, He sounded like a noisy crowd. ⁷I, Daniel, alone saw the vision. The men with me didn't see the vision, but they started to tremble violently and tried to get away by hiding. ⁸So I was left alone to see this grand vision, but there was no strength left in me. The healthy color left my face so that it looked marred, and my strength slipped away. ⁹I heard Him speak, and as I listened to Him, I fainted face down on the ground.

¹⁰Then a hand touched me and roused me to get up on my hands and knees. ¹¹"Daniel, a much loved man," He said to me, "pay attention to what I'm telling you and stand up straight because I have now been sent to you." When He said this to me, I stood up trembling. ¹²"Don't be afraid, Daniel," He told me. "From the first day when you made up your mind to understand, humbling yourself before your God, what you said was heard, and I have come because you spoke. ¹³The prince of the Persian kingdom opposed me 21 days, but then Michael, one of the leading princes, came to help me,

and I have left him to oppose the kings of Persia" and have come to help you understand what will happen to your people in the last days because there is still a vision for those days."

¹⁵When He said this to me, I looked at the ground and was silent. ¹⁶And there was one who looked like a human being touching my lips. I opened my mouth to talk and said to Him who was standing before me, "My Lord, because of the vision my pains have overwhelmed me, and my strength has slipped away. ¹⁷How can I, my Lord's servant, talk to my Lord? I have now no strength left, and no breath remains in me."

¹⁸Then the one looking like a man touched me and strengthened me. ¹⁹"Don't be afraid, you are much loved," He said, "may everything be well with you. Be strong; yes, be strong!" And as He talked to me, I felt myself strengthened. "Speak, my Lord," I said, "because you have strengthened me."

The Lord Reveals the Future to Daniel

²⁰"Do you know why I have come to you?" He asked. "I will now go back to fight with the prince of Persia, but while I'm out there fighting, the prince of Greece will come. ²¹But I will tell you what is inscribed in the true writing. Concerning these things there is nobody uniting his strength with mine but Michael, your prince."

11 In the first year of Darius the Mede I stood to strengthen and defend him.

Dynastic Events of Persia,

10
5-6 Rev 1
13-15
2:18, 19:12
13 Jude 9

Greece, the Ptolemies and Seleucids^b

²“Now I will tell you the truth. Three more kings will come in Persia, then a fourth who will get much richer than all the others, and as he gets to be strong by his wealth, he will stir up everybody against the kingdom of Greece.

³“Then a soldier king will come who will rule over an immense area and do as he pleases. ⁴But he will hardly be established when his kingdom will be broken in pieces and divided in four directions, but his descendants will not get it, nor will it be ruled as he ruled it since his empire will be torn up and go to others.

⁵“The southern king will become strong, but one of his officers will get stronger than he and rule over a large kingdom. ⁶After some years they will join one another when the

southern king's daughter will marry the northern king to make peace, but she won't keep her power, nor will his power continue; she will be surrendered, she and her escort, and her child, and the man who married her.

⁷“At that time a shoot will grow from her roots in place of her father. He will attack the army and enter the fortification of the northern king and will prevail over them. ⁸And he will take as loot back to Egypt the metal images of their gods and their precious utensils of silver and gold. ⁹Then for some years he will keep away from the northern king who will invade the southern kingdom but then go back to his own country.

¹⁰“Then his sons will get ready to fight and gather a large army that will march on like a flood, pass through, and again fight its way

^bThis prophesy came true as follows:

- 2 After Cambyses, Smerdis, and Darius Hystaspis came the fourth, Xerxes, who raised an army 2½ million men against Greece. He met disaster at Salamis in 480 B.C.
- 3 Alexander conquered the world.
- 4 He died at 32. His two sons Hercules and Alexander were murdered 13 years later. The empire was divided into four parts.
- 5 A Macedonian, one of Alexander's best generals, became Ptolemy I of Egypt. Seleucus, another officer in Alexander's army, became king of Babylonia.
- 6 Antiochus II divorced his wife Laodice to marry Berenice, the daughter of Ptolemy II. Each of the two women had a possible heir to the throne. When Ptolemy II died, Antiochus divorced Berenice and remarried Laodice. But Laodice poisoned her husband Antiochus and had her son murder Berenice and her child.
- 7 Berenice's brother, Ptolemy III attacked Syria under Seleucus II and killed Laodice.
- 8 He brought back to Egypt 40,000 talents of silver and 2,500 precious vessels and images of the gods.
- 9 Seleucus II marched against Egypt, was defeated, and came back with only a remnant of his army.
- 10 Seleucus III succeeded his father but was murdered after two years. His brother Antiochus III aimed to have an empire like Alexander's.

to his foe's fortifications. ¹¹The southern king will get furious, go out, and fight with the northern king, whose large army that he put into the field will fall into the enemy's hands and be taken away. ¹²The southern king will feel proud, and though he puts down tens of thousands, he will not continue strong.

¹³And again the northern king will raise an army larger than the first, and after some years he will come marching with a big army and a lot of equipment. ¹⁴In those times many will rebel against the southern king, and criminals of your own people will attempt to make a vision come true, but they will fall. ¹⁵Then the northern king will come, put up ramparts, and take a fortified city, and the southern forces will not hold their ground; even their picked troops will not be strong enough to resist. ¹⁶The invader will do as he pleases, and nobody will be able to hold his ground against him. He will take his position in the Beautiful Country and have the power to destroy it. ¹⁷Then he will be determined to get the whole dominion of the southern king in his power by making peace with him and giving

him a daughter to marry, in order to destroy his kingdom; but the plan will not succeed or help him. ¹⁸Then he will turn his attention to the lands by the sea and take many places, but a leader will silence the insults made by him without insulting him in turn. ¹⁹Then he will turn back toward the fortresses of his own country and will stumble and fall and disappear.

²⁰Then another will rise to take his place and will have a collector of tribute go out in royal attire, but in a few days he will be destroyed without fury and without war.

Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.)

²¹In his place there will come a contemptible person who will not be given royal glory but will come to it when people are off their guard; by intrigue he will make himself king. ²²He will sweep away and crush overwhelming forces including the prince of the covenant. ²³After a treaty has been made with him, he will act treacherously and rise to power with only a few people. ²⁴When nobody expects him, he will invade the richest parts of the prov-

-
- 11 Antiochus with 72,000 men and 102 elephants met Ptolemy with 70,000 men and 73 elephants and defeated him thoroughly. The king of Egypt was victorious.
 - 12 The king of Egypt was proud and lazy, and didn't follow up his advantage.
 - 13 Antiochus won the victories for which he was called the Great.
 - 15 The Egyptians succeeded in taking Judea away from Antiochus. But Antiochus again defeated the Egyptians and entered Jerusalem.
 - 16 "The beautiful country" is Judea.
 - 17 Antiochus gave his daughter Cleopatra in marriage to the 7-year-old Ptolemy V and Coele-Syria, Phenicia, and Judea as a dowry but gained nothing by it.
 - 18 When most of Asia was in his hands, Antiochus started to take Greece but the Romans defeated him at Thermopylae and again at Smyrna.
 - 19 Retiring east of the Taurus mountains, he searched for gold to pay tribute to the Romans.
 - 20 His son Seleucus IV collected tribute from Judea to pay the Romans. His own prime minister Heliodorus had him killed.

inces and do what none of his fathers or ancestors ever did—scattering among them plunder, spoils, and goods. He will invent new ways of attacking fortifications. But it will be only for a while.

²⁵“With a big army he will stir up his power and his courage against the southern king, and the southern king will get ready to fight with a vast and strong army but won’t hold his ground on account of schemes put to work against him. ²⁶Yes, those who eat the king’s food will ruin him, his army will be swept away, and many will fall in battle. ²⁷Both kings will have in mind to do wrong and at one table will tell lies but will not succeed because the end can’t be till the time that is appointed. ²⁸He will come back to his country with a lot of goods. Setting his heart against the holy covenant, he will do what he likes and come back to his own country.

²⁹“At the appointed time he will again invade the south, but this last time will be different from the first. ³⁰Ships will come from the west to oppose him. Scared, he will turn back, be angry at the holy covenant, take action and again favor those who forsake the holy covenant. ³¹He will send troops to defile the holy place—the refuge—set aside the regular sacrifices, and put up there the *abomination that destroys*. ³²In beguiling ways he will seduce those who violate the covenant to become heathen, but the people who know their God will stand firm and take action. ³³Those who teach the people will help many to understand, but for some time they will fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. ³⁴When they fall, they will get a little help, but many will join them hypocritically.

³⁵Some of the faithful who understand will fall, but this will refine them, purify and make them white till the end comes, but the time appointed is still to come.

The Enemy of God’s People

³⁶“The king will do as he pleases. He will honor and glorify himself above any God; he will say monstrous things against the God of gods, and will succeed till his rage is over because what is decreed must be fulfilled. ³⁷He will think nothing of the gods of his fathers or the god desired by women, or of any god, because he will make himself greater than anything else. ³⁸Instead he will honor the god of fortresses and with gold, silver, precious stones, and other costly things honor a god his fathers didn’t know. ³⁹With the help of a foreign god he will deal with strong fortresses. He will give high honors to those who acknowledge him, make them rulers over many, and distribute the land to them as a reward.

⁴⁰“In the last time he will fight the southern king. The northern king will rush at him like a cyclone with chariots and horses and many ships, invading the countries and sweeping through them. ⁴¹He will invade the Beautiful Country and tens of thousands will fall, but Edom, Moab, and the best of the Ammonites will escape from him. ⁴²When he reaches for these countries even Egypt will not escape, ⁴³but he will control Egypt’s stores of gold, silver, and all its treasures; and the Libyans and Ethiopians will fall in line. ⁴⁴But news from the east and the north will trouble him, and in a great fury he will leave to

11
31 Mt 24 15
Mk 13 14
36 2 Th 2 4

destroy and annihilate many. "He will pitch his royal tents between the sea and the beautiful Holy Mount. Then he will come to his end with nobody to help him.

12 "At that time *Michael*, the great prince, will stand up to protect your people. It will be a time of trouble such as hasn't been since there was a nation till that time, but at that time your people will be saved, all who are written in the book. ¹And many sleeping in the ground will wake up, some to live forever and others to feel ashamed and abhorred forever. ²And those who understand will shine like the light in the sky and those who make many righteous like the stars forever.

"Go, Daniel"

"But you, Daniel, keep these words and seal the book till the last time. Many will search it thoroughly, and knowledge will grow."

³When I, Daniel, looked up, I saw two others standing there, one on one bank of the river and the other on the other bank of the river. ⁴And one asked the man dressed in

fine linen who was above the water of the river, "How long will it be till these wonders will be over?" "I heard the man dressed in fine linen who was above the water of the river as He raised his right and left hands to heaven and swore by Him who lives forever, "It will be for three and a half seasons. When the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, then all these things will be accomplished."

⁵I heard Him but did not understand, so I asked Him, "My Lord, how will these things end?"

"Go, Daniel," He said, "because these words are kept and sealed till the last time. ⁶Many will be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked will do wicked things, and none of the wicked will understand; only the wise will understand. ⁷From the time the regular burnt offering is taken away and the abomination that destroys is set up there are 1,290 days. ⁸Blessed is anyone who waits till he reaches the 1,353 days. ⁹But go on to the end for you will rest and rise for what is allotted to you at the end of time."

12
 1 Jude 9
 1 Mt 24 21
 Mk 13 19
 Rv 16 18
 2 Mt 25 46
 3 Mt 13 43
 4 Rv 22 10
 7 Rv 4 9
 10 5-6
 7 Rv 12 14
 9 Rv 22 10
 11 Mt 24 15
 Mk 13 14
 12 Jb 1 12
 5 11

HOSEA

1 This is what the LORD said to Hosea Beeri's son, when Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah were the kings of Judah and when Jeroboam, the son of Joash, was king of Israel.

Hosea Marries a Prostitute

¹When the LORD first spoke to Hosea, the LORD told Hosea, "Go, marry a prostitute with children born by prostitution, because the country has left the LORD to live as a prostitute."² So he went and married Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, and she became pregnant, and they had a son.

"Call him Jezreel," the LORD told him, "because in a little while I will punish Jehu's family for the murders in Jezreel and put an end to the kingdom of Israel. ³At that time I will break Israel's bow in the valley of Jezreel."

"She became pregnant again and had a daughter. And He told him, "Call her *Unloved* because I will no more love the people of Israel and ever forgive them. ⁷I will love the people of Judah and I, the LORD their God will save them but will not save them by a bow or a sword, by fighting, by horses or horsemen."

"When she had weaned Unloved, she became pregnant again and had a son. ⁸"Call him *Not-My-People*." He said, "because you are not My people, and I'm not yours.

¹⁰"And yet the Israelites will be many like the sand by the sea that can't be measured or counted, and

where they are told, 'You are not My people,' they will be told, 'You are the children of the living God.'

"And the people of both Judah and Israel will be gathered together to appoint one leader over themselves and go out of that country, because the day of Jezreel will be great.

2 Call then your Israelite brothers 'My people,' and your Israelite sisters 'loved.'

Israel Is an Unfaithful Wife

²"Correct your mother—correct her

because she is not My wife and I am not her husband. She should get rid of the sexual lust on her face and the adultery between her breasts.

³or I will strip her naked and make her bare as when she was born.

I will make her like a desert, like dry land and I will kill her with thirst.

⁴And I will not love her children, because they are born in prostitution.

⁵Their mother lived as a prostitute;

she who conceived them did shameful things,

saying, 'I'll go after my lovers who give me my food and water, my wool and flax,

my olive oil and wine.'

⁶For that I will hedge up her^a way with thorns

¹
6 1 Pt 2 10
9 1 Pt 2 10
10 Ro 9 27
2
1 1 Pt 2 10

^aGr: Heb "your"

- and build a wall for her to keep her from finding her paths.
- ⁷She will run after her lovers and not catch up with them. She will look for them and not find them. Then she will say, 'I'll go back to my first husband because I was happier then than now.'
- ⁸She doesn't acknowledge that I gave her fresh grain, wine, and olive oil, and much silver and gold, which the people used for Baal.
- ⁹And so I will take back My grain when it gets ripe and My fresh wine in its season. I will take away My wool and My flax that was to cover her naked body.
- ¹⁰And I will uncover her nakedness for her lovers to see, and nobody will rescue her from Me.
- ¹¹I will bring to an end all her happy times, her festivals, her celebrations at the first of the month, her sabbaths, and all her meetings.
- ¹²I will destroy her vines and fig trees, of which she said, 'These are the pay my lovers have given me,' and I will make them a jungle where the wild animals will devour them.
- ¹³I will punish her for the days she spent on the Baals when she sacrificed to them and made herself pretty with her rings and necklaces and went after her lovers and forgot Me," says the LORD.

God Is Faithful

- ¹⁴"So I will coax her, have her go into the wilderness, and speak to her heart.
- ¹⁵There I will give her her vineyards and make the Valley of Trouble a door of hope. There she will respond as she did when she was young, as she did when she came out of Egypt.
- ¹⁶Then," says the LORD, "she will call Me 'my husband' and no more call Me 'my Baal.'
- ¹⁷because I will get rid of the names of the Baals in her mouth; they will never be mentioned again by name.
- ¹⁸And then I will make a covenant for them with the wild animals, the birds in the air, and the animals moving on the ground. I will smash bows, swords, anything to fight with, and rid the country of them, and have the people lie down without being afraid.
- ¹⁹I will purchase you as My wife forever. I will pay your bride-price in righteousness and justice, in kindness and love.
- ²⁰I will pay for you in faithfulness, and you will know the LORD. On that day I will answer you," says the LORD:
- ²¹"I will give the sky what it wants, and the sky will give the land what it wants,
- ²²and the land will give the fresh grain, wine, and olive oil what they need,

and they will respond to
Jezreel.^b

²¹And I will plant her in the country for Myself
and love her who isn't loved.
*I will say to those who are not
My people.*
'You are My people.'
and they will say, 'You are my
God!'"

The LORD Wants to Bless His People

3 "Go," the LORD told me, "and again love a woman who, loved by a friend, is an adulteress, just as the LORD has loved Israel while they turn to other gods and love cakes of raisins."

²So I bought her for myself for 15 shekels of silver and an omer and a half of barley. ³But I told her, "Sit at home for me a long time. Don't be a prostitute or offer yourself to any man, and I will wait for you."

²³ Ho 9:25,
¹ Pt 2:10

'The Israelites will sit a long time without a king or a prince, without a sacrifice or a pillar, and without a priest's apron or family idols.

⁵After that, Israel will come back and search for the LORD their God and David their king, and they will come trembling to the LORD and to His blessings in that last time.

More Sinning

4 Israelites, listen to what the LORD says.

The LORD has a quarrel with the people living in the land

because nobody in the land is faithful and kind or knows God.

²There's swearing and lying, murder, stealing, and adultery. People break the law, and one bloody crime follows another.

³That is why the country dries up and everything in it languishes, the animals in the fields and the birds in the sky. Even the fish in the sea are taken away.

⁴"Let no man dispute it; let no man argue about it. My dispute is with you, O priest.

⁵"You stumble during the day, and the prophet also stumbles with you at night; you have destroyed your mother."^c

⁶Ignorance destroys My people. Because you have rejected knowledge,

I will also reject you so that you will not be My priest. You forget the law of your God, and I too will forget your children.

⁷"The more priests there were, the more they sinned against Me.

So I will change their glory to shame.

⁸They feed on the sin of my people and they're eager to have them sin.

⁹The priests and the people are alike;

I will punish them for their ways

^bJezreel means "God's sowing;" a place with a bad reputation. The events of I Kings 21 at Jezreel resulted in the dynasty of Jehu, about to come to an end (II Kings 10:30).

^cIn these verses he's speaking to the priests. Israel is their mother.

and pay them back for what they do.

¹⁰“They will eat and not be satisfied; they will live in sexual sin and never have children, because they have left the LORD ¹¹to commit adultery. Old and new wine take hold of their brains.

¹²My people ask their wooden idol for help, and their wand tells them what to do, because the spirit of lust has misled them; they leave their God to play the prostitute.

¹³They sacrifice on top of the mountains and burn offerings on the hills, under oaks, poplars, and terebinths because they provide good shade. So your daughters become prostitutes and your sons’ wives commit adultery.

¹⁴I will not punish your daughters for their sexual sin or your sons’ wives for their adultery, because the men themselves go to prostitutes and sacrifice with temple prostitutes. A people who don’t understand are ruined.”

¹⁵Israel, if you go on as a prostitute, Judah mustn’t become guilty too. Don’t come to Gilgal, and don’t go up to Beth-aven.^d Don’t swear, “As the LORD lives.”

¹⁶Israel is stubborn like a stubborn heifer. Will the LORD then feed them like a lamb in a wide pasture? ¹⁷Ephraim worships idols; let him alone. ¹⁸When they’re done drinking, they indulge in sexual orgies. Their rulers love shame. ¹⁹The wind will carry them away in its wings, and they will see how their sacrifices have failed.

Unfaithful People

5 “Hear this, you priests! Listen, people of Israel! Let the royal family open their ears! You have been sentenced because you have been a snare at Mizpah and a net spread out on Tabor; ²your rebels have gone deep into sin; and I will punish all of you. ³“I know Ephraim, and Israel isn’t hidden from Me. Ephraim, you are now living in sexual sin, and Israel has made herself unclean.” ⁴Their deeds won’t let them go back to their God because they have the spirit of lust in them and don’t love the LORD. ⁵What Israel is proud of testifies against them: sinning makes Israel and Ephraim stumble, and Judah stumbles with them. ⁶With their sheep and their cattle they will come to search for the LORD but do not find Him.

^d“house of sin,” a nickname for Bethel

He has withdrawn from them.
 They have been unfaithful to the
 LORD
 and given birth to bastard chil-
 dren.
 Now the destroyer will devour
 them with their lands.

God Will Be a Lion

"Blow the horn in Gibeah,
 the trumpet in Ramah,
 and sound the alarm against
 Beth-aven:
 'We will follow you, Benjamin!'

"When the time for punishment
 comes, Ephraim will be turned
 to ruins.

What I announce about the
 tribes of Israel will certainly
 happen.

"The leaders of Judah are like
 those who change the border
 of their land—
 I will pour on them My fury like
 water.

"Ephraim is an oppressor
 who crushes justice,
 because he is determined to go
 after filth.

"So I will be like a moth to
 Ephraim
 and like a rotting to the people of
 Judah.

"When Ephraim sees his sickness
 and Judah his festering sore,
 Ephraim goes to Assyria
 and sends to the great king,
 but he can't heal you,
 or cure you of your sore

"because I will be a lion to
 Ephraim
 and a young lion to the people of
 Judah.

I, I will tear them in pieces and
 leave.

I will carry them off,
 and nobody will rescue them.

Superficial Repentance

"I will go back to My place
 till they confess their guilt and
 seek my face.
 When they're in trouble, they'll
 long for me."

6 Come, let us go back to the
 LORD.

He has torn us but He will heal
 us.

He has struck us but He will
 bandage our wounds.

²After two days He will revive us.
 On the third He will raise us
 to have us live before Him.

³Let us earnestly seek to know
 the LORD.
 He will come out as surely as the
 dawn.

He will come to us like the rain,
 like the spring showers that
 water the ground.

"What'll I do with you,
 Ephraim?

What'll I do with you, Judah?

Your love is like a morning
 cloud,
 like dew passing away early.

⁵That is why I cut them down by
 the prophets and kill them by
 what I say.

My^e judgments strike like
 lightning.

⁶I want love and not just sacri-
 fice;

I want you to know God and not
 just bring burnt offerings.

⁷"Like Adam they have broken
 My covenant

and there have acted treacher-
 ously against Me.

⁸Gilead is a city of wrongdoers,

6 Mt. 9:13;
 12:7

^eGr: Heb "your"

tracked-up with blood.

⁹Just as bands of robbers wait for a man,

so gangs of priests murder on the road to Shechem.

Yes, they plan wickedness.

¹⁰I've seen horrible things at Israel's temple; there Ephraim plays the prostitute, and Israel pollutes herself.

¹¹Judah, you too must harvest what you sowed.

When I want to restore My people,

7 When I want to heal Israel, Ephraim's guilt and Samaria's wickedness gets uncovered:

They practice deceit,

break in as thieves and plunder outside like a gang,

²and never realize I keep a record of all their wickedness; now what they're doing is all around them, and it's right in front of Me."

³"They delight the king with their wickedness and the leaders with their lies.

⁴They are all adulterers, like a stove heated by a baker, who stops stirring up the fire from the time the dough is kneaded till it rises.

⁵On our king's birthday the rulers begin to grow warm with wine.

The king joins hands with violent men.

⁶They burn in their lust like an oven with cakes: All night their anger smolders, but in the morning it burns like a flaming fire.

⁷They all glow like a stove, and consume their rulers. All their kings have fallen.

"There is no one among them who calls on Me."

⁸Ephraim mixes with other nations.

Ephraim is a cake that isn't turned.

⁹Strangers devour his strength, and he doesn't know it; gray hairs are sprinkled on him, and he doesn't know it.

¹⁰Israel's arrogance testifies against them, but for all this they don't return to the LORD their God or look for His help.

¹¹"Ephraim acts like a silly dove, without sense. They call to Egypt and run to Assyria.

¹²As soon as they run, I spread My net over them and bring them down like birds in the air.

I will capture them when I hear them gathering.

¹³"Woe to them because they have strayed from Me; they are destroyed because they've rebelled against Me.

I wanted to redeem them, but they tell lies about Me.

¹⁴They don't cry to Me from their hearts as they wail on their beds.

They cut themselves for grain and wine as they turn against Me.

¹⁵I train them and strengthen their arms, but they plan evil against Me."

¹⁶They return but not to the Most High.

They are like a bow with a slack string.

The sword will strike down their leaders for the shamelessness of their tongues;

for this they will be mocked in
Egypt.

A Warning Trumpet

8 "Put the horn to your lips!
Like a herald over the LORD's
house,
because they have broken My
covenant
and rebelled against My law.
"They cry to Me, 'My God,
we, Israel, know You,'
"but Israel has spurned what is
good;
let the enemy pursue him.
"They made kings without Me;
they made princes without My
knowing about it.
With their own silver and gold
they made idols
only to be cut down.
"Your calf-god is a stench,
Samaria.
My anger blazes against this
people.
How long can they go unpun-
ished?
"Samaria's calf was made in
Israel.
Workmen made it; it is a false
god
and it will be cut into chips."
"They sow the wind
and reap the whirlwind.
What they sow doesn't mature
but is only a sprout that pro-
duces no grain.
If it were to produce it,
foreigners would devour it.
"Israel will be swallowed up.
Already they are among the na-
tions
like a bowl nobody wants.
"They went up to Assyria—
like a wild donkey wandering off
alone.
Ephraim has hired lovers.
"Because they do their lewd busi-

ness among the nations, I will
now gather them up
and they will suffer for a while
under the burden of the king
of princes.
"Ephraim has made many altars
for sin-offerings,
but they are now altars on
which he sins.
"Though I write ten thousand
things in My law for him,
they are treated as something
strange.
"They offer Me meat as gifts so
they can eat the flesh;
but I the LORD do not accept
them.
Now their wrongs will be re-
membered
and their sins punished:
They will go back to Egypt.
"Israel has forgotten his Maker
and has built palaces;
Judah has built many fortified
cities.
But I will send a fire on his cities
to burn down his palaces."

Israel Will Go Into Exile

9 Israel, don't celebrate
and be delighted like other na-
tions,
because you have gone a-lusting
from your God,
loving a prostitute's pay on
every threshing-floor.
"Threshing-floor and vat will not
feed you,
and new wine will fail you.
"You will not stay in the LORD's
country.
Ephraim will go back to Egypt,
and the people will eat unclean
food in Assyria.
"They will not pour out wine to
the LORD
nor will they please Him.
Their sacrifices will be for them

like the food mourners eat:
All who eat it will make themselves unclean
because their food will only satisfy their appetite.

It will not come into the LORD's house.

⁹What will you do on the day appointed for an assembly, the day of the Lord's festival?

¹⁰Even if they get away from the destruction,

Egypt will gather them,
and Memphis will bury them.

Where they had their treasures of silver,

thistles will grow;
thorns will be in their tents.

¹¹The time will come to punish. The time will come to pay back. Israel will know it.

The prophet is considered a fool and the man of the Spirit crazy because of the sin and your great hostility. ^{7 LU 21:22}

¹²The prophet is a watchman for God over Ephraim;
he sets a trap on all his paths,
and there is hostility in the temple of His God.

¹³They have deeply corrupted themselves as they once did at Gibeah. He will remember their wrongs and punish them for their sins.

¹⁴"I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness.

I picked your fathers like the first ripe fig when its season starts.

But they went to Baal-at-Peor and devoted themselves to a shameful idol,

becoming as abominable as the thing they loved.

¹⁵"Ephraim's glory will fly away

like a bird
so that there will be no one born carried in the womb, or conceived.

¹⁶Even if they raise their children, I will take them away before they grow up;

yes, woe to them when I leave them."

¹⁷I have seen Tyre; like it Ephraim is planted in a pleasant place. But Ephraim will bring out his children for the slayer.

¹⁸LORD, give them—what will You give them?—
give them a womb that miscarries and dry breasts.

¹⁹"All their evil was evident in Gilgal;
there I hated them.

For their evil deeds I will drive them out of My house and not love them anymore.

All their leaders are rebellious.

²⁰"Ephraim is struck down. Their roots are dried up. They will bear no fruit. Even if they have young, I will kill the children they delight in."

²¹My God will reject them because they refused to listen to Him.

And they will be wandering among the nations.

10 Israel is a luxuriant vine, producing its fruit.

The more he produces, the more altars he makes;

the finer his country, the finer the pillars he makes for his idols.

²Their hearts are divided; now they must take their punishment.

¹Heb uncertain

He will tear down their altars
and destroy their pillars.

¹Yes, soon they'll be saying,
"We have no king because we
don't fear the LORD.

But what could a king do for
us?"

⁴They speak mere words, swear
to lies,
and so they make contracts, and
court cases spring up like
poisonous weeds in the fur-
rows of a field.

⁵Those who live in Samaria bow
down to the heifer of Beth-
aven.

Its people will weep over it and
its priests wail over it
because its glory has departed
from it.

⁶Yes, the thing itself will be car-
ried to Assyria
as a present to the great king.
Ephraim will be disgraced;
Israel will be disappointed in
what he planned.

⁷Samaria and her king will be cut
off
and be like a piece of wood on
the water.

⁸The hill shrines of Aven—Is-
rael's sin—will be wiped out.
Thorns and thistles will grow up
on their altars.

People will say to the mountains,
"Cover us."

and to the hills, "Fall on us."

⁹Since the time of Gibeah you
have sinned, Israel;
and it's still the same. Will no
war against wicked people
reach them in Gibeah?

¹⁰I will punish them when I want
to.

People will be gathered against
them
since they are yoked to two sin-
ful idols.

¹¹"Ephraim is a trained heifer
that loves to thresh.

And will I put a yoke on her fair
neck?

I will harness Ephraim, Judah
will plow,
and Jacob will harrow for him-
self."

¹²Sow righteousness for your-
selves,
reap the fruit of love,
break new ground for your-
selves.

It is time to search for the LORD
till He comes and rains right-
eousness on you.

¹³You have plowed wickedness
and harvested wrong.

You have eaten the fruit of lies
because you trusted in your
chariots and your many war-
riors.

¹⁴The noise of war will come
against your people;
all your fortresses will be de-
stroyed as Shalman destroyed
Beth-arbel in battle:

Mothers were dashed in pieces
with their children.

¹⁵So it will be done to you, Bethel,
because your wickedness is so
very great.

At daybreak the king of Israel
will be totally destroyed.

God Loves Israel

11 "When Israel was a boy, I
loved him

and I called My son out of Egypt.

²But the more they were called,
the farther they went away:

They sacrificed to the Baals and
offered to idols.

³Yet I was the one who taught
Ephraim to walk,

taking him in my arms.

But they didn't know I healed
them.

10
8 Lk 23:30.
Rv 6:16
11
1 Mt 2:15

"I would harness them with
leather cords, with ropes of
love,
and I would be to them like one
who removes the yoke from
their neck,
and then bend down to feed
them.

⁵"They will not return to Egypt,
but the Assyrian will rule them
because they have refused to
come back to Me.

⁶The sword will flash in their
cities,
putting an end to their vain talk
and destroying their plans.

⁷My people are hopelessly de-
termined to desert Me.
Even though they call it a high
god,
it still cannot lift them up.⁸

⁸"How can I give you up, 12
8 Nu 3:17
Ephraim?

How can I make you like Admah
and treat you like Zeboim?
I'm changing My mind;
My sympathy is stirred up.

⁹I will not do what in My fury I
should do.
I will not again destroy Ephraim,
because I am God and not man,
the holy One among you,
and I will not come with terror."

¹⁰They will follow the LORD
as He roars like a lion.
When he roars,
His children will come trembling
from the west.

¹¹"They will come trembling like
birds from Egypt
or doves from Assyria,
and I will settle them in their
homes."
says the LORD.

Lies, Deceit and Violence

¹²"Ephraim surrounds Me with
lies and Israel with deceit."
Judah also is wayward with God
and with the Holy One, who is
faithful.

12 Ephraim cultivates wind
and chases after the hot east
wind.

All day they add violence to
their lies.

He makes a treaty with Assyria
and takes oil to Egypt.

²The LORD has a quarrel with
Judah
and will punish Jacob according
to his ways.

He will pay him back for what he
does.

³In the womb he took his brother
by the heel,
and when he was a strong man,
he fought with God.

⁴When he fought with the Angel,
he won,
weeping and pleading with Him.
He found Him at Bethel,
and there God talked to him.

⁵The LORD is the God of armies;
the LORD is the name by which
He is remembered.

⁶You too should turn to your God,
be kind and just, and always
look confidently to your God.

⁷With dishonest scales in his
hands,
this merchant loves to cheat.

⁸Ephraim says, "Ah, I've become
rich.

I've gotten my own wealth."
All his riches are not enough
to pay for the wrong he did.

⁹"But I have been the LORD your
God ever since Egypt.

⁸Heb uncertain

I will make you live in tents
again as in the olden days.

¹⁰I spoke to the prophets and gave them many visions
and by the prophets I spoke in parables."

¹¹Is Gilead a delusion?

Yes, they will surely come to nothing.

They sacrifice bulls in Gilgal,
they also have altars like piles of stones
beside the furrows of the field.

¹²When Jacob fled to the land of Syria,

Israel worked for a wife
and watched sheep for a wife.

¹³The LORD brought Israel out of Egypt
by a prophet
and by a prophet kept them safe.

¹⁴"Ephraim has most bitterly provoked Me."

His guilt for shedding blood will be held against him.

and his Lord will pay him back for his insults.

13 When Ephraim spoke, people used to tremble.

He was important in Israel.
Then He worshiped Baal and died.

²And now they sin more and more,

using their silver to make metal images for themselves
and skillfully made idols,
all of them the work of craftsmen.

People say of them, "They kiss calf idols
and commit human sacrifice."

³That is why they will be like the morning mist,

like dew passing away early,
like chaff driven by a storm from a threshing-floor,

and like smoke coming out of a chimney.

⁴"But I am the LORD, your God ever since Egypt,
when you didn't know any God but Me,

and only I could save.

⁵I took care of you in the desert in an arid land.

⁶When I fed them,
they were satisfied,
and when they were satisfied,
they became proud;
so they forgot Me.

⁷"Then I will come against them like a lion,

like a leopard I will watch by the road for them.

⁸I will attack them like a bear robbed of her cubs,
tear open their hearts,
and devour them like a lion.

I will tear them apart like a wild animal.

⁹You are destroying yourself, Israel: but in Me is your help.

¹⁰"Where is your king now to save you?

Where are your rulers in all your cities,

of whom you said, 'Give me a king and princes!'

¹¹I gave you a king when I was angry
and took him away when I was furious."

¹²Ephraim's wrong is carefully kept;
his sin is well preserved.

¹³The time comes for him to be born;

he's a foolish baby—
when it's his time, he doesn't come out of the womb.

¹⁴"I want to free them from the grove

and redeem them from death.

I want to be a plague to you, death,

13
14

and a pest to you, *grave*.
and I will not think of changing
My mind."

¹⁵Although Ephraim thrives
among the reed plants,
the LORD's scorching wind will
come from the east,
blowing out of the desert.
Then his spring will dry up,
and his fountain will be
parched,
and it will strip his storehouse of
every precious thing.

¹⁶Samaria must pay for her sins,
because she rebelled against
her God.
The people will be struck down
by the sword,
their children will be dashed in
pieces,
and their pregnant women will
be ripped open.

Repent and Return

14 Israel, return to the LORD
your God;
because of your own sin you
have fallen.

²Take with you something to say
and return to the LORD.
Ask Him, "Forgive all wrong,
and accept our words.
Then we'll pay with the sacri-
fices of our lips.

³Assyria cannot save us. We'll
not ride on war horses any-
more,

or again call something our
hands have made. 'Our God!'
You are the One who loves the
orphan."

⁴"I will heal their unfaithfulness
and of my own free will love
them.

Since I am no longer angry with
them,

⁵I will be like dew to Israel.
He will blossom like a flower
and with his roots take hold like
a poplar.

⁶His shoots will spread out.
He will be as beautiful as the
olive tree
and as fragrant as Lebanon.

⁷They will again live in my shade.
They will raise grain
and blossom like a vine.
Their fame will be like the wine
of Lebanon.

⁸What has Ephraim still to do
with idols?

I have humbled him but I do care
for him.

I am like an evergreen cypress
—you get your fruit from Me."

⁹Let the one who is wise under-
stand these things.
And let the one who under-
stands know them,
because the LORD's ways are
right.

The righteous walk in them,
but rebels stumble over them.

¹⁴
9 Acts 12:10

THE BOOK OF
JOEL

1 This is what the LORD said
to Joel Pethuel's son:

The Plague of Locusts

Hear this, you aged men,
and listen, all you who live in
this country.

Has this ever happened in your
time or the time of your fa-
thers?

Tell your children about it,
and have your children tell their
children,
and their children the next gen-
eration.

What the cutting locusts left,
the licking locusts ate;
what the lickers left,
the hopping locusts ate;
and what the hoppers left,
the stripping locusts have eaten.

Awake, you drunkards, and
weep.

Wail, all you who drink,
because there's no more wine
for you to drink.

A "people" invaded my country,
strong and impossible to count.
They have the teeth of a lion;
and the jaw-teeth of a mature lion.

They have ruined my vines,
broken down my figtrees,
stripped off what they could eat,
discarded the rest,
leaving their branches white.

Wail like a girl, girded with
sackcloth,
weeping over the young man she
married in her youth.

The sacrifices of food and drink
have been cut off from the
LORD's temple.

The priests, the LORD's ser-
vants, mourn.

The fields are ruined,
and the ground mourns
because the grain is destroyed;
the new wine is dried up;
the fresh olive oil is gone.

You who plow, feel the disap-
pointment.

You who take care of the vines,
wail for the wheat and the bar-
ley
because the harvest of the fields
is lost.

The vines are withered,
the fig trees dried up,
pomegranates, palms, apricot
trees,

all the trees in the fields are
withered.

Yes, joy has faded away from
people.

A Call for Repentance

Fasten your sackcloth and
mourn, you priests;

wail, you who serve the altar.
Come, spend the night in sack-
cloth,

you who serve my God,
because the sacrifices of food
and drink

are withheld from the temple of
your God.

Set aside a holy fast, call a
solemn meeting,

gather you elders, all who live in
the land,

to the temple of the LORD your
God,

and cry to the LORD.

Oh what a day this is!

The day of the LORD is near

and it comes as destruction from
the Almighty.

¹⁶Isn't the food cut off right before
our eyes,
and joy and delight from the
temple of our God?

¹⁷The seeds of grain shrivel under
their clods.^a

The granaries are going to
waste
and the barns are in ruins
because the grain is withered.

¹⁸How the animals groan!
The herds of cattle don't know
where to turn
because there's no pasture for
them;
even the flocks of sheep suffer.

¹⁹I cry to You, LORD,
because a fire has burned the
open pastures;
flames have scorched the trees
in the field.

²⁰Yes, the beasts in the field pant
for You
because the streams are dry,
and the blazing heat has burned
the open pasture land.

An Invasion Is Coming

2 Blow the horn in Zion
and sound an alarm on My holy
hill.

All who live in the land should
be stirred
because the day of the LORD is
coming;
it is near.

^{2a}a dark and gloomy day with very
dark clouds.

Like something black spreading
over the hills,
a great and mighty "people"
have come.
There never has been anything
like them.

and for many generations it will
never happen again.

³A fire burns ahead of them,
and after them comes a scorch-
ing flame.

Ahead of them the land is like
the garden of Eden,
but behind them a barren des-
ert;
nothing escapes them.

⁴They look like horses
and run like war horses.

⁵They rumble like chariots
as they hop on the tops of the
hills.

They crackle like fire burning up
straw.

They're like a great army going
into battle.

⁶People are in anguish before
them;
all faces get pale.

⁷They run like warriors
and climb walls like soldiers.
Each goes straight ahead,
and they don't turn from their
paths.

⁸They don't push one another.
Each one keeps in line.
They break through weapons
without a loss in their ranks.

⁹They attack a city,
run on the walls,
climb into houses,
and come through windows like
thieves.

¹⁰The earth quakes before them,
and the sky trembles;
*the sun and the moon turn dark,
and the stars stop shining.*

¹¹The LORD thunders ahead of
His army,
His army is very great,
and mighty in doing what He
tells them.
Yes, *the day of the LORD is*

²
⁴⁻⁵ Rv 9:7, 9
¹⁰ Mt 24:29
Mk 13:24
Rv 6:12
8:12, 9:2
¹¹ Rv 6:17

^aHeb uncertain

great and terrible,
and who can stand it?

A Call to Repentance

- ¹²“Right now,” says the LORD,
“return to Me with all your
hearts,
with fasting, weeping, and
mourning.”
- ¹³Tear your hearts and not your
clothes,
and turn to the LORD your God
because He is kind, merciful,
slow to get angry, full of love,
and feels sorry about disaster.
- ¹⁴Who knows—He may change
His mind
and leave behind Him a bless-
ing—gifts of food and drink
for the LORD your God?
- ¹⁵Blow the horn in Zion,
order a holy fast,
call a solemn meeting.
- ¹⁶Gather the people,
sanctify the community,
get the elders together,
gather the little children,
even those who are nursing.
Have the bridegroom leave his
room,
and the bride her chamber.
- ¹⁷Have the priests, the LORD’s
servants,
weep between the porch and the
altar.
Have them say: “Spare Your
people, LORD,
and don’t let Your heritage be
disgraced
and mocked among the nations.
Why should any of them ask,
‘Where is their God?’ ”

The LORD’s Answer

- ¹⁸Then the LORD was zealous for
His country
and took pity on His people.
- ¹⁹The LORD answered His people:

- “Now I’m sending you fresh
grain, wine, and oil,
until you are satisfied.
And I will no more let you be a
disgrace among the nations.
- ²⁰I will put the northern one far
from you
and drive him to a barren and
forsaken land,
his front into the eastern sea
and his rear into the western
sea.
His foul odor will come up
and his stench rise!
Though he did great things,
- ²¹don’t be afraid, O land;
be glad and rejoice
because the LORD will also do
great things.
- ²²Don’t be afraid, you beasts in
the field,
because the open pasture land
will turn green,
the trees will bear their fruit,
the fig trees and vines will give a
good yield.
- ²³“Be delighted, people of Zion,
and happy in the LORD your God
because the LORD will give you
the fall rain plenteously,
and He will provide rain for you,
the fall and the spring rain as
before.
- ²⁴Then the threshing-floors will be
filled with grain,
and the vats will overflow with
fresh wine and oil.
- ²⁵I will repay you for these years
the locusts consumed,
the hopping, destroying, and
cutting locusts,
My great army that I sent
against you.
- ²⁶Then you will eat a-plenty
and praise the name of the
LORD your God
who has done wonders for you,

and My people will never again
feel ashamed.

⁷Then you will know I am in Israel
and I am the LORD your God,
and there is no other,
My people will never again feel
ashamed.

God's Spirit to be Poured Out

²⁸Later this will happen:
I will pour out my Spirit on all
people,
and your sons and your daughters
will prophesy.
Your old men will have dreams,
and your young men will see visions.

²⁹And even on men and women
who are slaves,
I will pour out My Spirit in
those days.

³⁰I will put wonderful signs in the
sky and on earth:
blood, fire, and columns of
smoke.

³¹The sun will turn dark
and the moon bloody
before the coming of the LORD's
great and terrible day.

³²But then everyone who calls on
the LORD's name will be
saved;
there will be on Mount Zion and
in Jerusalem those who escape
as the LORD promised,
and among those who escape
will be the remnant whom the
LORD calls.

The Day of Judgment

3 "In those days and at that
time
when I will restore Judah and
Jerusalem,

²I will gather all nations
and bring them down to the valley
of the LORD's judgment

and there I will put them on trial
for what they did to Israel,
My people and My heritage,
whom they have scattered
among the nations.
They have divided My land,
¹cast lots for My people;
they gave a boy for a prostitute,
and sold a girl for wine and got
drunk.

⁴"Now what have you to do with
Me, Tyre and Sidon,
and all the districts of Philistia?
Are you paying Me back for
something?

If you are paying Me back,
I will quickly and swiftly pay you
back for what you did,
⁵because you took My silver and
My gold
and brought My fine treasures
into your temples.

⁶You sold the people of Judah and
Jerusalem to the Greeks
so as to take them far away from
their land.

⁷I will stir them up to leave the
place where you sold them
and will punish you for what you
did.

⁸I will put your sons and your
daughters in the hands of the
people of Judah,
who will sell them to the men of
Shebz
to bring them to a distant people."

The Lord has spoken!

⁹Announce this among the nations:
Sanctify yourselves for war.
Rouse the soldiers; let all the
warriors advance for the attack.

¹⁰Hammer your plowshares into
swords
and your pruning-hooks into
spears.

28-32 Acts
2:17-21
Mt 24:29
Mk 13:24
Ro 10:13
Rv 6:12, 17
8:7
32 Acts 2:39

- Even the weakling should say,
"I'm strong."
- ¹⁴Hurry and come all you nations
from every direction,
and gather there.
LORD, have Your soldiers come
down.
- ¹⁵The nations should rouse them-
selves
and come up to the valley of the
LORD's judgment,
because there I will sit
to judge all the nations coming
from all directions. ¹³Swing
the sickle,
for the harvest is ripe.
Come in, trample the grapes—
the winepress is full.
The vats overflow—their
wickedness is great.
- ¹⁴There are countless crowds
upon crowds in the valley of
judgment
because the day of the LORD is
near in the valley of judgment.
- ¹⁵The sun and the moon will turn
dark,
and the stars will stop shining.
- ¹⁶The LORD will roar from Zion
and thunder from Jerusalem
so that heaven and earth will
tremble.
- But the LORD will be a refuge
for His people,
a fortification for the people of
Israel.
- ¹⁷And you will know I the LORD
your God
am living in Zion, My holy hill.
Jerusalem will be holy,
and no foreigner will pass
through it again.
- ¹⁸On that day the mountains will
drip with fresh wine,
and milk will flow on the hills.
In all the brooks of Judah water
will flow,
coming out of a spring at the
LORD's temple
watering the valley of Shittim.
- ¹⁹Egypt will be laid waste
and Edom become a barren des-
ert
because they did violence
against Judah,
murdering innocent people in
their country.
- ²⁰But Judah will be inhabited for-
ever,
and Jerusalem through all gen-
erations.
- ²¹Though I've passed by the bloody
wrongs done to them,
I will not do so in the future,
because I the Lord am living
in Zion.

3
13 Mk 4:29;
Rv 14:15-
16, 18-19
15 Mt 24:29;
Mk 13:24;
Rv 6:12;
8:12; 9:2
18 Rv 22:1

AMOS

1 This is what Amos said, who was among the shepherds of Tekoah; it is what he saw about Israel when Uzziah was king of Judah and Jeroboam, the son of Joash, was king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.

¹He said:

The LORD roars from Zion
and thunders from Jerusalem,
and the pastures of the shepherds mourn,
and the top of Carmel withers.

God Will Punish Nations

²The LORD says this:

“For three and four wrongs of
D a m a s c u s
I will not change it:
Because they rode over Gilead
with iron threshing sledges.

⁴I will hurl fire into the house of
Hazeal,
and it will burn down the
palaces of Hadad’s son.

⁵I will break the bars of Damas-
cus
and destroy the people living in
the Valley of Idols
and him who holds the scepter in
the Palace of Pleasure.
The people of Syria will go into
captivity at Kir,”
says the LORD.

⁶The LORD says this:

“For three and four wrongs of
G a z a
I will not change it:
Because they took all the people
into captivity
to hand them over to Edom.

⁷I will hurl fire on Gaza’s wall,

and it will burn down its palaces.

⁸I will destroy the people living in
Ashdod
and the man holding the scepter
in Ashkelon.

I will keep turning My hand
against Ekron,
and the rest of the Philistines
will perish.”

says the Lord GOD.

⁹The LORD says this:

“For three and four wrongs of
T y r e

I will not change it:

Because they handed over all
their captives to Edom
without thinking of their brotherly
covenant.

¹⁰I will hurl fire on Tyre’s wall,
and it will burn down its palaces.”

¹¹The LORD says this:

“For three and four wrongs of
E d o m

I will not change it:

Because he hunted his brother
with a sword,
squelching any pity,
always tearing at the object of
his anger,

and nursing his grudge forever.

¹²I will hurl fire into Teman,
and it will burn down Bozrah’s
palaces.”

¹³The LORD says this:

“For three and four wrongs of the
A m m o n i t e s

I will not change it:

Because they ripped open the
pregnant women in Gilead
in order to enlarge their country,

⁴I will set fire on Rabbah's wall
that will burn down its palaces
with a roar on the day of battle,
with a storm on the day of the
whirlwind.

⁵Their king will go into captivity,
he with his princes,"
says the LORD.

2 The LORD says this:
"For three and four wrongs of
M o a b

I will not change it:
Because they burned the bones
of the king of Edom to make
lime.

²I will send fire into Moab,
and it will burn down Kerioth's
palaces,
and Moab will die in the noise of
battle
with shouting, with the blowing
of horns.

³I will destroy the ruler in the
middle of them,
and with him I will kill all their
princes,"
says the LORD.

⁴The LORD says this:
"For three and four wrongs of
J u d a h

I will not change it:
Because they have rejected the
LORD's law
and haven't done what He
ordered
and because their false gods
that their fathers followed led
them astray,

⁵I will send a fire into Judah,
and it will burn down Jeru-
salem's palaces."

⁶The LORD says this:
"For three and four wrongs of
I s r a e l
I will not change it:

Because they sell a righteous
man for money
and a poor man for a pair of
shoes—

⁷they pant even for the dust on
the heads of the poor;
they wrong lowly persons;
a man and his father go to the
same girl to soil My holy
name;

⁸beside every altar they stretch
out on clothes taken as
pledges
and in the temples of their gods
drink the wine of those they
have fined.

⁹Yet I destroyed ahead of them
the Amorites,
tall as cedars and strong as
oaks;
I destroyed their fruit above and
their roots below.

¹⁰And I took you out of Egypt
and led you through the wilder-
ness forty years
so you could get the country of
the Amorites as your own.

¹¹I made some of your sons proph-
ets
and some of your young men
Nazirites.^a
Isn't that so, you people of Is-
rael?"
asks the LORD.

¹²"But you made the Nazirites
drink wine
and ordered the prophets, 'Don't
prophesy.'

¹³"Now I will stop you like an
overloaded wagon.

¹⁴If you're fast, you will fail to
escape;
if you're strong, you'll not use
your strength;
and if you're a hero, you'll not
save yourself.

^aSee Numbers 6:1-21

- ¹⁵If you shoot with a bow, you'll not hold your ground;
if you're fast on your feet, you'll not get away;
or if you ride a horse, you'll not save yourself.
- ¹⁶If you're the boldest of the heroes,
you'll run away naked on that day."
says the LORD.

Doom to the Nation

3 Listen, people of Israel, to what the LORD says against you, against all the people I brought out of Egypt:

- ²"Of all the people on earth I have chosen only you, and so I will punish you for all your wrongs."
- ³Do two men walk together if they aren't agreed?
- ⁴Does a lion roar in the forest when he has no prey?
Does a young lion cry out from his den if he hasn't caught anything?
- ⁵Does a bird fall into a snare on the ground when there is no bait?
Does a snare spring up from the ground without catching something?
- ⁶Is a horn blown in a city without people feeling afraid?
Does any disaster happen in a city if the LORD doesn't do it?
- ⁷But the Lord GOD doesn't do anything without *telling His secret plan to His servants, the prophets.*
- ⁸The lion roars—is there anyone who isn't afraid?
The Lord GOD speaks—is there anyone who will not prophesy?

³
⁷ *Rv 10:7*
¹¹⁻¹⁸
¹³ *Rv 1:8*

Doom to Samaria

Announce it on the palaces in Ashdod
and on the palaces in Egypt,
and say: "Get together on the hills of Samaria,
and see what great confusion is there,
what oppression is there:

¹⁰They don't know how to do right," says the LORD;
"what they get by crime and plunder they hoard in their palaces."

¹¹That is why the Lord GOD says:
"An enemy! He will surround the country,
strip you of your strength,
and rob your palaces."

¹²The LORD says:
"As a shepherd snatches from a lion's mouth
two legbones or a piece of an ear,
so the people of Israel living in Samaria will get away
with a corner of a bed or a couch from Damascus.

¹³"Listen and testify against the people of Jacob,"
says the Lord GOD, the God of armies:

¹⁴"On the day I punish Israel for its wrongs,
I will punish the altars at Bethel,
and the horns of the altar will be cut off and fall to the ground.

¹⁵I will strike the winter house and the summer house,
and the ivory houses will perish,
and the big palaces will come to an end,"
says the LORD.

4 Listen to this,
you cows of Bashan on the hill of Samaria,

oppressing the poor and crushing
the needy

and telling your husbands,
"Bring it and let's drink."

¹The Lord GOD swears by His
holiness:

"Certainly the days will come on
you

when you will be taken away
with hooks,

and the last of you with fish-
hooks.

¹Each of you will go out straight
ahead

through the break in the wall,

and you will be sent away to
Harmon."

says the LORD.

"You Didn't Return to Me"

¹"Come to Bethel and do wrong,
to Gilgal and pile up your
wrongs.

Bring your sacrifices every
morning

and your tenth parts every three
days.

⁵Burn a thanksgiving offering of
bread with yeast.

Call for freewill offerings and
announce who gave them,

since that is what you love, you
people of Israel."

says the Lord GOD.

⁶"And so I also gave you—
nothing for your teeth to bite in
all your cities

and no food in all your places.
But you didn't return to Me."

says the LORD.

⁷"Yes, I stopped the rain from
falling on you

three months before the harvest.
And I made it rain on one town

and not on another;

one field got rain, and another
field got none and dried up.

⁸And so two or three towns stag-

gered to another
to drink water and couldn't get
enough.

But you didn't return to Me,"
says the LORD.

⁹"I struck you down with a
scorching wind and mildew.

The gnawing grasshopper con-
sumed your many gardens,
your vineyards, your fig trees,
and your olive trees.

But you didn't return to Me,"
says the LORD.

¹⁰"I sent plagues among you, like
those in Egypt.

I killed your young men with a
sword

and captured your horses.

And so I made the stench of your
camps come up to your nos-
trils.

But you didn't return to Me,"
says the LORD.

¹¹"I laid you waste as God laid
waste Sodom and Gomorrah.

And you were like a brand
snatched from fire.

But you didn't return to Me,"
says the LORD.

¹²"That is why I do this to you,
Israel.

Because I do this to you, Israel,
prepare to meet your God!"

¹³Remember, He formed the hills
and made the wind;

He tells man what he's thinking;

He makes the dawn dark

and walks on the high places of
the earth—

the LORD, the God of armies, is
His name.

A Funeral Song

5 Listen to what I say in a funeral
song about you people of Israel:

The virgin Israel will fall never
to rise again.

²She will be thrown down on her

⁴
¹¹ *Jude 23*

ground, and there will be nobody to raise her.

¹The Lord GOD says this:

“The town that will go to war with a thousand will have a hundred left, and she who will go with a hundred will have ten left—the people of Israel.”

“Search for Me”

⁴The LORD tells the people of Israel:

“Search for Me and live.

⁵But don’t search at Bethel or go to Gilgal or all the way to Beersheba.

Gilgal will go into exile, and Bethel will deceive you.”

⁶Search for the LORD and live. Or He’ll break out among the people of Joseph like a fire that consumes, and there will be nobody at Bethel to put it out.

⁷You are twisting justice to make it a bitter experience and throwing fairness on the ground.

⁸He who made the Pleiades and Orion, who turns the darkest night into morning and darkens the day into night, who calls the water of the sea to pour it on the ground— He is called the LORD.

⁹In a flash, He brings destruction on the strong and so destroys a fortress.

¹⁰You hate anyone who corrects others at the gate; and loathe anyone who tells the truth.

¹¹You trample on the poor and take part of his wheat away from him;

so when you build houses of hewn stones, you won’t live in them; and when you plant pleasant vineyards, you won’t drink the wine from them.

¹²I know your wrongs are many and your sins are big— oppressing the righteous, taking bribes, and taking away the rights of the poor at the gate.

¹³That is why the wise man at that time will be silent because the time will be evil.

¹⁴Strive for what is good and not evil, in order to live, and so the LORD, the God of armies, will be with you as you say.

¹⁵Hate evil and love good, and establish justice at the gate. It may be the LORD, the God of armies, will be kind to those who are left in Joseph.

¹⁶There’s a reason why the LORD, the God of armies, says: “They will weep in all the market places and say in all the streets, ‘Woe! Woe!’ They will call the farmer to weep and tell the skilled mourners, ‘Mourn!’”

¹⁷In all the vineyards there will be mourning because I’m going to pass through you,” says the LORD.

The LORD’s Day

¹⁸Woe to you who long for the LORD’s day!

- What good can the LORD's day
bring you?
It is darkness and not light.
- ¹⁸It is like a man running a way
from a lion,
and a bear attacks him.
He comes into the house and
leans with his hand on the
wall,
and a snake bites him.
- ²⁰Isn't the LORD's day dark, not
light,
gloomy, with nothing bright in
it?
- ²¹"I hate and despise your
festivals
and take no delight in your
meetings.
- ²²Even if you bring Me burnt offer-
ings and food offerings,
I will not accept them;
or your fat animals as shared ⁵
offerings. 25-27 Acts 7: 42-43
I won't look at them.
- ²³Take away from Me the noise of
your songs.
I will not listen to the music of
your lyres.
- ²⁴Let what is right roll on like the
waters,
and justice like an ever-flowing
stream.
- ²⁵"Did you bring me sacrifices and
food offerings in the wilder-
ness for forty years,
you people of Israel?"
- ²⁶So you carry Siccuth as your
king
and Kiyyun as your idol,
the star of your gods
which you made for yourselves.
- ²⁷And so I will have you taken into
exile beyond Damascus,"
says the LORD, who is called the
God of armies.

Woe to the Nation's Leaders

- 6** Woe to you in Zion who are
unworried,
to you in the mountain of Sa-
maria, who feel so confident:
the leaders of the best of the
nations,
to whom the people of Israel
come.
- ²Go over to Calneh and look.
And from there go to the great
city of Hamath.
Then go down to Gath, city of the
Philistines.
Are you better than these king-
doms?
Or is their territory greater than
yours?
- ³You act as if the day of destruc-
tion were far away
while you have crime sitting
near you.
- ⁴You sleep on your ivory beds,
sprawl on your couches,
eat lambs from the flock and
calves from the stall.
- ⁵You sing your songs to the lyre
and like David invent instru-
ments for singing.
- ⁶You drink from big bowls of
wine,
grease yourselves with the fin-
est oils,
and don't feel sick about the
ruin of the people of Joseph.
- ⁷That is why you will now be the
first to go into exile,
and the happy noise of sprawl-
ing banqueters will be gone.
- ⁸The Lord GOD swears by Him-
self.
The LORD, the God of armies,
says,
"I am disgusted with Jacob's
pride,
and I hate his palaces.

I will hand over the city and everything in it."

⁹This is what will happen: If there are ten people left in one home, they will die.

¹⁰Their uncle who wants to take them and burn them comes to take the bodies out of the house.

He asks whoever is in the inner room of the house,

"Is there anyone else with you?"

"No," the other answers.

"Hush," he says,

"because we mustn't mention the LORD's name!"

¹¹You see, the LORD has ordered it:

He will break the big mansion into splinters and the little hut into bits.

¹²Do horses run on rocks, or do you plow the sea with oxen,

seeing that you change right to poison

and the products of righteousness into a bitter thing?

¹³You delight in nothing and say, "Didn't we by our strength win victories?"

¹⁴"You see, I will stir up a nation against you people of Israel," says the LORD, the God of armies.

"They will oppress you from the entrance of Hamath to the valley of the Arabah."

The Vision of Locusts

7 The LORD showed me this: He was making locusts when the later growth was first coming up (it was the later growth after the mowing for the king). ²When they had finished eating the grass of the land, I said, "Lord GOD, please forgive.

How can Jacob exist? He's so small."

³The LORD was sorry about this. "It will not happen," the LORD said.

The Vision of Fire

⁴The Lord GOD showed me this: The Lord GOD was calling for judgment by fire. It consumed the great waters of the deep and would have devoured the land, ⁵when I said, "Lord GOD, please stop. How can Jacob exist? He's so small."

⁶The LORD was sorry about this. "This too will not happen," the Lord GOD said.

The Vision of the Plumb Line

⁷He showed me this: The Lord, with a plumb line in His hand, was standing by a wall made according to a plumb line. ⁸"What do you see, Amos?" the LORD asked me.

"A plumb line," I answered.

Then the Lord said: "I'm going to put a plumb line in the middle of My people Israel. I will not overlook their sins anymore. ⁹And so the high places of Isaac will be laid waste, and the holy places of Israel will be in ruins, and with a sword I will attack Jeroboam's family."

Amos and Amaziah

¹⁰Then Amaziah, the priest at Bethel, sent someone to tell Jeroboam, king of Israel: "Amos is plotting against you right among the people of Israel. The country can't stand everything he says. ¹¹This is what Amos says: 'The sword will kill Jeroboam, and Israel will leave its land to go into exile.'"

¹²Then Amaziah told Amos: "You seer, go, run away to Judah and eat there and prophesy there. ¹³But never again prophesy in Bethel—

here is the king's holy place, and here is the king's palace."

"Amos answered Amaziah: 'I'm not a prophet, that is one of a group of prophets. I take care of cattle and grow sycamore figs. 'But the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD told me: 'Go, prophesy to My people Israel.' "

"Now listen to what the LORD says: 'You say, 'Don't prophesy against Israel, and don't preach against Isaac's people.' "Just for that the LORD says this: 'your wife will be a prostitute in the city, and the sword will kill your sons and daughters. And your land will be divided by a measuring line. You will die in an unclean country, and Israel will certainly leave its country and go into exile.' "

The Vision of Late Summer Fruit

8 The Lord GOD showed me this: There was a basket of late summer fruit.

"What do you see, Amos?" He asked.

"A basket of late summer fruit," I answered.

"The end has come to My people Israel," the LORD told me. "I will not overlook their wrongs anymore. 'That day the songs in the palace will be a howling,'" says the Lord GOD. "So many dead bodies! Everywhere they will be thrown down silently."

Judgment Is Coming

"Listen to this, you who want to devour the needy and put an end to the poor in the world. "When will the first of the month be over," you ask, "so we can sell grain; and the Sabbath so we can offer grain for sale?"—using a bushel that is too small, a money weight that is too

heavy, and crooked scales to cheat, "buying poor people with money and the needy for a pair of shoes, and selling as grain what you sweep up on your floor.

"The LORD swears by the pride of Jacob: 'I'll never forget anything they're doing.' "

"Shouldn't the country tremble for this and everyone living in it mourn? All of it will rise like the Nile and be tossed and sink down like Egypt's river.

"On that day," says the Lord GOD,

"I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight.

¹⁰I will turn your festivals into mourning and all your happy songs into funeral songs.

I will put sackcloth on all waists and make every head bald and make it like the mourning for an only child, and the end of it will be a bitter day.

"The days will come," says the Lord GOD,

"when I will have a famine come into the country, not a hunger for food or a thirsting for water but of hearing the words of the LORD.

¹²And people will wander from sea to sea, from the north to the east, anxiously searching for what the LORD says but will not find it.

¹³On that day beautiful girls and young men will faint for thirst. "Those who swear by the guilty thing of Samaria and say,

'As your god lives, Dan,'
and, 'As the way of Beersheba
lives'—
they will fall never to get up
again."

The Vision of a Destruction None Will Escape

9 I saw the Lord standing by the
altar, and He said:

"Strike the tops of the pillars to
shake the thresholds.

Smash them on the heads of all
the people.

I will kill with a sword any that
are left behind.

None of them who flees will get
away;

²none of them will escape.

Even if they would dig their way
into the place of the dead,

My hand would get them from
there.

If they would go up to heaven,

I would get them down from
there.

³If they would hide on top of
Carmel,

I would search for them and get
them from there.

If they would hide on the bottom
of the sea to keep Me from
seeing them,

there I would order the sea
snake to bite them.

⁴If they would march ahead of
their enemies into exile,

I would order the sword to kill
them there.

I will watch them to hurt them
and not to help them."

⁵When the Lord, the LORD of
armies, touches the earth,

it quakes, and all who live there
mourn.

All of it rises like the Nile

and goes down again like Egypt's
river.

"He who built stairs into heaven
and set His sky over the earth,
who calls the water of the sea
and pours it on the ground—
He is called the LORD.

⁷"Aren't you Israelites like the
people of Ethiopia to Me?"
asks the LORD.

"Didn't I bring Israel up out of
Egypt,

the Philistines from Crete, and
the Syrians from Kir?

⁸You see, the Lord GOD is looking
at the sinful kingdom,

and I will wipe it off the face of
the earth

but not totally destroy the peo-
ple of Jacob,"

says the LORD.

⁹"You see, I'm ready to give the
order

and will sift the people of Israel
among all the nations

as something is sifted in a sieve,
but not a kernel will fall to the

ground.

¹⁰The sword will kill all the sin-
ners of My people

who are thinking, 'Destruction
will not catch up with us or get

at us.'

"I Will Restore My People"

¹¹On that day I will set up
David's tent that has fallen
down

and repair its walls where they
are broken down,

restore his ruined places,

and build them as they were
long ago.

¹²so they may have what is left of
Edom

and all the nations over whom
My name is called,"

says the LORD who does these
things.

9
1 Rv 8:3
11-12 Acts 15
16-18)

““The days are coming,” says the LORD,
“when the one who plows will
catch up with him who cuts
the grain,
and the one who tramples the
grapes with him who sows the
seed.
The mountains will drip with
grape juice,
and all the hills will flow with it.
“Then I will restore My people
Israel.

and they will build the ruined
cities and live there,
plant vineyards and drink the
wine from them,
make gardens and eat their
fruits.
“I will plant them on their
ground,
and they won't be plucked up
again
from their ground that I gave
them.”
says the LORD your God.

THE BOOK OF
OBADIAH

Edom's Doom

The vision of Obadiah. The Lord GOD says this about Edom.

We have heard the news from the LORD.

A messenger is sent among the nations saying,

"Come, let us go and fight against her."

²"Look, I will make you small among the nations; you're much despised.

³The pride you feel deceives you. You who live in the clefts of rocky mountains; whose home is high up. You're thinking,

'Is there anyone who can bring me down to the ground?'

⁴"If you fly as high as the eagle and make your nest among the stars,

I will get you down from there," says the Lord.

⁵"If thieves come to you or robbers at night, don't they steal only till they have enough?

Oh how you will be ruined!

If grape pickers come to you, don't they leave grapes to glean?

⁶Oh how Esau will be ransacked and his hidden treasures plundered!

⁷"All your allies will drive you to the border.

Your friends will treacherously get the best of you.

Those eating your food will set traps for you,

and you won't know about it."

⁸The LORD asks, "On that day won't I destroy the wise men in Edom,

and take away wisdom from Esau's mountain?

⁹Your heroes, O Teman, will despair

so that everyone on the mount of Esau will be killed off.

¹⁰Because you did violence to your brother Jacob,

shame will overwhelm you, and you will be cut off forever.

¹¹"That day you stood by when strangers carried off his goods;

foreigners came into his gates and cast lots over Jerusalem and you were just like one of them.

¹²You shouldn't gloat when your brother has his day of calamity.

You shouldn't be delighted when the people of Judah are ruined.

You shouldn't talk so big when he's in trouble.

¹³You shouldn't come into the gate of My people on the day of their disaster.

You shouldn't look so pleased at his misery on the day of his disaster.

You shouldn't lay your hand on his goods on the day of his disaster.

¹⁴You shouldn't stand at the crossroad to kill those who escape.

You shouldn't hand over anyone

JONAH

1 This is the word of the LORD which came to Jonah the son of Amittai: "Get up and go to the great city of Nineveh and announce to her that I see how wicked they are."

Jonah Runs Away

"But Jonah got up and ran away from the LORD to Tarshish. He came down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. He paid the fare and went on board to get away from the LORD and go with them to Tarshish.

"But the LORD sent a strong wind on the sea; a great storm rose; they thought the ship would be wrecked. ^{17 Mt 12:40} The sailors were scared, and each of them cried to his god. They dumped the cargo into the sea to lighten their load. But Jonah had gone down into the inner hold of the ship and was lying there fast asleep.

"The captain of the sailors went to him. "How can you sleep?" he asked. "Get up, call on your God. Perhaps he will think of us, and we won't drown."

"Then they said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots to see who has brought this disaster on us." So they cast lots, and the lot selected Jonah.

"Please tell us," they asked him, "who has brought this disaster on us? What is your work? Where do you come from? What is your country? And which people do you come from?"

"I'm a Hebrew," he answered them, "and worship the LORD, the

God of heaven who made the sea and the land."

"Terribly frightened, the men asked him, "What did you do?" They now knew he was running away from the LORD, because he told them. "What should we do with you to make the sea calm down for us?" they asked him. The storm was getting worse and worse.

"Take me," he told them, "and throw me into the sea, and the sea will calm down for you. I realize I'm the reason this big storm has come on you."

"Then the men rowed hard to get the ship to the shore but couldn't do it; the sea was raging worse and worse against them.

"Please, LORD," they cried to the LORD, "Don't let us perish for taking this man's life, and don't charge us with murder, since You, LORD, do as You like." "So they took Jonah and threw him into the sea, and it stopped its raging. "Then the men started to fear the LORD very much, and they offered sacrifices to the LORD and made vows.

Jonah and the Fish

"The LORD ordered a big fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish three days and three nights.

2 Then Jonah, inside the fish, prayed to the LORD his God and said:

"In my distress I called to the LORD,
and He answered me.

From the belly of the under-
world I cried.

and You heard my voice.

¹You threw me into the deep
water.

into the middle of the sea,

and the flood surrounded me.

All Your waves and billows
went over me.

²Then I said:

though I'm driven away from
Your presence,

I will certainly again look at
Your holy temple.

³The water surrounded me,
threatening my life;

the abyss went around me; sea
weed was wrapped around
my head.

⁴I went down to the lowest parts
of the mountains,

to a world whose bars shut me in
forever.

But You, LORD my God,
brought me back alive from the
grave.

⁵When I was fainting away,

I remembered the LORD.

My prayer reached You in Your
holy temple.

⁶Those who worship idols that
deceive them

forsake Him who is merciful to
them.

⁷But I will sacrifice to You with
the voice of praise;

I will pay what I have vowed.

The LORD is able to save!"

⁸The LORD spoke to the fish, and
he spit out Jonah on the shore.

Nineveh Repents

3 The word of the LORD came to
Jonah a second time: "'Get up
and go to the great city of Nineveh
and preach to it what I will tell
you.'"

¹Jonah got up and went to Nineveh

as the LORD told him. Nineveh was
a great city before God, a three-
days' walk. ²Jonah started to go
into the city a day's walk, and
preached this: "Forty days yet, and
Nineveh will be destroyed."

³Then the men of Nineveh be-
lieved God and announced a fast
and dressed in sackcloth from the
greatest to the least. ⁴When the
news came to the king of Nineveh,
he got up from his throne, put off his
robe, put on sackcloth, and sat in
ashes. ⁵He had someone call
throughout the city: "This is a de-
cree of the king and his noblemen:
Men and animals, cattle and sheep
should eat nothing, get no food and
drink no water. ⁶But every man
and animal should put on sackcloth
and cry hard to God; people should
turn from their wicked ways and the
crimes they're doing. ⁷Who knows,
God may change His mind and be
sorry and turn from His fury so that
we'll not perish."

⁸When God saw what they did,
how they turned from their wicked
ways, God changed His mind about
the disaster He threatened to bring
on them, and He didn't do it.

Jonah's Anger and God's Answer

4 Jonah didn't like this at all
and got angry. ²He prayed to
the LORD: "Now, LORD, isn't this
what I said when I was still in my
own country. So I went and fled to
Tarshish. ³I knew You are gra-
cious, merciful, patient, and very
kind, and You regret to bring on
disaster. And now, LORD, take my
life—I'd rather die than live."

"Is it right for you to be angry?"
the LORD asked.

²But Jonah left the city and stayed
east of the city and made himself a

³
4-5 Mt 12:41;
Lk 11:32

booth there and sat under it in its shade till he would see what would happen in the city. "The LORD God had a plant grow up over Jonah to serve as a shade over his head to keep him from suffering, and Jonah delighted very much in the plant. 'But when the next day dawned, God had a worm come and attack the plant so that it withered. 'When the sun rose, God had a hot east wind blow. The sun struck Jonah's head so that he fainted and asked for death, saying, "It's better for me to die than live."

"Is it right for you to get so angry about the plant?" God asked Jonah.

"It is right for me to be angry enough to die," he answered.

"You feel sorry for the plant you didn't work for or raise," the LORD said, "because it grew in a night and died in a night. "Shouldn't I feel sorry for this great city of Nineveh in which there are more than 120,000 persons who can't tell their right hand from their left, and many animals?"

MICAH

1 The LORD spoke to Micah a man from Mareshah, in the time of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, about Samaria and Jerusalem.

¹Hear, all you people.

Listen, world and all who are in it.

The Lord GOD will testify against you,

the Lord coming from His holy temple.

²The Lord will come from His place.

He will come down and walk on the high places of the earth.

³Under Him the mountains will melt

and the valleys split apart,
like wax near a fire,

like water pouring down a steep place.

Samaria to be Destroyed

⁴All this is for Jacob's wrong and Israel's sins.

What is Jacob's wrong? Isn't it Samaria?

And what are Judah's high places? Aren't they Jerusalem?

⁵And so I will make Samaria a pile of ruins in the field,
a place for the planting of vineyards.

I will pour her stones into the valley

and lay bare her foundations.

⁶All her images will be smashed in pieces.

the wages of her sacred prostitutes will be burned,
and all her idols I will turn into a heap of ruins.

They were collected with money from the hire of prostitutes,
they will again be used for the hire of prostitutes.

⁷For this I will wail and howl and go stripped and naked.

I will wail like a jackal and mourn like an ostrich.

⁸The blow she'll get will not be cured;

it will have an effect on Judah and reach the gate of my people,
yes even Jerusalem.

Disaster for Jerusalem and Eleven Towns of Judah

⁹Don't tell it in Gath. Don't weep there.

In the City-of-dust^a roll in the dust.

¹⁰You who live in Beauty-town,^b leave it shamefully naked.

You who live in March-town^c will not march out of it.

The lamentation in Near-town^d is because there is nothing to stand near.

¹¹You who live in Bitter-town^e will be tired of looking for better days.

Disaster will come down from the LORD

to the very gate of Jerusalem.

¹²Hitch the horses to the chariots, you who live in Lachish.

You started the people of Zion to sinning

^aBeth-aphrah ^bShaphir ^cZaanan ^dBeth-ezel ^eMaroth

because the sins of Israel were found in you.

¹⁴Then give a parting gift to Moresheth, near Gath.

The homes of Deception-town^f will dispossess you the kings of Israel.

¹⁵You who live in Possession-town,^g

I will again allow the enemy to dispossess you till Israel's glory comes to Adullam.

¹⁶Cut off your hair and be bald for these daughter-towns you delight in.

Make yourself very bald like the vulture because these people will leave you and go into exile.

Disaster Coming

2 Woe to those who plan evil and lie in their beds getting ready to do wrong!

When the morning dawns, they do it

because they have the strength to do it.

²They want fields, so they seize them; houses, so they take them.

They oppress a man and his family, robbing him and his property.

³So the LORD says: I'm planning disaster for these people.

You can't remove your necks from it; or walk with heads erect, because it will be a time of disaster.

⁴In that day there will be a song to taunt you and a bitter wailing, "We are completely ruined.

My people were given a land, but now it's given to others. Our fields are turned over to the despoiler!"

⁵Then you'll have nobody in the LORD's congregation to assign you your land by lot.

The Prophet Rebuked

⁶"Don't rant" they rant.

"Men shouldn't rant about such things.

Disgrace will not overtake us."

⁷People of Jacob, if you ask,

"Is the LORD impatient?

Are these the kind of things He does?

Are not His words kind to those who live right?"

⁸You are the ones who rise against My people as an enemy.

You strip off the mantle from the garment of the man walking along without a care and not wanting to fight.

⁹You drive out the women of My people from their delightful homes and take away My glory from their young children forever.

¹⁰Get up and go—this is not the place to rest, because it is unclean; it will be destroyed with a sickening destruction.

¹¹If a man goes about with a false and lying spirit and says,

"I will preach to you about wine and liquor," he would be the preacher these people want.

Restoration Promised

¹²I will certainly gather all of you, Jacob,

^fAchzib or Beth-achzib ^gMareshah

and bring together the remnant
of Israel.

I will put them like sheep in their
enclosure,

like a flock in the middle of their
pasture,

ready to stampede in the pres-
ence of men.

¹⁰One who breaks through will go
up ahead of them.

Then they will break through,
go through the gate, and leave
by it.

Their king will go on ahead of
them with the LORD leading
them.

The Rulers Rebuked

3 And I said:
Please listen, leaders of Jacob
and rulers of the people of Israel.
Shouldn't you know what is
right?

¹But you hate what is good
and love what is evil.
You tear the skin off my people
and the flesh from their bones.

²You eat the flesh of my people,
rip off their skin, break their
bones,
and cut them in pieces as in a
pot,
like meat in a kettle.

³Then they will cry to the LORD,
but He will not answer them.
Then He will hide His face from
them
because they have done their
evil deeds.

The Prophets Rebuked

¹The LORD says this against the
prophets
who lead my people astray.
When they have something to
bite with their teeth,
they preach, "All is well!"

But they declare a holy war
against the man
who doesn't put anything in
their mouths.

⁴That is the reason night will
come on you
and you won't have a vision,
a darkness in which you won't
be able to tell the future.
The sun will go down on the
prophets,
and the day will turn black over
them.

⁵The seers will be disgraced
and the diviners ashamed.
They will all cover their lips
because God won't answer
them.

⁶But certainly I am full of the
LORD's Spirit,
full of strength, justice and
courage,
to tell Jacob his wrong and Is-
rael his sin.

Her Leaders Bring Ruin to Zion

¹Please listen to this, leaders of
the people of Jacob
and rulers of Israel.
You abhor justice and twist
everything that is right.

²You build Zion with blood and
Jerusalem with wrong.

³Her leaders have to be bribed to
give justice,
her priests teach for a price,
and her prophets tell the future
for money
even while they depend on the
LORD,
saying, "Isn't the Lord among
us?
Nothing bad will happen to us."

⁴You are the reason; it is your
fault
Zion will be plowed like a field,
Jerusalem will be ruins.

and the temple mount will become a wooded hilltop.

The LORD to Rule from Zion

4 In the last time the mount of the LORD's temple will be firmly established in the top of the mountains and be raised above the hills, and peoples will flow to it.

⁷Many nations will go and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD and to the temple of the God of Jacob.

He will teach us about His ways and we'll walk in His paths, because His revealed truth comes from Zion and the LORD's word from Jerusalem."

⁸He will judge between many people and arbitrate for mighty nations far away.

They will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.

No nation will raise a sword against another, and people will not learn to fight anymore.

⁹But everyone will sit under his vine and his fig tree with nobody to frighten them, because the LORD of armies has promised it.

¹⁰Although every other people lives according to the name of their god,

we will live according to the name of the LORD our God forever.

Exiles to be Gathered In

¹¹The Lord says:

At that time, I will gather in the lame and bring together those who were driven away, whom I made to suffer.

¹²I will make those who are lame a remnant and those who are exiled a strong nation.

And after that the LORD will be King over them in Mount Zion forever.

¹³Then you, Tower of the Flock, Hill of the daughter of Zion, your rule will come back to you. The people of Jerusalem will again be a kingdom as they were in the beginning.

¹⁴Why, then, are you crying so loud now?

Don't you have a King? Or has your Counsellor perished that pangs have gripped you like a woman in childbirth?

¹⁵Writhe and labor to produce, daughter of Zion, like a woman in childbirth because now you will leave the city

and live in the fields and come to Babylon.

There you will be rescued; there the LORD will free you from your enemies.

The Nations to be Crushed

¹⁶But now many nations gather against you, Zion. They say, "Let her be defiled, and we'll watch her."

¹⁷They don't know what the LORD wants to do or understand that He's planning to gather them like cut grain on the threshing-floor:

¹⁸Get up and thresh, Zion's daughter,

4
7 Lk 1:33
10 Ps 12:3

because I will make your horns
iron
and your hoofs bronze,
and you will crush many people.
I will devote their spoils to the
LORD
and their wealth to the Lord of
all the earth.

Messiah Will Come from Bethlehem to Rule

5 But now, gather in troops,
you people invaded by troops.
We are besieged.
With a stick they will strike the
cheek
of the judge of Israel.
²You, Bethlehem (Ephrathah),
too small to be one of Judah's
clans,
from you there will come out for
Me.

One Who Is to Rule Israel
whose real comings are from the
eternal past.

³So He will give Israel up
till the time when a mother will
have a Child.

⁴Then the rest of Israel's rela-
tives will return to her.

He will appear as a Shepherd
to rule with the LORD's power,
with the majesty of the name of
the LORD His God.

They will live securely
because His majesty will then
reach
to the most distant parts of the
world.

⁵He will be a Man of Peace.

Deliverance from Assyria

When the Assyrians come into
our country
and tramp into our palaces,
we'll have seven shepherds,

yes, eight leaders of men attack
them.

⁶They will "shepherd"^h Assyria
with swords
and Nimrod's country with
drawn swords.

And so He will rescue us from
the Assyrians
when they come into our country
and march into our territory.

The Remnant Among the Nations

⁷Then there will be a remnant of
Jacob
among many peoples,
like dew from the LORD
and showers on the grass
that doesn't wait for a man
or depend on human beings.

⁸So there will be a remnant of
Jacob
among the people of many na-
tions,
like a lion among the animals of
the forest,

like a young lion among the
flocks of sheep,
which, coming through, tramps
down

and tears its prey in pieces,
and there's nobody who can
rescue.

⁹Your hand will be high over
Your foes,
and all Your enemies will be
destroyed.

¹⁰The LORD says: At that time,
I will also get rid of the horses
you have
and will destroy your chariots.

¹¹I will destroy the cities of your
country
and tear down all your for-
tresses.

¹²I will get rid of the witchcraft
you practice.

⁵
² Jn 7:42
Mi 2:6

^hThe Heb also means "to shatter"

and there'll be no one anymore
to interpret the clouds.

¹³I will destroy your idols
and your sacred pillars that you
have among you,

and no more will you worship
what your hands have made.

¹⁴I will pull out the Asherah posts
that are among you.

¹⁵And I will destroy your enemies
in anger and fury
and take vengeance on the na-
tions that refuse to listen.

The LORD Brings Israel to Trial

6 Listen now, to what the LORD
is saying:

Get up, plead your case before
the mountains,
and let the hills hear you.

²Hear the LORD's case, you
mountains,
and you enduring foundations of
the earth;
the LORD is presenting His case
against His people
and is arguing with Israel.

The Lord

³My people, what have I done to
you?

And how have I wearied you?
Testify against Me.

⁴I took you out of Egypt,
freed you from slavery;
I sent Moses, Aaron, and Mir-
iam to lead you.

⁵My people, please remember
what Balak king of Moab
planned,
what Balaam son of Beor an-
swered him,
and what happened from
Shittim to Gilgal,

so that you will know the right-
eous things the LORD has
done.

His People

⁶What should I bring when I meet
the LORD

and bow to God on high?

Should I come to Him with burnt
offerings,
with calves a year old?

⁷Will the LORD be pleased with
thousands of rams,
with ten thousand streams of
olive oil?

Should I give my firstborn for my
wrong,
the child of my body for my sin?

⁸You were told, man, what is
good
and what the LORD wants from
you:

only to do what is right,
love mercy,
and live humbly with your God.

The Dishonest Rich Rebuked

⁹Listen, the LORD is calling the
city. (It is good sense to re-
spect His^d name,
to obey the punishing rod and
the One who appointed it.)^j

¹⁰Is there still in that wicked tem-
ple and in the wicked treasury
a short bushel that is cursed?

¹¹Can I consider pure the man
with dishonest scales,
and a bag of false weights?

¹²Her rich men do many violent
crimes,
those who live there tell lies
and have deceiving tongues in
their mouths.

ⁱHeb "Your "

^jThe meaning of the Heb is obscure. Another rendering may be "Listen, O
tribe and those who are assembled."

- ¹¹I will begin to strike you with heavy blows
and lay you in ruins for your sins.
- ¹⁴You will eat and not be satisfied
but become constipated.
You will carry things away but not keep them;
and anything you may keep I will let the sword cut down.
- ¹⁵You will sow but not reap.
You will crush olives
but not rub yourself with oil;
and trample grapes,
but you will not drink the wine.
- ¹⁶You keep Omri's rules
and do everything Ahab's family did
and follow their advice.
So I must make you a horrible example.
a city whose inhabitants others hiss at,
an object of people's scorn.

7
6 MI 10:21
35-36
MK 13:12
LK 12:53

Micah:

- 7** How troubled I am!
I am like one who gathers the summer fruits.
like one who gleanes grapes.
But there isn't a bunch of grapes to eat
or a first-ripe fig I crave so much.
- ²People who love God have died out on earth,
and there's no one living right among men.
They all plot bloody deeds.
One is hunting the other with a net.
- ⁷Their hands are busy with evil
and they do it skillfully.
The ruler and the judge ask for a bribe.
the great man talks about what he wants.
Together they pervert justice.

- ⁴Among them the best is like a prickly briar,
and the sincere one is worse than a thorny hedge.
The day the LORD's watchmen talk of,
when You punish, LORD, will come; then they will panic.
- ⁵Don't believe your neighbor,
don't trust a friend,
and keep your mouth shut to the woman lying in your arms.
- ⁶A son treats his father as a fool,
a daughter rebels against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—
a man's enemies are the members of his family.
- ⁷But I will eagerly look for the LORD;
I will wait for God who saves me;
my God will hear me.

Zion's Future

- ⁸Don't be gleeful over me, my enemy.
Although I've fallen, I will rise.
Although I sit in the dark, the LORD is my light.
- ⁹Because I have sinned against Him,
I will bear the LORD's anger until He pleads my case and secures my right.
He will bring me out to the light,
and I will see His righteous way.
- ¹⁰Then my enemies will see it,
and will feel ashamed.
They were the ones who said,
"Where is the LORD your God?"
I will gaze at them
when they are tramped on like mud in the streets.
- ¹¹That will be a day to build your walls,

- a day when your border will be extended.
- ¹²a day people will come to you from the lands between Assyria and Egypt, even from Egypt to the Euphrates, from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain.
- ¹³The earth will be a desert to those who live in it, because of what they do.
- ¹⁴With Your Shepherd's crook tend to Your people, the flock that is Your own, that lives alone in the woods of a dense forest. Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead as they did long ago.
- ¹⁵As when You came out of Egypt, let us see Your wonderful deeds.
- ¹⁶Let the nations see them and feel ashamed despite all their strength.

20 Lk 1:54-55

- Let them put their hands to their mouths;
let their ears be deaf.
- ¹⁷Let them lick dust like snakes, like creatures crawling on the ground.
Let them come trembling out of their hiding-places, and in dread stand before You.
LORD our God, and be afraid of You.
- ¹⁸Who is a God like You?
You forgive sin and pass by the wrong of the remnant of Your own people!
You will not be angry forever, because You delight in mercy.
- ¹⁹You will again love us, subdue our wrongs, and throw all our sins into the deep sea.
- ²⁰You will be faithful to Jacob and kind to Abraham as You promised our fathers with an oath long ago.

THE BOOK OF NAHUM

1 The scroll of the vision revealed to Nahum of Elkosh containing a message about Nineveh.

The Lord's Anger

¹The LORD, a zealous God, avenges.

The LORD avenges and is full of anger.

The LORD takes vengeance on his enemies and stays angry with his foes.

²The LORD is patient and His strength is great, but He will not let the guilty go unpunished.

The LORD's way is in the whirlwind and storm, clouds are the dust of His feet.

³He rebukes the sea and makes it dry:

He dries up the rivers;
Bashan and Carmel wither;
the plants on Lebanon droop.

⁴The mountains tremble before Him and the hills shrink away; the earth is desolate in His presence,

the world with all who live in it.

⁵Who can stand before His anger?

Who can endure His flashing fury?

He pours out His anger like fire; the rocks are torn down by Him.

⁶But the LORD is good, a fortress when you're in trouble;

He takes care of those who trust Him.

⁷But with an overflowing flood He will put an end to Nineveh and pursue His enemies into darkness.

⁸Whatever you plot against the LORD

He will annihilate; for his enemies never attack a second time.

⁹Like tangled up thorns, like fodder to be eaten, like very dry straw, they will be consumed.

¹⁰From you comes one who plots evil against the LORD and plans wickedness.

¹¹This is what the LORD says:

"Even though many and fully armed,

even so they will be mowed down and pass away.

"Though I have humbled you (Judah),

I won't humble you again.

¹²For now I'll break the rod he used on you and tear his bonds off you."^a

¹³The LORD has given orders about you (Nineveh):

"You will no longer have children that bear your name.

In the temple of your gods I will destroy the carved and cast idols.

I will make your grave because you are despised."

^aThe alphabetic order of the verses in chapter one breaks down at the end of the chapter. 1:12b 13, 15 and 2:1 should go together since they are addressed to Judah.

Comfort for Judah

¹⁵See on the mountains the feet of
one bringing good news,
announcing, "All is well!"
Celebrate your festivals, Judah.
Pay your vows
because the wicked one will not
invade you again.
He'll be completely destroyed.

2 The battering-ram comes up
against your walls.
Guard the fortifications,
watch the road.
Rally your strength. Be fully
armed.

²(But the LORD will restore
Jacob's pride like Israel's
pride,
for plunderers plundered them
and destroyed their vines.)

The Destruction of Nineveh

¹
15 Acts 10:36

¹The shields of His heroes have
been made red;
His brave men are dressed in
scarlet.
The steel on His chariots flashes
when they are made ready, and
cypress spears are bran-
dished.

⁴Chariots are racing madly in the
streets
and jostle one another in the
broad open places.
They look like torches
and dart around like lightning.

⁵His warriors are strong.
They stumble as they go,
hurrying to the city wall.
A shield is set up for the sap-
pers.

⁶The river gates are opened,
the palace falls,

⁷the garrisoned city is stripped.
She is burned up as a sacrifice;

her maids moaning like pigeons,
beating their breasts.

⁸Nineveh is like a pool of water,
where water is draining off.

"Stop it, stop it!"

But nobody pays any attention.

⁹Get the silver, get the gold!
There's just no limit to what is
stored here—
a rich abundance of delightful
things.

¹⁰Empty, plundered, in ruins!
Hearts are throbbing, knees are
shaking, all limbs tremble,
and faces go pale.

¹¹Where is the lions' den
the cave for the cubs?
The place the lion, lioness and
little whelps
move about unafraid.

¹²For his whelps the lion made the
kill
and broke the neck of the prey
for his lionesses,
filling his caves with carcasses
and his lair with torn bodies.

¹³"See, I'm against you," says the
LORD of armies.

"I will send your chariots up in
smoke.

A sword will devour your young
lions.

I will stop your hunting prey in
the world,

and nobody will ever again hear
the voice of your ambassa-
dors."

Woe to Nineveh

3 Woe to the bloody city,
so full of lying and plunder,
so bent on going after prey!

²The whip cracks and wheels
rattle,

horses gallop and chariots
bounce along.

³Riders make their horses rear
up,

- swords flash, and spears glitter.
 And so many are killed,
 a heap of carcasses,
 no end to corpses,
 people stumble over bodies—
 *because of the great lust of this
 prostitute,
 this fair mistress of sorcery,
 by her lust she enslaves nations
 and peoples by her witchery.
 "I'm against you," says the
 LORD of armies.
 "I will lift up your dress over
 your face
 to show the nations your naked
 body
 and the kingdoms your shame.
 "I will throw filth on you
 and make you a disgrace and a
 sight to see.
 "Then everybody who looks at
 you will shrink from you,
 saying, 'Nineveh is in ruins.
 Who will weep over her?'
 Where can I look for any to com-
 fort you?"
 "Can you do better than Thebes
 situated by the Nile
 with water about her?
 Her rampart was the river,
 and the water was her wall.
 "Ethiopia and Egypt were her
 strength,
 and it was boundless.
 Put and the Lybians were there
 to help her.^b
 "Even she went as an exile into
 captivity.
 Her babies also were dashed in
 pieces
 at every street corner.
 Lots were cast for her noble-
 men,
 and all her great men are bound
 in chains.
- "You too will stagger like a
 drunkard.
 You will go into hiding.
 You too will be looking for pro-
 tection from the enemy.
 "All your forts will be like fig
 trees with the first-ripe figs:
 when shaken, the figs fall into
 the mouth of the eater.
 "Look at your people—they're all
 women!
 The city gates of your country
 are wide open to your
 enemies;
 fire has burned the bars of your
 gates.
 "Draw water for the siege.
 Strengthen your fortifications.
 Step into the claypits and
 trample in the clay.
 Take hold of the brickmold.
 "But look, fire will still consume
 you.
 A sword will cut you down.
 Fire will consume you like
 locusts.
 You have increased like young
 grasshoppers,
 you have multiplied like swarms
 of locusts.
 "You have produced more busi-
 nessmen than stars in the
 sky—
 like locusts that raid and fly
 away.
 "Your officers are like locusts,
 and your scribes are like
 swarms of them
 settling on the fences when it is
 cold;
 the sun rises, and they hurry
 away,
 and nobody knows where
 they've gone.
 "Your rulers, king of Assyria, are
 asleep.

^bVersions. Heb your

Your strong leaders are at rest.
Your people are scattered on the
hills
and nobody will gather them.
*Your wound will never heal,

your injury is fatal.
All who hear the news about you
will clap their hands over you.
Who hasn't suffered from your
endless cruelty?

THE BOOK OF
HABAKKUK

1 This is the revelation seen by the prophet Habakkuk.

Habakkuk:

¹LORD, how long do I have to call for help while You don't listen?

I cry to you. "Violence!" and You don't save us.

²Why do you let me see wrongdoing.

why do You watch misery? Before me is plundering and crime.

quarreling starts and fighting continues.

³So the law is a dead letter, and no just decree is ever carried out.

The wicked hold the righteous in check;

and so just decrees are perverted.

¹
5 ACH 13 41
6 RV 20 9

The Lord:

⁴Look among the nations and see. Wonder and be amazed.

In your days I'm going to do a work you will not believe when you're told.

⁵I'm going to use the Chaldeans, those fierce and rash people. They will march through the whole country to take over the homes that aren't theirs.

⁶They will frighten and terrify. They will be proud of their own customs.

⁷Their horses are faster than leopards,

more fierce than wolves in the evening.

Their war horses come a-galloping,

coming from far away.

They fly like vultures,

swooping to devour.

⁸All of them come to do violent crimes

with faces eagerly looking ahead.

They gather captives like sand.

⁹They make fun of kings and treat princes as a joke. They laugh at every fortified city and pile up dirt to take it.

¹⁰Then they change their minds and go on.

They are guilty, these people who think their god is their strength.

Habakkuk:

¹²LORD, my God, aren't You from everlasting?

My holy One, Victor over death!

LORD, You have appointed them to judge us.

O Rock, You have set them up to correct us.

¹³You whose eyes are too pure to look at wrong

and who can't watch wrongdoing,

why do You watch those treacherous men?

Why are You silent when the wicked swallows one who is more righteous than he?

¹⁴You make men like the fish in the sea,

like crawling animals that are without a ruler.

¹⁵They pull them all up with a hook
and drag them away in their net
and gather them in the dragnet.
And so they are happy and delighted.

¹⁶That is why they sacrifice to their net
and burn incense to their dragnet
because they get rich by using them
and eat the finest food.

¹⁷Should they then empty their nets continually
and always keep on killing nations mercilessly?

Habakkuk:

2 I will stand as a watchman.
I will stand on the wall
and watch to see what He says to me
and how He will answer^a my complaint.

²
3-4 Ro 1:17;
Gal 2:11;
Hab 10:
27-29

The Lord:

¹He answered me and said:
Write the vision,
inscribe it clearly on tablets
so anyone who reads it may run.

²The vision is waiting for the time set
when it is to be carried out.
It longs for fulfillment
and can't fail to come true.
If it seems slow, just wait for it
because it will certainly happen
and not be late.

³Look at the puffed-up fellow
whose life is perverted.
But the righteous man will live
by his faith.

Troubles for the Oppressor

¹Then too, riches^b deceive.
The man who is proud can't rest.
He gets to be as greedy as the grave
and like death never gets enough.
And so he drags together all the nations to himself
and gathers all the people to be his own.
²Won't all these make him the butt of their satire
and taunt him with double-talk
and say:

Woe to him who enriches himself with what isn't his own!
(How long will it be?)
And he loads himself with many pledges?

³Won't your creditors suddenly rise
and those who are going to shake you awake?
Then you will be their victim for plunder.

⁴Because you robbed many nations,
all the rest of the people will rot
you
for the human blood you poured out
and the violent wrongs you did to the country,
the city and all who live there.

⁵Woe to him who treacherously exploits others
for his own family
so he can make his nest on high,
to be out of reach of disaster.

⁶You have really planned

^aFollowing Syriac. Heb "how I shall answer"

^bFollowing Dead Sea Habakkuk scroll. Later Heb texts "wine"

disgrace for your family
by cutting off many people
and forfeiting your own life.

¹¹A stone in the wall cries out
and a beam in the building an-
swers it.

¹²Woe to him who builds a town by
bloody murder
and sets up a city by wrongdo-
ing.

¹³Consider, isn't this from the
LORD of armies
that people work hard only to
feed the flames
and nations wear themselves
out for nothing?

¹⁴But the world will be filled with
a knowledge of the Lord's
glory
as the water fills the sea.

¹⁵Woe to him who gives his neigh-
bor a drink,
pouring out poison and making
him drunk
in order to gaze at his naked-
ness.

¹⁶You will be filled with disgrace
instead of glory.
Drink yourself and stagger.
The cup in the LORD's right
hand will be turned to you,
and disgrace will be on your
glory.

¹⁷You were violent with Lebanon
and frightened the animals with
slaughter;
violence overwhelms you
because you murdered the
people and ravished the coun-
try,
the city, and all who live there.

¹⁸What good does it do

to shape and carve an idol?
It is a statue, and a teacher of
lies.

What good does it do to trust
what you shape
and make such dumb idols?

¹⁹Woe to him who says to wood,
"Wake up,"
and to a dumb stone, "Rise."
Can this teach you?
See, it is overlaid with gold and
silver,
and there isn't any spirit in it at
all!

²⁰But the LORD is in His holy
temple!
The whole world should be si-
lent before Him!

Habakkuk's Prayer

3 The prophet Habbakuk's Pray-
er (a lyrical poem)^c

¹LORD, I have heard about Your
fame.
Your work frightens me.
LORD, revive Your work in these
middle years;
in these middle years reveal it.
But when You are angry,
remember to be merciful.

²God comes from Teman;
the holy One from Mount
Paran. (Music) ^d

His majesty covers the heavens,
and the earth is full of His glory.

³His brightness is like the light of
day.

Rays stream from His hands
where He hides His power.

⁴A plague goes ahead of Him;
burning fever follows close be-
hind Him.

⁵When He stands up,
He shakes the earth;
by just looking,

^cConjecture Heb "on Shigionoth." compare Ps 7

^dHeb adds Selah, a musical term of unknown meaning

He makes the nations jump in
terror.
The ancient mountains crumble;
the old hills sink down.
Eternal ways are His.
7 I see the tents of Ethiopia in
trouble,
the tent-curtains of Midian
trembling.
8 Are You angry with the rivers,
LORD;
are You furious with the rivers,
do You rage against the sea
when You ride on Your victo-
rious horses and chariots?
9 You strip Your bow for action,
with arrows set to the string
(Music)^d
You split the land with rivers.
10 Looking at You,
the mountains writhe in pain.
A cloudburst of water sweeps
on.
The deep sea roars
and raises its hands high.
11 Sun and moon stay in their
dwelling
at the flash of Your arrows as
they shoot by;
Your glittering spear shines.
12 In Your wrath You march
through the earth;
in Your anger You thresh the
nations.
13 You come out to save Your
people,
to save Your anointed one.
You crush the chief of the house-
hold of wickedness,
laying him bare from feet to

³
10 Lk 1:47

neck. (Music)^d
14 With your arrows
you pierce the leaders of his
warriors,
who came like a whirlwind to
scatter us;
their presumption is like those
who devour the poor in secret.
15 With Your horses You trample
in the sea
and through the surge of mighty
waters.
16 Hearing about it, I tremble in-
side,
and my lips quiver at the sound.
My bones start to rot,
and my knees shake under me.
I wait for the day of trouble
to come on the nation who will
oppress us.
17 The fig tree will have no buds,
the vines will have no grapes,
the olive tree will fail to pro-
duce,
the fields yield no food,
the sheep will be cut off from
their fold,
and no cattle will be in the
barns—
18 but I will delight in the LORD
and be happy in God who saves
me.
19 God the LORD is my strength.
He will give me feet like a deer
and make me leap along on the
heights.
To the leader of the choir, with
my string music.

THE BOOK OF
ZEPHANIAH

1 This was what the LORD told Zephaniah son of Cushi, son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah, when Josiah, Amon's son was king of Judah.

The Whole Earth to be Judged

¹I will completely wipe everything off the earth says the LORD.

¹I will get rid of people and animals;

I will get rid of the birds in the air and the fish in the sea, the wicked and whatever makes them do wrong!

I will destroy man from the face of the earth. ¹
2-3 Mt 12:41
14-15 Rv 6:17
says the LORD.

Judah to be Judged

¹I will stretch out My hand against Judah and all who live in Jerusalem. I will get rid of everything in this place that is left of Baal, the names of the idol priests and the other false priests.

⁵who on roofs worship all the stars in the sky, who bow down ⁶and swear loyalty to the LORD

but also swear by Milcom, who have turned away from following the LORD, and no longer search for the LORD or ask Him for help.

⁷Be silent before the Lord GOD, because the day of the LORD is near, and the LORD has prepared a sacrifice.

He has invited guests and consecrated them.

⁸On the day of the LORD's sacrifice

I will punish the officials and the king's sons and all who dress in foreign fashion.

⁹On that day I will punish all who jump over the threshold to fill their masters' palace with crime and cheating.

¹⁰On that day, says the LORD, a cry will come from the Fish Gate and a wailing from the new part of the city, and a loud crash will echo from the hills.

¹¹Weep, you who live in the Mortar, because all the merchants will be wiped out and all who weigh out silver will be destroyed.

¹²At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps and punish the men who feel satisfied with their dregs, thinking that the LORD doesn't do anything good or bad.

¹³Their wealth will be taken as plunder, and their homes turn to ruins. They built houses, but they won't live in them. They planted vineyards, but they won't drink any wine from them.

The Day of the Lord Is Coming

¹⁴The LORD's great day is near. It is near and coming closer.

The sound of the day of the LORD is bitter.

the shriek of the warrior is horrible.

¹⁵That day will be a day of wrath,
a day of trouble and anguish,
a day of wreck and ruin,
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and fog.

¹⁶a day of trumpet blowing and battle cries
against the fortified towns and the corner towers.

¹⁷Then I will bring such trouble on men
they will walk like blind men
because they have sinned
against the LORD.
Their blood will be poured out like dust
and their intestines like manure.

¹⁸Their silver and gold won't be able to rescue them.
On the day the LORD is angry
and His fiery jealousy devours the whole earth
He will bring the end,
yes, sudden destruction on all who live on earth.

Look for the Lord!

2 Be gathered together, like a heap of straw,
you people whom nobody wants.

²before the time comes when you pass away like chaff,
before the LORD's anger blazes on you,
before the day of the LORD's fury comes on you.

³Look for the LORD,
all you humble people in the land who do what is right, as He says.
Look for what is right;
try to be humble.
Then you may find shelter when the LORD is angry.

Against the Philistines

⁴Gaza will be deserted;
Ashkalon will be in ruins;
Ashdod's people will be driven out at noon;
Ekron will be torn out by the roots.

⁵Woe to you who live on the seacoast,
you nation of Cherethites.
The LORD speaks against you,
Canaan,
land of the Philistines:

⁶I will destroy you so that nobody will be living there.
And the seacoast will be pasture-land,
caves for shepherds,
and fenced places for sheep.

⁷And the coast will belong to those who are left of the people of Judah.
There they will feed their sheep.
In the evening they will lie down in the houses of Ashkelon
because the LORD their God comes to help them
and bring them back to a happy life.

Against Moab and Ammon

⁸I have heard how Moab taunted My people,
how the people of Ammon mocked them
and bragged about their borders.

⁹And so, as I live, says the LORD of armies, the God of Israel.
Moab will be like Sodom,
and the people of Ammon like Gomorrah,
a place full of weeds, saltpits,
and ruins forever.
Those who are left of My people will plunder them.

and the rest of My nation will
take what they have.

¹⁰This is what they will get for
their pride

because they taunted and
mocked the people of the
LORD of armies.

¹¹The terror of the LORD will be
against them
because He will destroy all the
earth's gods
and from all coasts the nations
will come to worship Him.

Against Ethiopia

¹²You Ethiopians too.
My sword will kill you.

Against Assyria

¹He will stretch out His hand
against the north
and destroy Assyria and make
Nineveh a ruin,
as dry as the desert.

²Flocks will lie down in the mid-
dle of it.

all the many animals.
The pelican and the heron will
lodge on the top of its pillars;
listen, they are squawking in a
window;

the threshold is torn up;
the cedar work is laid bare.

³Here is the triumphant city
that lived so carefree and
thought,

"Here am I, and there's nobody
like me."

What a ruin it is now!

A place for animals to lie down.
Everybody who passes by here
will hiss and shake his fist.

Jerusalem's Doom

3 Woe to this tyrannical city,
foul and polluted!

¹She listens to nobody
and lets nobody correct her.

She doesn't trust the LORD
or come to her God.

²Her officials are roaring lions
within her.

Her judges are wolves that in
the evening
leave nothing to gnaw on in the
morning.

³Her prophets are reckless and
treacherous men.

Her priests pollute holy things;
they break the law.

⁴But the LORD within her is righ-
teous.

He does no wrong.

Without fail, every morning He
brings justice to the land.

But the wicked feel no shame.

Respect Me

¹I cut down the nations
so that their fortifications were
in ruins,

and I laid waste their streets
so that nobody walked in them.

Their cities were destroyed
so that not a single person lived
there.

²But I said to Jerusalem,

"Respect Me and receive My
correction,"

so that she would not lose sight
of all I had ordained for her.

But they were quick to do every-
thing even worse.

³And so, wait for me,

says the LORD,

till I get up to accuse,

because I have decided to
gather nations,

to bring together kingdoms,

to pour my fury on them,

all My burning anger,

yes, the fire of My jealousy
will devour the whole world.

⁴Then I will change people

so they can speak in a pure way;

all of them call on the LORD's
name
and serve Him shoulder to
shoulder.

The Humble Remnant

¹⁰From the other side of the rivers
of Ethiopia
the scattered people who pray to
Me
will bring Me a present.

¹¹That day you will not have to be
ashamed
of all the wrongs you did to Me
since then I will take away from
you
your proud and boasting men.
And never again will you act
proudly
on My holy hill.

¹²But I will leave among you
a humble and poor people
who will trust in the LORD's ^{12 *Heb* 14.5}
name.

¹³Those who are left in Israel will
not do wrong
or tell lies,
and no deceiving tongue will be
found in their mouths.
They will feed and lie down,
and there will be nobody to
terrify them.

Zion Will Be Happy

¹⁴Sing happily, daughter of Zion!
Shout, Israel!
Be glad and rejoice with all your
heart,
daughter of Jerusalem.

¹⁵The LORD will cancel your pun-
ishment.

He will drive out your enemies.
The King of Israel, the LORD, is
among you.

You don't need to fear another
calamity.

¹⁶On that day Jerusalem will be
told,

"Don't be afraid.
Zion, don't give up!"

¹⁷The Lord your God is among you;
He is mighty to save.
He will be delighted with you.
He will renew^a you with His
love.

He will be joyful over you with
shouts of joy.

The Exiles Will Return

¹⁸I will gather those who have
gone out from you and are
weeping,
being away from the festivals,
carrying the burden of disgrace.

¹⁹At that time I will deal with all
who mistreat you.

I will rescue the lame,
and gather those who are driven
away.

And I will make them a people
who are praised;
whose name is honored all over
the world
where they were in disgrace.

²⁰At that time when I gather you
I will bring you home.
You will be famous and praised
among all the people of the
world
when I make you happy again—
you will see it yourselves, says
the LORD.

^aGk; Heb "he will be silent in his love."

HAGGAI

Rebuild the Temple

1 In the second year of King Darius on the first day of the sixth month the LORD spoke through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel, Shealtiel's son, governor of Judah, and to Joshua, Jehozadak's son, the high priest: ²The LORD of armies says, "These people say, the time hasn't come yet, the time to build the LORD's temple."

³Again the LORD spoke through the prophet Haggai: "Is it time for you to live in paneled houses while this temple is in ruins? ⁴And now the LORD of armies says, "Think carefully about what you are doing. ⁵You sow much but bring home little. You eat but can't get enough. You drink but never have enough to get drunk. You dress but can't get warm. You earn wages and put it in a purse with holes." ⁷The LORD of armies says, "Think about what you are doing."

⁸"Go up into the mountains, get wood, and build the temple. I will be delighted with it and honored," says the LORD.

⁹"You look for much and it turns out to be so little. And when you bring even that home, I will blow it away. Why?" asks the LORD of armies. "On account of My temple that is in ruins while each of you is running around caring for his own house. ¹⁰That is why the sky over you is holding back the dew, and the ground refuses to give her produce. ¹¹I called for a drought on the land and the hills, on the new grain, grapes, and olives, everything the

ground produces, on men and animals and all their hard work."

¹²Then Zerubbabel, Shealtiel's son, and Joshua, Jehozadak's son, the high priest, and all the people who were left listened to the LORD their God, namely, what the prophet Haggai said since the LORD their God had sent him. And the people respected the LORD.

¹³And Haggai, the LORD's messenger with the LORD's message, told the people: The LORD says, "I am with you."

¹⁴The LORD stirred the spirit of Zerubbabel, Shealtiel's son, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua, Jehozadak's son, the high priest, and the spirit of all the people who were left, and they came and went to work on the temple for the LORD of armies, their God ¹⁵on the 24th day of the 6th month in the second year of King Darius.

The LORD's Glory Will Fill the Temple

2 In the second year of King Darius on the 21st day of the 7th month, the LORD spoke through the prophet Haggai: ²Say to Zerubbabel, Shealtiel's son, governor of Judah, and Joshua, Jehozadak's son, the high priest, and to those who are left of the people ³"Are there any left among you who saw how beautiful this temple was at first? And how does it look to you now? Doesn't it look like nothing to you? ⁴But now, have courage, Zerubbabel," says the LORD, "and have courage, Joshua, Jehozadak's

son, the high priest, and have courage, all you people of the land," says the LORD, "and do the work, because I am with you," says the LORD of armies. ⁵"It is the covenant I made with you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit stands firm among you. Don't be afraid." ⁶"The LORD of armies says, "Once again in a little while, I'm going to shake heaven and earth, the sea and the dry land. ⁷I'll shake all the nations, and so the treasures of all the nations will come, and I will fill this temple with glory," says the LORD of armies. ⁸"The silver is mine, and the gold is mine," says the LORD of armies. ⁹"In the future this temple will be more beautiful than it was at first," says the LORD of armies. "And in this place I will give peace," says the LORD of armies.

A Curse Turned to Blessing

¹⁰On the 24th day of the 9th month in the second year of Darius, the LORD spoke through the prophet Haggai: "The LORD of armies says, "Ask the priests to instruct you. ¹¹If a man carries holy meat in a part of his garment and with this part touches bread, boiled food, wine, oil, or any kind of food, does it become holy?"

"No," the priests answered.

¹²"If somebody gets unclean by touching a dead body," Haggai asked, "and then touches anyone of these, will it become unclean?"

"It will be unclean," the priests answered.

¹³"So it is with these people," Haggai answered, "and with this nation before Me, says the LORD. With everything they do and the sacrifices they bring—they're unclean! ¹⁴And now, think of this carefully from now on. Before one stone was laid on another in the LORD's temple, ¹⁵during all this time, when anybody came to a heap of grain expecting 20 measures there were only 10. And when anybody came to a winevat to draw 50 measures, there were only 20. ¹⁶I struck everything you produced with blight and mildew, and hail, but still you wouldn't come to Me, say the LORD. ¹⁷Think of this carefully from now on, starting with the 24th day of the 9th month. Consider what happened since the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid. ¹⁸Was there any grain left in your granary? The vine, figtree, pomegranate, and olive tree didn't produce. But from now on I will bless you."

¹⁹A second time, on the 24th day of the month the LORD spoke to Haggai: ²⁰Tell Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, "When I shake heaven and earth, ²¹I will upset the thrones of the kingdoms and destroy the strength of the heathen nations. I will upset chariots and their drivers, and horsemen will cut one another down with the sword. ²²On that day," says the LORD of armies, "I will take you, my servant Zerubbabel," says the LORD, "and I will make you like a seal ring because I have chosen you," says the LORD of armies.

⁷
6 Heb 12
26-27

THE BOOK OF
ZECHARIAH

1 In the eighth month of the second year of Darius the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo: 'The LORD was very angry with your fathers. 'Tell them, the LORD of armies says this: "Return to Me" says the LORD of armies, "and I will return to you," says the LORD of armies. "'Don't be like your fathers. The earlier prophets called to them: Turn from your wicked ways and the evil you do. But they refused to listen or pay attention to Me," says the LORD. "'Your fathers—where are they? And the prophets—do they live forever? 'But what I said and decreed and ordered My servants, the prophets, to tell, didn't it catch up with your fathers, and then they turned and said, 'The LORD of armies has done to us what he planned to do because of our ways and doings, that is what He has done to us.'"

6 Rv 10:7
11:18
8 Rv 6:2, 4

Vision 1: Myrtles in the Valley

'On the 24th day of the 11th month, the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the LORD spoke to the prophet Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo. 'That night I saw a man riding on a red horse: he was waiting among the myrtle trees in the valley. Behind him were horses that were red, sorrel, and white.

'"What are these, my lord?" I asked.

"I will show you what these are."

^aOr "they escaped disaster"

said the angel who was talking to me.

¹⁰Then the man waiting among the myrtles answered, "The LORD has sent these to patrol the world." "Then they spoke to the LORD's angel standing among the myrtles: "We have patrolled the world, and the whole world is living quietly."

¹²Then the LORD's angel said, "LORD of armies, how long will You withhold your mercy from Jerusalem and the cities of Judah with whom You've been angry now for 70 years."

¹³And the LORD answered the angel who was talking to me, and what He said was kind and comforting. "The angel who was talking to me said: "Announce: The LORD of armies says, 'I'm very zealous for Jerusalem and Zion' "but I'm very angry with the nations who are so confident. When I was only a little angry, they increased their wickedness."^a "That is why the LORD says, 'I have come back to Jerusalem to be merciful. There My temple will be rebuilt,' says the LORD of armies, 'and a measuring line will be used to lay out Jerusalem.' "Also announce: The LORD of armies says: 'The cities will again be overflowing with prosperity. I will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem to be Mine.'"

Vision 2: 4 Horns and 4 Smiths

¹⁶Then I looked up and saw—four horns.

¹⁹“What do these mean?” I asked the angel who was talking to me.

“These are the horns,” he said, “that scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.”

²⁰Then the LORD showed me four smiths.

²¹“What have these come to do?” I asked.

“Those horns scattered Judah so much,” He said, “that nobody dared to raise his head but these smiths have come to terrify them, to throw down the horns of the nations that raised their horns against the land of Judah to scatter it.”

Vision 3: Jerusalem Without Walls

2 Then I looked up and saw a man with a *measuring* line in his hand. ²¹“Where are you going?” I asked him.

“To *measure* Jerusalem,” he answered, “to see *how wide and long* it should be.”

¹Then the angel who was talking to me left, and another angel went to meet him, “and he told him, “Run, tell that young man, ‘People will live in Jerusalem without walls because there will be so many people and animals in it. ³And I will be a wall of fire around her,’ says the LORD, ‘and I will be a glory in her.’”

⁴“Come, come, escape from the northern country,” says the LORD, “I spread you out like the four winds of heaven. ⁵Come, Zion, you who live in Babylon, escape.” ⁶The LORD of armies says this: “He who is glorious sends Me to the nations who plundered you because anyone who touches you touches the pupil

of His eye. ⁷I will shake My fist at them, and they will be plundered by those who were their slaves. Then they will know the LORD of armies sent Me. ⁸Sing out and rejoice, people of Zion, because *I will come and live among you*,” says the LORD. ⁹“On that day many nations will join the LORD and become My people. *I will live among you*, ¹⁰you will know the LORD of armies sent Me to you. And the LORD will take Judah as His own in the holy land, and He will again choose Jerusalem.”

¹¹Be quiet, everybody, before the LORD. He is stirring from the holy place where He lives.

Vision 4: The Highpriest Is Cleansed

3 Then He showed me Joshua, the high priest, standing before the LORD’s Angel, and Satan^b was standing at his right to *accuse* him.

¹“The LORD rebuke you,” the Angel^c of the LORD said to Satan. “The LORD who chooses Jerusalem *rebuke* you. Isn’t this man a brand *snatched from the fire*?” ²Joshua was dressed in *dirty clothes* as he was standing before the Angel.

³Then the Angel said to those who were standing ready to serve Him, “Take his *dirty clothes* off.” And He said to him, “See, I have taken your sins from you, and I dress you in festival garments.”

⁴And I said, “They should put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and dressed him while the LORD’s Angel was standing by.

⁵The LORD’s Angel solemnly assured Joshua: ⁶“The LORD of

2
1:2 Rev 21
15-16
10-11 Rev 21:3
3
1 Rev 12:9-10
20:2
2:4 Jude
1:23

^bThe Heb means “the Accuser” or “the Adversary”

^cSyriac: Heb “the LORD said”

armies says, 'If you will live in My ways and do what I tell you, you will govern My temple and watch over My courts, and I will give you the right to walk among these standing here. 'Please listen, Joshua, O high priest, you and your friends who sit before you. You men^d stand for something wonderful I will do because I will bring My Servant, the Branch.'

"'There is a stone I put before Joshua. Seven eyes are on one stone. I am making an engraving on it,' says the LORD of armies. 'I will remove that country's sin in one day. 'On that day,' says the LORD of armies, 'a man will invite his neighbor to be with him under the vine and the figtree.'"

Vision 5: Oil for the Lamps

4 The angel who talked to me woke me up like a man is wakened from sleep.

³ Rv 11.4
⁵ Rv 5.6
¹¹ Rv 11.4
¹⁴ Rv 11.4

"'What do you see?" he asked me.

I said, "I see a lampstand, all gold, with a bowl on top, and seven lamps on it, with seven spouts for each lamp that is on top of it. 'Near it there were *two olive trees*, one on the right and the other on the left of the bowl."

'Then I asked the angel who talked to me, "What are these, my lord?"

'Then the angel who talked to me asked me, "You don't know what these are?"

"No, lord," I answered.

'Then he answered me: "These are the seven eyes of the LORD that *move over the whole earth*." This is what the LORD says to Zerub-

babel: Not by might or by power but by My Spirit, says the LORD of armies. 'What is a great mountain? Before Zerubbabel it shall be a plain. And he will bring out the keystone (of the temple) while people shout, 'Blessings, blessings be on it!'"

"Then this word from the LORD came to me: "'Zerubbabel's hands laid the foundation of this temple, and his hands will finish it, and so you will know the LORD of armies sent Me to you. 'Is there anyone who despises the time when little things happen? They shall be delighted to see the plumbline in Zerubbabel's hand."

"I asked him, "What are these two olive trees at the right and the left of the lampstand?" 'And again I asked him, "What are the two branches of the olive trees by the two golden funnels pouring the golden liquid from above?"

"Then he asked me, "You don't know what they are?"

"No, lord," I answered.

"'These are the two anointed ones," he said, "who are *ready to serve the Lord of the whole world*."

Vision 6: The Flying Curse

5 Again I looked up and I saw a flying scroll.

"'What do you see?" he asked me.

"I see a flying scroll," I answered. "It is 20 cubits long and 10 cubits wide."

"'This is the curse," he said, "that is going out over the whole country because everyone who steals will be taken away from here as the scroll says, and everyone who

^dSyriac: Heb "They are men who . . ."

^e"These are . . . the whole earth" is found after verse 10 in the Heb text.

swears falsely will be taken away from here as it says. 'I will send out the curse, says the LORD of armies, and it will go into the home of a thief and one who swears falsely by My name, and will stay there in his house till it has wiped it out with its timbers and stones.'

Vision 7: Putting Away Sin

'Then the angel who was talking to me came forward. "Look up now," he said, "and see what is coming."

"What is it?" I asked.

"This is a basket that is coming," he said. And he added, "And this is their sin throughout the country." Just then a lead cover was raised and there was a lone woman crouching in the basket. "This is Wickedness," he said, and he pushed her into the basket and forced the lead cover down on its opening.

'I looked up and saw two women coming forward with the wind in their wings. They had wings like a stork and carried the basket between the earth and the sky.

"Where are they taking the basket?" I asked the angel who was talking to me.

"To build a temple for her^f in Babylonia," he told me. "When the temple is ready, she^f will be set there on the place prepared for her."^f

Vision 8: God's Chariots

6 I looked up again and saw four chariots going out from between the two mountains. The mountains were of bronze. ²Red horses pulled the first chariot. *Black*

horses pulled the second. ³White horses pulled the third chariot, and strong speckled horses pulled the fourth.

'I asked the angel who was talking to me, "What are these, my lord?"

"These are the four winds of heaven," the angel answered, "that are going out after standing ready to serve the LORD of the whole earth. "The chariot with the black horses is leaving for the northern part of the earth, and the white horses are following them. The speckled go to the south." ⁷These strong horses were leaving, eager to go and patrol the earth.

"Go," He said, "and patrol the earth." And they patrolled the earth.

"Then He called to me. "Look," He said to me, "those who went to the northern country have made My spirit rest in the northern country."

Priest and King

'The word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁰"Take what the exiles Heldai, Tobiah, and Jedaiah have brought. Go this very day, go into the home of Josiah, Zephaniah's son, where those from Babylon have gone—"take silver and gold, and make a crown, and put it on the head of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest. ¹²Tell him: The LORD of armies says, "There will be a man whose name is Descendant. He will sprout up from where He is planted and will build the LORD's temple. ¹³Yes, He will build the LORD's temple and have royal majesty. He will sit and rule on His throne and be a priest on His throne. Both

8
2-3 Rv 8:2,5
5 Rv 10:7
11-12 Heb
10:21

^fThe pronouns may refer to either the basket or the woman in it.

will be planning peace. "The crown will be a reminder to Heldai, Tobiah, and Jedaiah, and to Josiah,⁸ Zephaniah's son in the LORD's temple. "Those who are far away will come and help build the LORD's temple. Then you will know the LORD of armies sent Me to you. This will happen if you will really obey the LORD your God."

Better than Fasting

7 In the fourth year of King Darius, the fourth day of Chisleu, the ninth month, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah. "Bethel-sharezzer sent Regem-melech with his men to win the LORD's good will and ask the priests of the temple of the LORD of armies and the prophets: "Should I mourn and fast in the fifth month as I have done now for so many years?"

"Then the LORD of armies told me: "Say to all the people of the land and the priests: When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month these 70 years, did you really fast for Me? "When you ate and drank, didn't you do the eating and drinking? "Isn't this what the LORD announced through the former prophets' hands when people were living peacefully in Jerusalem and the towns around her, and in the Negeb and the foot-hills?"

"The word of the LORD came to Zechariah: "The LORD of armies says this: 'Give true justice, be kind and merciful to one another, "don't mistreat a widow, orphan, stranger or poor person. And in your hearts don't plan to do each other harm.'"

"But they refused to listen,

turned a stubborn shoulder, and shut their ears so they wouldn't hear. "They made their hearts hard as flint so they couldn't hear the teaching, namely the words the LORD of armies sent by His Spirit through the former prophets. So the LORD of armies got very angry. "He used to call and they wouldn't listen. "So now they call and I won't listen," says the LORD of armies. "But by a storm I will blow them among all the nations unknown to them. They will leave behind them a country so ruined nobody will go through it or come back to it. They will have turned a delightful country into ruins.

10 Promises

8 (1) Again the LORD of armies spoke.

"The LORD of armies said: "I'm very zealous for Zion. I'm glowing with a burning zeal for her."

(2) "The LORD said: "I will return to Zion and live in Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be called the loyal city, and the mountain of the LORD of armies, the holy mountain."

(3) "The LORD of armies said: "There will still be old men and women sitting in the streets of Jerusalem, each so old he will have a staff in his hand. "The streets in the city will be full of boys and girls playing in the open places."

(4) "The LORD of armies said: "If those who are left in those days think it is too hard, should I also think it is too hard?" It is the LORD of armies who speaks.

(5) "The LORD of armies said: "I will be rescuing My people from the country where the sun comes up and from the country where the sun

7
10 1 Co 13:5
8
6 Mt 19:26
Mk 10:27

⁸Syriac: Heb "to the kindness of Zephaniah's son"

goes down. ⁹I will bring them to live in Jerusalem, and they will be My people and I will be their God in truth and righteousness."

(6) ¹⁰The LORD of armies said: "Work courageously, you who are now hearing what the prophets say, who were there when the foundation was laid for rebuilding the temple of the LORD of armies. ¹¹Before that time no man was paid anything, not even for the use of an animal, and nobody who went out or in could feel safe because of the enemy; I had sent all men against one another.

¹¹"And now I won't treat those of these people who are left as in those early days," says the LORD of armies. ¹²"But they will sow in peace, the vine will grow its grapes, the land will yield its products, the skies will give their dew, and I will give as a heritage all these things to those who are left. ¹³And just as you people of Judah and you people of Israel were an example of a cursed nation among nations, so I will save you to be a blessed people. Don't be afraid. Work courageously."

(7) ¹⁴The LORD of armies said this: "As I decided to harm you when your fathers made Me angry," says the LORD of armies, "and I didn't change My mind, ¹⁵so I have decided again in these days to be good to Jerusalem and the people of Judah. Don't be afraid.

¹⁶"But you should do these things: Tell one another the truth, provide true and good justice within your city gates. ¹⁷Don't plan to harm another, and don't love to swear to lies, because I hate all these things," says the LORD.

¹⁸Or possibly "the face of the earth"

(8) ¹⁹The word of the LORD of armies came to me again.

²⁰The LORD of armies said: "For the people of Judah the fast in the fourth month, the fast in the fifth month, the fast in the seventh month, and the fast in the tenth month will turn to joy and delight and to happy festivals. But love truth and peace."

(9) ²¹The LORD of armies said: "It will still happen that nations including people living in many cities will come. ²²Those who live in one city will go to another and say, 'We're certainly going there to win the LORD's good will and seek the LORD of armies; I myself am going.'

²³Then many people and strong nations will come to seek the LORD of armies in Jerusalem and win the Lord's good will."

(10) ²⁴The LORD of armies said: "In those days ten men speaking every kind of language of the nations will take hold of the garment of the man of Judah and say, 'We'll go with you; we've heard God is with you.'"

A Revelation from the LORD

9 The LORD is against the land of Hadrach, and Damascus his dwelling place.

To the LORD belongs the land of Aram¹ as do all the tribes of Israel.

²He is also against Hamath which borders on it.

and against Tyre and Sidon though they are very shrewd.

³Tyre built herself a fortress and heaped up silver like dirt and gold like mud on the streets.

⁹ 2 Co 6:16
¹⁶ Eph 4:25
¹⁷ 1 Co 13:5

‘But the Lord will make her poor.
He will smash her wall into the
sea.

and fire will burn her down.

⁹Ashkelon should see it and be
afraid;

let Gaza feel great anguish.

And Ekron, because her hopes
are dashed.

Gaza will lose her king,
and Ashkelon her people.

¹⁰A mixed breed will live in
Ashdod,

and I will smash the Philistines’
pride.

¹¹I will take away the bloody meat
they have in their mouths

and the abominable pieces of
sacrifice from between their
teeth.

Some will be left there for our
God,

to be like a family in Judah;

the people of Ekron will be like
the Jebusites.

¹²I will camp in front of My house
as a guard against any that
would come or go.

Nobody will pass through them
again to oppress them.

because I will now watch them
with My own eyes.

The Messiah Is Coming

⁹Be very happy, *people of Zion!*

Shout aloud, *people of Jeru-*
salem.

You see, your King will come to
you.

He is righteous and victorious,

poor, and riding on a donkey,
on a young burro, the colt of a
donkey.

¹⁰He will get rid of the chariots in
Ephraim

and the war horses in Jeru-
salem;

also the bow used in battle.

He will talk peace to the nations,
and He will rule from sea to sea
and from the Euphrates river to
the end of the world.

¹¹Also, because you have a cove-
nant made *with blood*

I’ll send your captives out of the
waterless pit.

¹²They will return to the fortified
city¹

as captives who have hope.

**Even now I’m telling you I’ll re-
store to you twice as much**
for all you’ve gone through.

¹³I will use Judah as a bow I bend
and Ephraim as an arrow on
that bow.

I will stir up your people, Zion,
(against your people, Greece),
and I’ll make you like a sword in
a warrior’s hands.

¹⁴The LORD will be seen above
them

and will shoot His arrow like
lightning.

The Lord GOD will blow the
horn

and march in southern storms.

¹⁵The LORD of armies will shield
them

so they can consume their
enemies,

tramp on the stones hurled by
their slings.

and noisily drink (blood) like
wine

and be full of it like the bowl in
the sacrifices and the corners
of the altar.

¹⁶And so at that time
the LORD their God will give the
flock of His people victory:

9 Mt 21:5.
11 Mt 26:28
Mk 14:24
Lk 22:20.
1 Co 11:25.
Hb 13:20

¹Jerusalem

they will sparkle on His land like
jewels in a crown.

¹⁷How happy and how lovely they
will be!

Grain will make the young men
flourish,
and new wine the girls.

“I Will Gather My People”

10 Ask the LORD for rain when
the spring rain is due. The
LORD who makes rain clouds will
give the people showers of rain and
to each one food growing in the
field.

²But the household gods make
false promises. The fortune-tellers
see lies and the dreams they tell
about are nothing. When they
comfort, they are cheating. That is
why the people wander away like
sheep and are in trouble for lack of
a shepherd.

³I'm furious with the shepherds
and will punish the he-goats
because the LORD of armies will
take care of His flock,
the people of Judah,
and will make them His splendid
horse in battle.

⁴From them will come a corner-
stone,
from them a tent peg,
from them a bow for the battle,
from them each commander will
go forth.

⁵They will unite and be like
warriors,
who in battle, tramp in the mud
of the streets.

They will fight because the
LORD is with them,
and those who ride on horses
will be thrown into confusion.

⁶I'll make the people of Judah
mighty
and the people of Joseph victo-
rious.

I will restore them because I
love them,
and they will be as though I
never rejected them;
because I am the LORD their
God, I will answer them.

⁷The people of Ephraim will be
heroes,
happy as if they were drinking
wine.
Their sons will see it and be
glad.
They will be happy in the LORD.

⁸I will whistle for them
and gather them because I have
redeemed them.
They will be as many as they
ever were.

⁹Though I have scattered them
among the nations,
even from far away, they will
remember Me.
They will rear their children
and come back.

¹⁰I will bring them home from
Egypt,
gather them from Assyria,
and bring them to Gilead and
Lebanon,
and there won't be enough room
for them.

¹¹But they will march through a
sea of trouble,
and strike down the waves in the
sea,
and dry up all the depths of the
river.

Then the pride of the Assyrians
shall be cast down,
and the sceptre of Egypt re-
moved.

¹²I will make them mighty in the
LORD.

In His name they will go about as
they like.”
This is what the LORD says.

¹⁰
² Mt 9:36
⁸ Mt 6:34
⁷ Phil 4:4

11 Open your doors, Lebanon,
that fire may burn down
your cedars.

¹Wail, cypress,
because the cedar has fallen.
The stately trees are ruined.
Wail, oaks of Bashan,
because your thick forest has
been cut down.

²Listen! The shepherds are wail-
ing
because their fine pastures are
ruined.

Listen! The young lions are
roaring
because the jungle at the Jordan
is ruined.

The Good Shepherd

"The LORD my God says this: "Be
a shepherd of the flock that will be
slaughtered. ³Those who buy them
kill them without becoming guilty.
Those who sell them say, 'Bless the
LORD. I'm getting rich!' Those who
shepherd them don't feel sorry for
them.

⁶"So I will not again feel sorry for
the people of the world," says the
LORD. "I will abandon everybody to
his neighbor and his king, and they
will lay waste the earth. And I will
not rescue any of them."

⁷So I became the shepherd of the
flock that was to be slaughtered,
and also of the poor ones in the
flock. I took two staves. One I called
Friendliness, and the other I called
Fellowship. And so I was the
shepherd of the flock. ⁸I got rid of
three shepherds in one month. I was
feeling impatient with the sheep,
and they too felt disgusted with
me. ⁹So I said, "I won't be your
shepherd. If you're dying, die. If
you're getting lost, get lost. And let

those that are left, devour one
another." ¹⁰I took my staff Friend-
liness and cut it in two, to break the
covenant the LORD^k had made
with all the nations. "That day it
was broken, and so the poor in the
flock who were watching me knew it
was the word of the LORD.

¹²Then I told them, "If you think it
is right, pay me. But if not, don't."
And they weighed out as my pay
thirty shekels of silver.

¹³"Give it to the potter,"¹ the
LORD told me, "a 'fine' price they
have set on Me." And I took the 30
shekels of silver and gave them at
the LORD's temple to the potter.¹

¹⁴Then I cut in pieces my second
staff Fellowship, to break off the
brotherly fellowship between Judah
and Israel.

The Worthless Shepherd

¹⁵Then the LORD said to me,
"Now take the gear of a shepherd, a
worthless shepherd. ¹⁶because I'm
going to appoint a shepherd in the
country who will not take care of
those that are lost, search for the
young, heal those that have broken
their legs, or support those that can
still stand, but will eat the meat of
the fat animals and tear off their
hoofs."

¹⁷"Woe to the worthless shepherd
who forsakes the flock.
A sword shall strike his arm
and his right eye,
and his arm shall completely dry
up,
and his right eye lose its sight."

Jerusalem's Victory

12 This is a revelation of what
the LORD said about Israel.
The LORD—who spreads out the

^kHeb could read "I had made" ¹Gk "the treasury"

heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit in a man—says this: "I'm going to make Jerusalem a bowl full of intoxicating drink. And what happens to Jerusalem when it is besieged will also happen to Judah. "On that day I will make Jerusalem a stone too heavy for all the nations to lift. All who try to lift it will be badly injured, though all the nations in the world rally against her. "On that day," says the LORD, "I will make every horse panic and its rider go crazy. I'll be watching over the people of Judah, but every horse of the other people I'll strike blind. "Then the clans^m of Judah will think 'The strength of the people of Jerusalem is in the LORD of armies, their God.' "On that day I will make the clans^m of Judah like a pot of fire among pieces of wood and like a burning torch in straw, and they will burn down right and left all the people around them. The people of Jerusalem will again be living in their own place, at Jerusalem.

"The LORD will save Judah's tents first so that the glory of David's family and of the people in Jerusalem may not outshine that of Judah. "The LORD will protect the people in Jerusalem that day so that the weakest will be like David, and David's family will be like God, like the LORD's Angel who leads them. "On that day I will undertake to destroy all who come to attack Jerusalem."

The Spirit Makes People Weep

"I will pour out on David's family and those living in Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of prayer. They will look at Me whom they

have pierced. They will mourn over Him as parents mourn for their only son and weep bitterly as they weep over their firstborn. "On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be great, like the mourning at Hadad-rimmon in the valley of Megiddo. "The country will mourn, each family by itself, the family of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves; "the family of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of Shimei by itself and their wives by themselves. "All the families that are left, each by itself, and their wives by themselves."

A Fountain Opened

13 "On that day a fountain will be opened for David's family and the people in Jerusalem to wash away sin and filth. "And on that day," says the LORD of armies, "I will rid the country of the idols' names so that nobody will remember them anymore, and I will also remove the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness from the country.

"Then if a man will still prophesy, his father and his mother will say to their own son: 'You shouldn't live because you tell lies in the LORD's name,' and his father and his mother will stab to death their own son when he prophesies.

"On that day each of the prophets will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies. He won't dress in hairy garment to tell his lies. "He will say: 'I'm no prophet. I farm the ground because I've been bound to the soil since I was a child.'

"But somebody will ask him,

^mOr "leaders"

'What are these wounds on your body?'

"'I got these wounds in the home of one of my friends,' he will answer."

"'Awake, sword, against My Shepherd, against the Man who is close to Me."

says the LORD of armies.

"Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.

Then I will turn My hand against the little ones.

"This will happen in the whole country," says the LORD:

"Two thirds of the people in it will be cut down and die, but a third will be left in it.

"I will take that third through fire and purify them as silver is purified

and test them as gold is tested.

They will call on My name,

and I will answer them.

'They are My people,' I will say.

'The Lord is our God,' they will answer."

The Day of the LORD

14 A day is coming that will belong to the LORD, when the spoils taken from you^a will be divided up in you.^a ¹I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight. The city will be taken, the homes plundered, and the women raped. Half of the city will go away into exile, but the rest of the people in the city will not be destroyed.

²Then the LORD will go out to fight against those nations as He used to do when there was a battle. 'That day He will stand with His feet on the Mount of Olives, just east

of Jerusalem. And the Mount of Olives will be split in the middle from east to west by a very wide valley, half of the mountain moving north and the other half south. ³Then you will flee to the valley of the mount of the LORD^b because this valley between the mountains will join it. You will flee as you did from the earthquake at the time of Uzziah, king of Judah. The LORD my God will come and all the holy ones will be with Him.^c

⁴Then there will be no light—the lights in the sky will go out.^d ⁵It will be a unique day—which the Lord knows—without day or night. But in the evening there will be light.

⁶On that day living water will flow from Jerusalem, half of it to the (Dead) Sea in the east and half to the sea in the west, flowing in summer and winter.

⁷The LORD will be King of the whole country. At that time the LORD will be the only One and His name unique.

⁸The whole country from Geba to Rimmon in the Negeb will be like the Jordan plain, but Jerusalem will be situated higher in its place, from Benjamin's gate to the area of the first gate, to the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananel to the king's winepresses. ⁹The people will live there and not die under a curse again but will live safely in Jerusalem.

¹⁰This will be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who go to war against Jerusalem. He will make their flesh rot as they stand on their feet; their eyes will rot in their sockets; and

^aJerusalem ^bOr "the valley of My mountains" ^cGk; Heb "with You"

^dHeb difficult. The Gk has "There shall be for one day cold and frost"

13
7 Mt 26:31
9 2 Co 6:16
14
Rv 21:3 7
5 Mt 25:31
7 Rv 21:5
8 Jn 4:10, 14
7:38; Rv
21:6, 22:1,
17
11 Rv 22:3

their tongues in their mouths. ¹³At that time the LORD will start a great panic among them, one man will grab another's hand and each one will strike out with his fist against the other. ¹⁴Judah will also fight in Jerusalem. The wealth of all the nations around them will be collected, a very large quantity of gold, silver, and garments. ¹⁵And a similar plague will also be on horses, mules, camels, donkeys, and any other animals in those camps.

¹⁶All who are left there of all the nations who came against Jerusalem will come up every year to worship the King, the LORD of armies, to celebrate the festival of Booths. ¹⁷If any of the families of the world will not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of armies, no rain will fall on them. ¹⁸If the people of Egypt don't

come up and enter, no rain will fall on them, but there will be the plague with which the Lord strikes the nations who don't come up to celebrate the festival of Booths. ¹⁹That will be the punishment for Egypt's sin and the sin of all the nations who don't come up to celebrate the festival of Booths.

²⁰At that time there will be written on the bells of the horses: "These are the LORD's holy ones." And the pots in the LORD's temple will be like the pans from which blood is poured against the altar. ²¹Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be a holy thing of the LORD of armies. All who want to sacrifice will come in and take some of them and cook meat in them. On that day there will no more be any Canaanite in the temple of the LORD of armies.

THE BOOK OF
MALACHI

1 This is a revelation of the LORD's word to Israel through Malachi.

The LORD's Love Despised

"I love you," says the LORD.

But you ask, "How do you love us?"

"Wasn't Esau Jacob's brother?" the LORD asks. "I have loved Jacob, but Esau I hated. I made his mountains a wasteland and gave the country he inherited to the jackals of the desert. If Edom says, 'We are struck down, but we will again build the ruins,' then the LORD of armies says, 'They may build, but I will tear it down.' And so they will be called 'a wicked country' and 'the people with whom the LORD is angry forever.' You will see this with your own eyes and say, 'The LORD is great even beyond Israel's borders.'

"A son honors his father and a slave his master. Then if I am a Father, where am I honored? And if I am a master, where am I respected?" The LORD of armies says this. "You priests despise My name, while you ask, 'How do we despise Your name?'"

"You offer polluted food on My altars and ask, 'How do we pollute You?'"

"When you hold the LORD's table in contempt and when you offer a blind animal as a sacrifice, isn't that wrong? Or when you offer a lame or a sick animal, isn't that wrong? If you bring such to your governor would he like you? Or

would he welcome you?" asks the LORD of armies.

"Now ask God to show you mercy. Your hands have done this. Can He welcome any of you?"

The LORD of armies says, "I even wish someone would shut the doors to keep you from lighting fires on My altar without a purpose. I'm not pleased with you," says the LORD of armies, "and I don't welcome the offerings you bring."

"From the rising of the sun to its going down My name is great among the nations, and everywhere incense is offered for My name and clean offerings because My name is great among the nations," says the LORD of armies. "But you make it unholy by thinking, 'the Lord's table may be defiled, and the products and food on it despised.'"

"You say, 'Oh how tiresome it is,' and you sniff at it," says the LORD of armies. "You bring an animal you robbed or a lame or a sick one. When you bring such an offering, can I be glad you brought it?" asks the LORD.

"No, a curse be on him who cheats, in whose flock there is a male he vows to give, but he sacrifices an injured one to the LORD. I am a great King," says the LORD of armies, "and My name is feared among the nations."

A Warning to the Priests

2 "And now, you priests, this warning is for you." "If you won't listen or set your heart to give glory to My name," says the LORD of armies, "I will send a curse on

1
2-3 Rd 9:13
7 1 Co 10:21
11 2 Th 1:12
Rv 15:4
12 1 Co 10:21

you and curse your blessings. Yes, I've already cursed them because you don't take this to heart.

"I will restrain your arm^a and will throw manure in your faces, even the manure from your festivals, and you will be swept away with it. 'Then you will know I sent you this warning about what is to happen to My covenant with Levi,'" says the LORD of armies. "My covenant was with him, and it meant life and well-being, and I gave him reverence that he should respect Me and stand in awe of My name. 'He taught the truth, and nothing wrong was found in what he said. He lived with Me in a friendly and upright way and turned many away from wrong. 'A priest's lips should preserve knowledge. Then people will come to him to be taught the Law because he is the messenger of the LORD of armies. 'But you left the way and made many stumble over the Law. You destroyed the covenant with Levi,'" says the LORD of armies. "And so I too will make you contemptible and humiliate you before all the people because you disregard My ways and you are partial to certain persons in handling the Law."

A Warning to the People

"Don't all of us have one Father? Hasn't one God created us? Why does one cheat another and so violate the covenant of our fathers? 'Judah has broken it; something abominable is done in Israel and Jerusalem. Judah has violated the LORD's holy sanctuary that He

^aOr "rebuke your offspring"

^bThe Heb is difficult. Seemingly Malachi speaks of marriage as a man covering his bride with his garment.

loves and has married the daughter of a strange god.

"The LORD of armies will not allow anyone who does this, whether he is a participant or a witness, to live in Jacob's tents nor will He let them bring offerings to Him. "And here's another thing. You cover the LORD's altar with tears, weeping and groaning because He doesn't look kindly at your offerings or feel pleased to get them from you.

"And still you ask, "Why?"

Because the LORD is a witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you are unfaithful although she is bound to you and is your wife by solemn covenant. "Did not the one God make her? Her flesh and spirit belong to Him. And what does the one God want but godly offspring. Then watch your own spirit and don't be disloyal to the wife of your youth.

"You see, I hate divorce," says the LORD the God of Israel. "I hate him who does violence to the sanctity of marriage."^b says the LORD of armies. "Keep watch over your spirit and don't be unfaithful."

"You have made the LORD tired with your talk. Still you ask, "How have we made Him tired of us?"

By your saying of all who do wrong. "The LORD considers them good; He delights in them." If that is so, where is the God of justice?

The Day of the LORD's Coming

3 "I am going to send My messenger to prepare a way for Me. And the Lord whom you're looking for will suddenly come to His tem-

3
1 MH 11 10
MH 12
L1 17 76
727

ple. yes, the Angel of the covenant whom you delight in—He will come.” says the LORD of armies.

‘But when He comes, who can bear it? When He shows Himself, who can stand it? He is like a refiner’s fire, like cleaners’ soap. ‘And He will sit down like one who refines and cleanses silver to cleanse Levi’s descendants and purify them like gold and silver. Then they will in a righteous way bring offerings to the LORD. ‘Then Judah’s offering and Jerusalem’s will please the LORD as they did in the past, in the years of long ago.

“Then I will come to judge you and will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers, those who swear to a lie, those who rob a hired man of his wages, cheat a widow and an orphan, take away a stranger’s rights, and don’t respect Me.” says the LORD of armies.

Return to Me

“But I the LORD have not changed, and so your descendants of Jacob haven’t perished. ‘From the time of your fathers you have turned away from My laws and not kept them. Return to Me and I will return to you.” says the LORD of armies.

You ask, “How should we return?”

“Can a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me.”

“How do we rob You?” you ask.

“In giving the tenth and in offerings. ‘A curse is on you, because you, the whole nation, are robbing Me. ‘Bring all your tenth parts into the storehouse so there will be food in My temple, and please test Me in this way,” says the LORD of armies, “and see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour out a blessing for you till there

is more than enough. ‘I will restrain the devouring locust from harming you and from destroying the products of your ground and the grapes of the vines in your fields from dropping before they are ripe,” says the LORD of armies. “‘All nations will call you happy because you will be a delightful country,” says the LORD of armies.

“‘You stubbornly oppose Me in what you say,” says the LORD.

You ask, “How did we talk against you?”

“You said, “It’s so disappointing to serve God. What did we get whenever we did what He wanted and walked in mourning before the LORD of armies? ‘According to our experience people are happier if they forget about God, more successful if they do wrong. Yes, you can challenge God and get away with it.”

“Then those who respected the LORD talked to one another. And the LORD was interested and listened. And a record was kept to remind Him of those who respect the LORD and think highly of His name. “‘They will be Mine,” says the LORD of armies, “on that day when I act they will be My precious possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him. ‘Then you will again see the difference between a righteous person and a wicked person, one who serves God and one who doesn’t.

4 “You see, the day will come, burning like a furnace, and all who defy God and all who do wrong will be straw. The coming day will burn them,” says the LORD of armies, “leaving no root or branch of them.

2 Rv 6:17

2“But for you who respect My name there will rise the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings. You will go out and frolic like calves let out of their barn. 3You will tramp on the wicked because they will be ashes under your feet on the day when I act.” says the LORD of armies.

4“Remember the instructions I

gave my servant Moses at Horeb as laws and decrees for all Israel.

5“I am going to send you the prophet Elijah before the LORD’s great and terrible day comes. 6He will give the heart of the fathers to their children and the heart of the children to their fathers. Otherwise I will have to come and destroy the whole country with a curse.”

THE
NEW TESTAMENT

THE GOOD NEWS
AS IT WAS TOLD BY

MATTHEW

1 THIS IS A RECORD showing how Jesus Christ was a descendant of David and of Abraham.

Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac was the father of Jacob, and Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers.

Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah,

and Tamar was their mother.

Perez was the father of Hezron,

Hezron was the father of Ram,

Ram was the father of Aminadab,

Aminadab was the father of Nahshon,

Nahshon was the father of Salmon,

and Salmon was the father of Boaz, and Rahab was his mother.

Boaz was the father of Obed, and Ruth was his mother.

Obed was the father of Jesse,

and Jesse was the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon, and Uriah's wife was his mother.

Solomon was the father of Rehoboam,

Rehoboam was the father of Abijah,

Abijah was the father of Asa,

Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat,

Jehoshaphat was the father of Joram,

Joram was the father of Uzziah,

Uzziah was the father of Jotham, Jotham was the father of Ahaz,

Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah,

Hezekiah was the father of

Manasseh.

Manasseh was the father of Amon,

Amon was the father of Josiah,

and Josiah was the father of Jechoniah and his brothers when the people were taken away to Babylon. After they had been taken away to Babylon,

Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel,

Shealtiel was the father of Zerubbabel,

Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud,

Abiud was the father of Eliakim,

Eliakim was the father of Azor,

Azor was the father of Zadok,

Zadok was the father of Achim,

Achim was the father of Eliud,

Eliud was the father of Eleazar,

Eleazar was the father of Matthan.

Matthan was the father of Jacob,

and Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary; she was the mother of Jesus, who is called Christ.

So there are, in all, fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the Babylonian Captivity, and fourteen from the Babylonian Captivity to Christ.

An Angel Comes to Joseph

This is how Jesus Christ was born.

His mother Mary had promised Joseph to be his wife. But before they came together, it was found that she was going to have a child—by the Holy Spirit.

Nazareth, summer, 5 B.C.

¹⁹Joseph, her husband, was a good man and didn't want to disgrace her. So he decided to divorce her secretly.

²⁰After he thought about it, he in a dream saw the Lord's angel, who said, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take your wife Mary home with you; her Child is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will have a Son, and you will call Him Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins. ²²All this happened so that what the Lord said through the prophet would come true: ²³*The virgin will conceive and have a Son, and He will be called Immanuel,*"^a which means God-with-us.

²⁴When Joseph awoke, he did what the Lord's angel had ordered him to do. He took his wife home with him ²⁵but didn't have relations with her till she had a Son. And he called Him Jesus.

1
23 14 7 14
8 8 10
2
6 Mt 5:24
2 Sm 5:2
11 14 80:6
Ps 72:10, 15

The Wise Men

2 Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea when Herod was king. Then Wise Men came from the east to Jerusalem. ²"Where is the Child who was born King of the Jews?" they asked. "We saw His star rise and have come to worship Him."

³When King Herod heard about this, he became alarmed and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴He called together all of the people's ruling priests and men trained in the Bible and tried to find out from them where the promised Christ was to be born.

⁵"In Bethlehem, in Judea," they

told him, "because the prophet has written: **And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are not at all the least among the leading towns of Judah, since from you will come a leader who will be the Shepherd of My people Israel.**"

Then Herod secretly called the Wise Men and found out from them the exact time the star appeared. ⁷Then he sent them to Bethlehem. "Go and search carefully for the little Child," he said ⁸"And when you find Him, report to me, so that I too may go and bow down before Him."

⁹After hearing the king, they started out. And there was the star they had seen when it rose! It led them on till it came to a stop over the place where the Child was. ¹⁰They were extremely happy to see the star. ¹¹They went into the house and saw the little Child with His mother Mary. Kneeling, they worshiped Him. Then they opened their treasure chests and offered Him *gifts: gold, incense, and myrrh.*

¹²But God warned them in a dream not to go back to Herod. So they went home to their country by another road.

To Egypt!

¹³After the Wise Men left, Joseph in a dream saw the Lord's angel, who said, "Get up, take the little Child and His mother, and flee to Egypt. Stay there till I tell you. Herod is going to search for the Child to kill Him."

¹⁴Joseph got up at night, took the

^aThe New Testament often quotes or alludes to verses or phrases from the Old Testament. The center-column references, listed by chapter and verse on each page where these occur, show where such a quotation is to be found in the Old Testament.

little Child and His mother, and went to Egypt. "He stayed there till Herod died. In this way what the Lord said through the prophet was to come true: *I called My Son from Egypt.*

"When Herod saw that the Wise Men had tricked him, he got very angry and sent men to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and in all the country around it, up to two years old, according to the exact time he had found out from the Wise Men. "Then what the prophet Jeremiah said came true:

"A cry is heard in Rama!

*Weeping and bitter wailing;
Rachel crying over her children
and refusing to be comforted,
because they are gone.*

"But when Herod died, the Lord's angel appeared to Joseph in Egypt in a dream ¹⁵and told him. "Get up, take the little Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel. Those who tried to kill the little Child are dead."

¹⁸Joseph got up, took the little Child and His mother, and came to the land of Israel. ²⁰But when he heard, "Archelaus has succeeded his father Herod as king of Judea," he was afraid to go back there. And being warned in a dream, he went to Galilee. ²¹He came and made his home in a town by the name of Nazareth. And so what the prophets said came true: Jesus was to be called a man from Nazareth.^b

John Prepares the Way

3 The time came when John the Baptizer appeared in the wilderness of Judea and preached: "Repent—the kingdom of heaven

is near." "He was the one of whom the prophet Isaiah said:

Someone will be calling in the wilderness,

*"Prepare the way for the Lord;
make the paths straight for Him."*

"John wore clothes of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist. And he lived on grasshoppers and wild honey.

"Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and the whole Jordan valley came out to him. "As they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River.

"He also saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism. "Brood of snakes, who warned you to run away from the punishment waiting for you?" he asked them.

"Do the works that show you have repented. "Don't think you can tell yourselves, 'Abraham is our father.' I tell you, God can raise children for Abraham from these stones. "The ax is now ready to strike at the roots of the trees, and any tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. "I baptize you with water for a change of heart. But the One who is coming after me is mightier than I. I'm not good enough to carry away His shoes. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. "He has the winnowing shovel in His hand and will clean up His threshing floor. His wheat He'll gather into His barn, but the chaff He'll burn in a fire that can't be put out."

John Baptizes Jesus

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to

^bAccording to Is 11:1 the Savior would be a Nezer, a sprout, growing from the roots of the tree of David.

John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. "John tried to stop Him. "I need to be baptized by You," he said, "and You come to me?"

¹⁵"Let Me have My way now," Jesus answered him. "That is how we should fulfill all righteousness."

Then John gave in to Him. ¹⁶As soon as Jesus was baptized, He stepped out of the water, and now heaven was opened, and He saw God's Spirit coming down on Him as a dove. ¹⁷And a voice from heaven said, "This is *My Son*, whom I love and *delight in*."

The Devil Tempts Jesus

4 Then the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ²He didn't eat anything for forty days and forty nights and then got hungry.

³The tempter came to Him. "If You're God's Son," he said to Him, "tell these stones to become loaves of bread."

"It is written," Jesus answered, "A man doesn't live on bread alone but on every word that God speaks."

⁵Then the devil took Him into the Holy City and had Him stand on the edge of the temple. ⁶"If You're God's Son," he told Him, "jump down. It is written: *He will order His angels to help you. They will carry you in their hands and never let you stub your foot against a stone.*"

⁷"It is also written," Jesus answered him, "*Don't test the Lord your God.*"

⁸Then the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms in the world and their glory. ⁹"All this I'll give You," the devil told Him, "if You'll

bow down and worship me."

¹⁰Then Jesus answered him, "Go away, devil! It is written: *Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.*"

¹¹Then the devil left Him, and angels came and served Him.

At Home in Capernaum

¹²When Jesus heard John had been put in prison, He went back to Galilee. ¹³Leaving Nazareth, He went and made His home in Capernaum by the lake, in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali. ¹⁴And so what the prophet Isaiah said was to come true:

¹⁵*Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,*

the way to the sea, across the Jordan,

Galilee of the Gentiles!

¹⁶*The people sitting in the dark will see a great Light.*

For those sitting in the land of the shadow of death a Light will rise.

¹⁷Then Jesus began to preach: "Repent—the kingdom of heaven is here!"

"Come with Me"

¹⁸As He was walking along the shore of the Lake of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon, also called Peter, and his brother Andrew (who were fishermen), casting a net into the lake. ¹⁹"Come, follow Me," Jesus told them, "and I will make you fishers of men."²⁰Immediately they left their nets and followed Him.

²¹He went on and saw two other brothers, James, Zebedee's son, and his brother John. They were in their boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. He called them, ²²and immediately they left

Jordan River and near it, Jerusalem, January and February, 27

¹⁷ Ps 2:7,
16 42:1
4
4 Dt 8:3
5 Ps 91:11-12
7 Dt 6:16
10 Dt 6:13
16 19:1-2

the boat and their father and followed Him.

Preaching in Galilee

¹⁴Then He went around everywhere in Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the Kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and sickness among the people.

¹⁵The news about Him spread all over Syria. And the people brought to Him all who were suffering from various diseases and were in great pain, those who were plagued by devils, the epileptics, and the paralyzed, and He made them well. ¹⁶Large crowds followed Him from Galilee, the Ten-Towns, Jerusalem, Judea, and the other side of the Jordan.

5 When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up the hill. And when He sat down, His disciples came to Him. ²Then He began to teach them:

³"Blessed are those who are poor in spirit—
they have the kingdom of heaven.

⁴"Blessed are those who mourn—
they will be comforted.

⁵"Blessed are those who are gentle—
they will own the land.

⁶"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst to be righteous—
they will be satisfied.

⁷"Blessed are those who are merciful—
they will find mercy.

⁸"Blessed are those whose hearts are pure—
they will see God.

⁹"Blessed are those who make peace—
they will be called God's sons.

¹⁰"Blessed are those who are persecuted for doing right—

they have the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you, lie and tell only evil about you on account of Me. ¹²Rejoice and be glad because you have a great reward in heaven. That's how they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

A Salt and a Light

¹³"You are the salt of the world. If salt loses its taste, how will it be made salty again? It's no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled on by people.

¹⁴"You are the light of the world. A town can't be hid when it's built on a hill. ¹⁵And you don't light a lamp and put it under the peck measure but on the lampstand, where it gives light to everybody in the house. ¹⁶So let your light shine before people that they may see the good you do and praise your Father in heaven."

Jesus Keeps the Law

¹⁷"Don't think that I came to set aside the Law or the prophets. I didn't come to set them aside but to fulfill them. ¹⁸I tell you the truth, till heaven and earth pass away, not an *i* or the dot of an *i* of the Law will pass away till everything is done. ¹⁹Anyone, then, who sets aside one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. But anyone who does and teaches what they say will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰I tell you, unless your righteousness is much better than that of the Bible scholars and Pharisees, you will

5
2 In 57:15
4 In 51:2
5 Ps 37:11
7 2 Sm 22:26
Ps 10:25
8 Ps 24:4
51:10
73:1

Near Capernaum, early summer, 28

never get into the kingdom of heaven."

Don't Murder

²¹"You have heard that long ago the people were told: *'Don't murder.* Whoever murders must answer for it in court.'

²²"But I tell you, anyone who is angry with his brother must answer for it in court. Anyone who calls his brother an 'empty-head' must go before the highest court. Anyone who calls him a 'fool' must go into hellfire.

²³"So if you're bringing your gift to the altar and remember there that your brother has something against you, ²⁴leave your gift there before the altar and go. First make up with your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

²⁵"If someone wants to sue you, be quick to make up with him while you are still on the way with him, or your accuser will hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you will be put in prison. ²⁶I tell you the truth, you will never get out until you pay the last cent."

Don't Lust

²⁷"You have heard it was said: *'Don't commit adultery.'*

²⁸"But I tell you, anyone who looks at a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

²⁹"If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose a part of your body than to have all of it thrown into hell. ³⁰And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose a part of your body than to have all of it go to hell.

³¹"It was said: 'Anyone who divorces his wife *must give her a divorce paper.*' ³²But I tell you anyone who divorces his wife, except for her being sexually unfaithful, makes her a partner in adultery. And also the man who marries the divorced woman is living in adultery."

Don't Swear

³³"Again, you have heard that long ago the people were told *'Don't make false promises,*' and *'Give the Lord what you swear to give Him.'*

³⁴"But I tell you, don't swear at all, not by *heaven*— it is *God's throne*; ³⁵or by *the earth*—it is *His footstool*; or by *Jerusalem*—it is *the city of the great King.* ³⁶And don't swear by your head, because you can't make one hair white or black. ³⁷Just say, 'Yes, yes; no, no. Anything more comes from the evil one.'

Love Your Enemies

³⁸"You have heard it was said *'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.'*

³⁹"But I tell you, don't oppose an evil man. If anyone slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other cheek to him. ⁴⁰If anyone wants to sue you for your shirt, let him have your coat too. ⁴¹If anyone make you go one mile, go two miles with him. ⁴²If anyone asks you for anything, give it to him, and when anyone wants to borrow from you, don't turn away.

⁴³"You have heard it was said: *'Love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.'*

⁴⁴"But I tell you, Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you. ⁴⁵In this way you

²¹ Ex 20:12;
Dt 5:17
²⁷ Ex 20:14;
Dt 5:18
³¹ Dt 24:1
³³ Lv 19:12;
Nm 30:2;
Dt 23:21;
Ps 50:14
³⁴⁻³⁵ 1k 66:1
³⁵ Ps 48:2
³⁸ Ex 21:24;
Lv 24:20;
Dt 19:21
⁴³ Lv 19:18

Near Capernaum, early summer, 2nd

will show you are sons of your Father in heaven. He makes His sun rise on people whether they are bad or good and lets rain fall on them whether they do right or wrong.

⁴⁰“If you love those who love you, what’s your reward? Don’t tax collectors do that too? ⁴¹If you treat only your brothers kindly, are you doing anything extraordinary? Don’t the people of the world do that too? ⁴²*Be perfect* as your Father in heaven is perfect.”

Don't Blow Your Horn

6 “Be careful not to do your good works before people to be seen by them. If you do, your Father in heaven will not reward you. ²So when you give to the poor, don’t blow your horn, as hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets to be praised by people. I tell you, that’s really all the reward they’ll get. ³When you give to the poor, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your giving may be secret. Then your Father, who sees what is secret, will reward you.”

⁴⁰ Dt 18:13
⁴¹ Mt 23:5-7
⁴² Mt 5:48

How to Pray

⁵“When you pray, don’t be like hypocrites, who like to stand praying in synagogues and on street corners in order to be seen by people. I tell you, that’s really all the reward they’ll get. ⁶But when you pray, *go into your own room, shut your door, and pray* to your Father, who is with you when you’re alone, and your Father, who sees what is secret, will reward you.

⁷“When you pray, don’t say

meaningless words, like pagans, who think they’ll be heard if they talk a lot. ⁸“Don’t be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

⁹“This is how you should pray:

Our Father in heaven—

May Your name be kept holy,

¹⁰Your kingdom come,

And Your will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

¹¹Give us today our daily bread.

¹²And forgive us our sins as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

¹³And don’t bring us into temptation,

But deliver us from evil.^c

¹⁴“If you forgive the sins of others, your Father in heaven will forgive you. ¹⁵But if you don’t forgive the sins of others, your Father will not forgive your sins.”

Fasting

¹⁶“When you fast, don’t look sad like hypocrites. They disfigure their faces to show people they are fasting. I tell you, that’s really all the reward they’ll get. ¹⁷But when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face ¹⁸so that nobody will see you fasting except your Father, who is with you when you’re alone. And your Father, who sees what is secret, will reward you.”

Treasures

¹⁹“Don’t store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy them and thieves break in and steal.

²⁰But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where no moth or rust destroys them and

^cThe doxology is found in later manuscripts: “You are the King who rules with power and glory forever. Amen.”

no thieves break in and steal.

¹¹Where your treasure is, there your heart will be.

¹²"The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eye is healthy, you have light for your whole body. ¹³But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be dark. How dark it is when the light in you is dark!

¹⁴"Nobody can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other or be loyal to the one and despise the other. You can't serve God and money."

Don't Worry!

¹⁵"So I tell you, don't worry about what you'll eat or drink to keep alive or what you'll wear on your bodies. Isn't life more than food, and the body more than clothes?

¹⁶"Look at the birds in the air. They don't sow or cut grain or gather anything into barns; but your Father in heaven feeds them. Aren't you worth more than they?

¹⁷"Can any of you by worrying add anything to your life?

¹⁸"And why worry about clothes? See how the flowers grow in the field, and learn from them. They don't work and they don't spin.

¹⁹Yet, I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory didn't dress like one of these. ²⁰If that's how God dresses the grass in the field, which lives today and tomorrow is thrown into a stove, how much more certainly will He put clothes on you—you who trust Him so little?

²¹"Don't worry, then, and say, 'What are we going to eat?' or, 'What are we going to drink?' or, 'What are we going to wear?' ²²The people of the world run after all these things. Your Father in heaven knows you need them all. ²³Strive above all to live under God's rule and according

to His righteousness, and you'll get all these other things too.

²⁴"So, don't worry about tomorrow. Tomorrow will take care of itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Criticize Yourself

7 "Don't judge, so that you will not be judged. ²The way you judge others, you'll be judged, and the measure you measure with will be used for you.

³"Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye and don't notice the log in your own eye? ⁴Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you have that log in your own eye? ⁵You hypocrite, first throw the log out of your own eye. Then you'll see clearly enough to take the splinter out of your brother's eye."

Pearls to Pigs

⁶"Don't give anything holy to the dogs or throw your pearls to the pigs, or they'll trample them under their feet and then turn and tear you to pieces."

Pray

⁷"Ask, and it will be given to you. Search, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened for you. ⁸Anyone who asks receives; anyone who searches finds; and anyone who knocks, the door will be opened for him.

⁹"If your son asks you for bread, will any of you give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish; will you give him a snake? ¹¹Now if you, bad as you are, know enough to give your children good gifts, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask Him?"

Near Capernaum, early summer, 28

The Golden Rule

¹²“Do for others everything you want them to do for you. That is the Law and the prophets.”

The Narrow Gate

¹³“Go through the narrow gate. The gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are going that way. ¹⁴“But the gate is small, and the way is narrow, that leads to life, and only a few are finding it.”

False Prophets

¹⁵“Beware of false prophets. They come to you dressed like sheep, but in their hearts they’re greedy wolves.

¹⁶“You will know them by what they do. Can we pick grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?” ²² ^{Jer. 14:14} ^{27:15} ¹⁷“No, every good tree bears good fruit, and a bad tree bad fruit. ¹⁸“A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, or a bad tree good fruit. ¹⁹“Any tree that doesn’t bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰“So you will know them by what they do.

²¹“Not everyone who calls Me Lord, Lord, will get into the kingdom of heaven, only he who does what My Father in heaven wants. ²²“Many will say to Me on that Day, ‘Lord, Lord, didn’t we prophesy in Your name, drive out devils in Your name, and do many miracles in Your name?’ ²³“Then I will tell them frankly, ‘I never knew you. *Get away from Me, you who are so busy doing wrong.*’”

Build on a Rock

²⁴“Anyone who hears and does what I say is like a man who had the sense to build his house on a rock. ²⁵“The rain poured down, the

torrents came, the winds blew, and they dashed against that house. But it didn’t go down, because its foundation was on the rock.

²⁶“Everyone who hears what I say but doesn’t do it is like a man who was so foolish he built his house on sand. ²⁷“The rains poured down, the torrents came, the winds blew, and they dashed against that house. And it went down with a big crash.”

²⁸“When Jesus finished speaking, the crowds were amazed at His teaching. ²⁹“He taught them with authority and not like their Bible scholars.

8 He went down the hill, and large crowds followed Him.

Jesus Heals a Leper

⁷ ²² ^{Jer. 14:14} ^{27:15} ¹⁷ ²³ ^{Ps 6:8} ⁸ ⁴ ¹¹ ¹³ ⁷ ⁴⁹ ¹“There was a leper, who went to Him and bowed down to the ground before Him. “Lord, if You want to,” he said, “You can make me clean.”

²“Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him. “I want to,” He said. “Be clean!” Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was clean.

³“Be careful not to tell anyone,” Jesus said to him, “but go, *let the priest examine* you, and offer the sacrifice Moses ordered, to show them you’re well.”

A Believing Captain

⁴“He went to Capernaum. There a captain came to Him and begged Him: ⁵“Lord, my slave is lying paralyzed at home. He’s suffering terribly.”

⁶“I will go and make him well,” Jesus said.

⁷“Lord,” the captain answered, “I’m not good enough for you to come under my roof. But just say a word, and my slave will be made well. ⁸“I’m only a man who has to

Galilee, early in 28

obey others, but I have soldiers under me. I tell one of them, Go, and he goes. And another, Come, and he comes. And my slave, Do this, and he does it."

¹⁰Surprised to hear this, Jesus said to the people who were following Him. "I tell you the truth, not even in Israel have I found such faith. ¹¹I also tell you, many will come *from the east and the west* and will eat with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. ¹²but those who were born to be the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown out into the dark. There they will cry and grind their teeth."

¹³"Go," Jesus told the captain. "Let it be as you believed." And the slave was made well in that hour.

Peter's Mother-in-Law

¹⁴Jesus went into Peter's home, and there He saw his mother-in-law down in bed with a fever. ¹⁵He touched her hand, and the fever left her. She got up and waited on Him.

¹⁶In the evening the people brought Him many who were plagued by devils. He drove out the spirits by talking to them, and all who were sick He made well. ¹⁷In this way what the prophet Isaiah said was to come true: *He took away our sicknesses and carried our diseases.*

¹⁸When Jesus saw a crowd around Him, He gave orders to cross to the other side.

"I Will Follow You, but—"

¹⁹A man trained in the Bible came to Him and said, "Teacher, I will follow You anywhere You go."

²⁰"Foxes have holes," Jesus told him, "and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man doesn't have a place to lay His head."

²¹"Lord," another disciple said to Him, "first let me go and bury my father."

²²But Jesus told him, "Follow Me and let the dead bury their dead."

Wind and Water Obey Him

²³Jesus stepped into a boat, and His disciples went with Him. ²⁴Suddenly a big storm stirred the lake so that the waves were covering the boat. But He was sleeping.

²⁵So they went and woke Him up, "Lord, save us!" they said. "We're drowning!"

²⁶"Why are you afraid?" He asked them. "You trust Me so little!" Then He got up and ordered the winds and the lake to be quiet, and they became very calm.

²⁷The men were amazed and said, "What kind of man is He? Even the winds and the lake obey Him!"

The Gadarenes

²⁸He went to the country of the Gadarenes on the other side of the lake. There two men with devils in them came out of the burial places and met Him. They were so savage nobody could go along that road.

²⁹"Let us alone, Son of God!" they shouted. "Did You come here to torture us before it is time?"

³⁰Far away a herd of many hogs was feeding. ³¹"If You mean to drive us out," the devils were begging Jesus, "send us into that herd of hogs."

³²"Go," He told them. They came out and went into the hogs. Then the whole herd stampeded down the cliff into the lake and died in the water.

³³Those who had taken care of the hogs ran away and went into the town, where they told everything, especially about the men plagued by

Capernaum, summer, 27 Fall, 29

devils. "Then the whole town came out to meet Jesus. When they saw Him, they begged Him to leave their country.

9 He got into a boat and crossed over.

Jesus Forgives Sins

Jesus came to His own town. "These people brought Him a paralyzed man, lying on a bed.

When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic. "Courage, son! Your sins are forgiven."

"Then some of the Bible scholars said to themselves, "He's blaspheming."

"Jesus knew what they were thinking. "Why do you think evil in your hearts?" He asked them. "Is it easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? "I want you to know the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins." Then He said to the paralyzed man, "Get up, take your bed, and go home."

"He got up and went home. "When the crowd saw this, they were frightened, and they praised God for giving such power to men.

Matthew

"When Jesus left that place, He saw a man by the name of Matthew sitting in the tax office. "Follow Me." He told him. He got up and went with Him.

"As Jesus was lying down to eat at his home, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with Jesus and His disciples. "When the Pharisees saw this, they asked His disciples, "Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

"Jesus heard them and said, "Those who are healthy don't need a

doctor, but the sick. "Go and learn what this means: *I like mercy and not mere sacrifice.* I didn't come to call righteous people but sinners."

The Bridegroom

"Then John's disciples came to Jesus. "We and the Pharisees fast," they said. "Why don't Your disciples fast?"

"Jesus asked them, "Can the bridegroom's friends mourn while the bridegroom is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them; then they'll fast.

"⁹ "Nobody sews a piece of new cloth on an old garment. The patch will tear away some of the garment, and the hole will get worse. ¹³ "Nobody pours new wine into old wineskins. If you do, the skins burst, the wine runs out, and the skins are ruined. No, you pour new wine into fresh skins; then both are preserved."

The Daughter of Jairus

"While He was talking to the people, a leader came to Him and bowed down to the ground before Him. "My daughter just died," he said, "but come, lay Your hand on her, and she will live."

"Jesus and His disciples got up and followed him.

"Now there was a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years. She came to Him from behind and touched the tassel of His garment. "If I only touch His garment," she said to herself, "I'll get well."

"Jesus turned and saw her. "Cheer up, daughter," He said, "your faith made you well." After that the woman was well.

"When Jesus came to the leader's home, He saw the flute players and

Galilee, early in 28 Capernaum, fall, 28

the noisy crowd. ²⁴"Go away," He said. "The little girl isn't dead; she's sleeping." But they laughed at Him.

²⁵When the crowd had been put outside, He went in and took her hand, and the little girl got up.

²⁶The news about this spread all over that part of the country.

Two Blind Men

²⁷When Jesus left that place, two blind men followed Him and called, "Have pity on us, Son of David."

²⁸He went into a house, and there the blind men came to Him. "Do you believe I can do this?" Jesus asked them.

"Yes, Lord," they told Him.

²⁹Then He touched their eyes and said, "As you believed, so it must be done to you!" ³⁰Then they could see again.

"See that nobody finds out about this!" He sternly ordered them.

³¹But they went out and spread the news about Him all over that part of the country.

A Dumb Man

³²As they were going out, a dumb man with a devil in him was brought to Him. ³³But as soon as the devil was put out, the dumb man spoke.

The crowds were amazed and said, "We've never seen anything like this in Israel."

³⁴But the Pharisees declared, "The ruler of the devils helps Him drive out the devils."

Pray for Workers

³⁵Then Jesus traveled through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the Kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness.

³⁶As He saw the crowds, He felt sorry for them, because they were

troubled and helpless *like sheep without a shepherd*. ³⁷Then He said to His disciples, "There's much grain to be harvested, but there are only a few workers. ³⁸Ask the Owner of the crop to send out workers to bring in His grain."

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

10 Jesus called His twelve disciples and gave them authority to drive out unclean spirits and heal every disease and sickness.

²These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, called Peter, and his brother Andrew; James, Zebedee's son, and his brother John; ³Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew, the tax collector; James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Zealot, and Judas, the man from Kerioth, who betrayed Him.

⁵Jesus sent these twelve out with the following instructions: "Don't go among the Gentiles or into any town of the Samaritans. ⁶But go to the lost sheep of Israel. ⁷As you go, preach, 'The kingdom of heaven is here.' ⁸Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out devils. Give these things as you received them—without pay.

⁹"Don't take any gold, silver, or copper money along in your pockets, ¹⁰and no bag for the way. Don't take two tunics, or shoes, or a stick—a worker earns his keep.

¹¹"When you go into any town or village, look for a person there who is deserving, and stay with him till you leave. ¹²When you go into a home, greet it. ¹³If the home is deserving, let your peace come on it. But if it's unworthy, let your peace come back to you. ¹⁴If anyone doesn't welcome you or listen to what you say, leave that house or

³⁶ Num 27:17;
1 K 22:17;
Ec 34:5

Galilee, January to March, 29

town, and shake the dust off your feet. ¹⁴I tell you the truth, on Judgment Day it will be easier for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.

¹⁵“You see, I’m sending you like sheep among wolves. So be shrewd as snakes and innocent as doves. ¹⁶Be on your guard against men, because they’ll hand you over to their courts and whip you in their places of worship. ¹⁷On My account you’ll be dragged before governors and kings to testify to them and to the nations. ¹⁸But when they hand you over to the authorities, don’t worry how you’ll speak or what you’ll say. When the time comes, you’ll be told what to say. ¹⁹It isn’t you speaking but your Father’s Spirit speaking through you.

²⁰“A brother will betray his brother to death, and a father his child. Children will *turn against* their parents and kill them. ²¹“Everybody will hate you because of My name. But be faithful to the end, and you will be saved. ²²When they hunt you in one town, flee to another. Let Me assure you, before you have gone through all the towns of Israel, the Son of Man will come.

²³“A pupil isn’t above his teacher, or a slave above his master. ²⁴A pupil should be satisfied to share his teacher’s lot and a slave to share his master’s. If the master of the house was called Beelzebul, how much more certainly the members of his household! ²⁵“So, don’t be afraid of them.

²⁶“All that’s covered will be uncovered, and all that’s hidden will be known. ²⁷What I say to you in the dark, tell in the daylight; and what you hear whispered in your ear,

preach from the housetops. ²⁸“Don’t be afraid of those who kill the body and can’t kill the soul, but fear Him who can destroy soul and body in hell. ²⁹“Aren’t two sparrows sold for a cent? And not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father’s permission. ³⁰“As for you, even the hairs on your head are all counted. ³¹“So don’t be afraid. You’re worth more than many sparrows. ³²“Whoever will confess Me before other people, him will I confess before My Father in heaven. ³³“Whoever will deny Me before others, him will I deny before My Father in heaven.

³⁴“Don’t think that I came to bring peace to the earth. I didn’t come to bring peace but a sword. ³⁵I came to set a *man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.* ³⁶“A man’s enemies will be those in his own home. ³⁷“If you love father or mother more than Me, you’re not worthy of Me; and if you love son or daughter more than Me, you’re not worthy of Me. ³⁸“If you don’t take your cross and follow Me, you’re not worthy of Me. ³⁹“If you find your life, you’ll lose it, but if you lose your life for Me, you’ll find it.

⁴⁰“Anyone who welcomes you welcomes Me; and anyone who welcomes Me welcomes Him who sent Me. ⁴¹“Anyone who welcomes a prophet because he is a prophet will get a prophet’s reward. Anyone who welcomes a righteous man because he is righteous will get a righteous man’s reward. ⁴²“Anyone who will give one of these little ones just a cup of cold water because he is My disciple, I tell you, will certainly not lose his reward.”

Galilee, summer, 28

11 After Jesus finished giving His twelve disciples these instructions, He went on from there to teach and preach in their towns.

About John

¹When John, who was in prison, heard about the works of Christ, he sent his disciples ²to ask Him, “Are You the One who is coming, or should we look for someone else?”

“Go,” Jesus answered them, “tell John what you hear and see: ³*The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor hear the good news,* ⁴and happy is anyone who doesn’t turn against Me.”

⁵When they were leaving, Jesus talked to the crowds about John:

“What did you go out into the wilderness to see—a reed shaken by the wind? ⁶What, then, did you go out to see—a man dressed in soft robes? Those who wear soft robes you’ll find in the palaces of kings.

⁷“What, then, did you go out for—to see a prophet? Let Me assure you, he’s even more than a prophet. ⁸“This is the one of whom it is written: *‘I will send My messenger ahead of You to prepare Your way before You.’* ⁹“I tell you the truth, there never has appeared a woman’s son greater than John the Baptizer. Yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John. ¹⁰“From the time of John the Baptizer till now the kingdom of heaven has been suffering violence, and violent men are trying to take it by force. ¹¹“All the prophets and the Law prophesied up to the time of John, ¹²but he (are you willing to accept it?) is the Elijah who has to come. ¹³“If you can hear, listen!

¹⁴“How should I picture the people of this age? They’re like little

children sitting in the marketplace and calling to others: ¹⁵“We played a tune on the flute for you, but you didn’t dance. We sang a funera song, but you didn’t beat your breasts.’ ¹⁶“John the Baptizer ha: come; he doesn’t eat or drink, and people say, ‘There’s a devil in him!’ ¹⁷“The Son of Man has come He eats and drinks, and people say ‘Look at the glutton and drunkard the friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ And yet, wisdom is proved correct by her actions.”

Woe!

¹⁸Then he began to denounce the cities where He had done most o His miracles, because they had no repented: ¹⁹“Woe to you, Chorazin Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would long ago have repented in sackcloth and ashes. ²⁰“I tell you, on Judgment Day it will be easier for Tyre and Sidon than for you. ²¹“And you, Capernaum, will you be *lifted up to heaven You will go down to hell!* If the miracles that have been done in you had been done in Sodom, it would still be there today. ²²“I tell you, on Judgment Day it will be easier for the country of Sodom than for you.”

“Come to Me!”

²³At that time Jesus said, “I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for hiding these things from wise and intelligent people and uncovering them for little children ²⁴Yes, Father, I praise You for wanting it to be that way.

²⁵“My Father put everything in My hands. Only the Father knows the Son. And only the Son—and anyone to whom the Son wants to reveal Him—knows the Father.

Judea, October to December, 29

¹¹
5:14, 29:18.
25:5, 61:1
10: E+ 23:20
23:14, 14:12, 15

“Come to Me, all you who are working hard and carrying a heavy load, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke on you, and learn from Me—I am gentle and humble-minded—then you will find your rest. My yoke is easy, and My load is light.”

Lord of the Sabbath

12 At that time Jesus walked through the grainfields on a Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick the heads of grain and eat them.

When the Pharisees saw this, they said to Him, “Look, Your disciples are doing something they shouldn’t do on a day of rest.”

“Haven’t you read what David did,” Jesus asked them, “when he and his men got hungry—how he went into God’s house and ate the loaves laid before God, which he and his men had no right to eat, but only the priests? Or haven’t you read in the Law that the priests in the temple work on a Sabbath as on other days and yet do no wrong? I tell you, here is something greater than the temple. If you knew what this means: *I like mercy and not mere sacrifice*, you would not have condemned the innocent. The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.”

The Shriveled Hand

He went on to another place and went into their synagog, and there was a man with a shriveled hand.

“Is it right to heal on a Sabbath?” they asked Him. They wanted to accuse Him of something.

“If anyone of you has only one sheep,” Jesus asked them, “and it falls into a hole on a Sabbath, won’t you take hold of it and lift it

out? Now, isn’t a man much more valuable than a sheep? It is right, then, to do good on a day of rest!”

Then He told the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out and it was made healthy again like the other hand.

But the Pharisees left and plotted against Him to kill Him. Jesus knew about this, and so He left.

The Servant

Many followed Him, and He healed them all, but He ordered them not to tell people who He was. In this way what the prophet Isaiah said was to come true:

*“Here is My Servant whom I have chosen,
whom I love and delight in.
I will put My Spirit on Him,
and He will announce justice to
the nations.*

*He will not quarrel or shout.
Nor will anyone hear His voice in
the streets.*

*He will not crush a bruised reed
or put out a smoking wick
till He has made justice victorious.*

*And His name will be the hope of
the nations.*

Power over the Devil

At that time some people brought to Jesus a man who had a devil and was blind and couldn’t talk. Jesus healed him so that he could talk and see.

The people were all amazed. “Could this be the Son of David?” they asked. When the Pharisees heard about it, they said, “He can drive out the devils only with the help of Beelzebul, who rules over the devils.”

Knowing what they were thinking, Jesus said to them, “If one part of any kingdom fights another, it

*Judea, October to December, 29
Near Capernaum, spring, 28*

29 Jer 6:16
12
4 Lv 24:5-8
1 Sm 21:6
7 Mt 6:6
18:21; 15:41
8:9; 42:1-4
Hab 1:4

loses its people. And if one part of any town or home fights another, it will not stand. ²⁸If the devil drives out the devil, he's fighting against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? ²⁹Now if Beelzebul helps Me drive out the devils, who helps your sons drive them out? That's why they'll be your judges. ³⁰But if God's Spirit helps Me drive out the devils, then God's kingdom has come to you. ³¹How can anyone go into a strong man's house and take away his goods without first tying the strong man up? After that he'll rob his house.

³²'Anyone who's not with Me is against Me, and anyone who doesn't help Me gather scatters. ³³So I tell you, any sin or slander will be forgiven, but slandering the Spirit will not be forgiven. ³⁴Anyone who talks against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who talks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven in this world or the next.

³⁵'Either the tree is good, and then its fruit is good. Or the tree is bad, and then its fruit is bad. You can tell a tree by its fruit. ³⁶Brood of snakes, how can you who are so evil say anything good? What you say flows from your hearts. ³⁷A good man produces good things from the good stored in him, but an evil man produces evil from the evil stored in him. ³⁸But I tell you, on Judgment Day people will have to give an account of every useless word they say. ³⁹By your words you'll be acquitted, and by your words you'll be condemned."

The Sign of Jonah

⁴⁰Then some Bible scholars and Pharisees said, "Teacher, we want You to show us some wonderful proof."

⁴¹"The wicked and unfaithful people of today are looking for a proof," He answered them, "but the only proof they'll get is the prophet Jonah. ⁴²As *Jonah was in the belly of the big fish three days*, so the Son of Man will be in the bosom of the earth three days. ⁴³The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with these people and condemn them, because they repented when Jonah preached; now look. One greater than Jonah is here. ⁴⁴The queen from the south will rise up in the judgment with these people and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear Solomon's wisdom; now look. One greater than Solomon is here.

⁴⁵"When an unclean spirit comes out of a man, he goes through dry places looking for a place to rest but doesn't find any. ⁴⁶Then he says, 'I'll go back to the home I left.' He comes and finds it empty, swept, and decorated. ⁴⁷Then he goes and takes home with him seven other spirits worse than himself, and they go in and live there. In the end that man is worse than he was before. That's what will happen to the wicked people of today."

The Mother and Brothers of Jesus

⁴⁸He was still talking to the people when His mother and brothers were standing outside wanting to talk to Him. ⁴⁹"Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside," somebody told Him, "and want to talk to You."

⁵⁰"Who is My mother," He asked the man that told Him, "and who are My brothers?" ⁵¹Pointing with His hand to His disciples, He said, "These are My mother and My brothers. ⁵²If you do what My

Galilee, summer, 28

Father in heaven wants, you are My brother and sister and mother."

The Sower

13 That same day Jesus left the house and sat down by the lake. ²But so many people gathered around Him that He stepped into a boat and sat there while all the people stood on the shore. ³Then He told them many things in parables.

"A sower went out to sow," He said. "As he was sowing, some seed fell along the road, and the birds came and ate it. ⁵Some seed fell on rocky ground, where it didn't have much soil. Because the soil wasn't deep, the seed came up quickly. ⁶When the sun rose, it was scorched, and because it had not taken root, it withered. ⁷Some seed fell on thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it. ⁸But some seed fell on good ground and produced grain, some a hundred, some sixty, and some thirty times as much as was sown. ⁹You have ears to hear; then listen."

"The disciples came to Him. "Why are You talking to them in parables?" they asked Him.

"You are given the privilege to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven," He answered, "but it isn't given to the others. ¹²If you have something, you'll be given more, and so you'll get more and more. But if you don't have what you should have, even what you have will be taken away from you. ¹³I talk to them in parables because they see and yet don't see, and hear and yet don't hear or understand. ¹⁴In them more and more Isaiah's prophecy is coming true:

You will hear but never understand;

you will look but never see.

¹⁵*These people have become dull at heart and hard of hearing and have shut their eyes, so that their eyes will never see, their ears never hear, or their hearts understand, and they will never turn to Me and let Me heal them.*

¹⁶"Blessed are your eyes because they see and your ears because they hear. ¹⁷Let Me assure you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see and didn't see it, to hear what you hear and didn't hear it.

¹⁸"Listen to what the parable of the sower means. ¹⁹When anyone hears the message of the Kingdom but doesn't understand it, the evil one comes and takes away what was sown in his heart. That is what was sown along the road. ²⁰In another the seed falls on rocky ground. He's one who welcomes the Word with joy as soon as he hears it, ²¹but it doesn't take root in him. He believes for a while, but as soon as the Word brings him trouble or persecution, he falls away. ²²In another the seed is sown among thorns. He's one who hears the Word, but the worry of the world and the deceitful pleasure of riches choke the Word, and it can't produce anything. ²³But in another the seed is sown on good ground. He's one who continues to hear and understand the Word and so goes on producing good things, one a hundred, another sixty, and another thirty times as much as was sown."

Weeds in the Wheat

²⁴Jesus pictured it to them another way: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵But while people were

By the Lake of Galilee, fall, 28

^{14 15 16 6}
⁹⁻¹⁰

sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. ²⁶When the wheat came up and formed kernels, then the weeds showed up too.

²⁷"The owner's slaves came to him and asked him, 'Master, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where did the weeds come from?'

²⁸"'An enemy did that,' he told them.

"'Do you want us to go and pull them out?' the slaves asked him.

²⁹"'No,' he said, 'if you pull out the weeds, you may pull up the wheat with them. ³⁰Let both grow together till the harvest. When the grain is cut, I will tell the reapers, 'Gather the weeds first, and tie them in bundles to be burned, but bring the wheat into my barn.'"

³² Ps 104:12
Ez 17:23
31:6
³⁵ Ps 78:2
⁴¹ Zph 1:3
Jb 12:16
⁴³ Dn 12:3

A Mustard Seed and Yeast

³¹He pictured it to them another way: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed a man took and sowed in his field. ³²It's the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown, it's the largest of the garden plants; it becomes a tree big enough for the *birds* to come and *nest in its branches*."

³³He pictured it to them another way: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast a woman took and mixed into a bushel of flour till it was all fermented."

³⁴Jesus used parables to tell the crowds all these things. He wouldn't tell them anything without a parable, ³⁵so that what the prophet said would come true:

I will open My mouth to speak in parables,

I will tell what has been hidden since the world was made.

The Meaning of the Weeds in the Wheat

³⁶When Jesus had dismissed the people and gone into the house, His disciples came to Him and said, "Tell us what the parable of the weeds in the field means."

³⁷"The sower who sows the good seed," He answered, "is the Son of Man. ³⁸The field is the world. The good seed are the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one. ³⁹The enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the world. The reapers are the angels. ⁴⁰As the weeds are gathered and burned, so it will be at the end of the world. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send His angels, and they will take out of His kingdom *those who do wrong and all who lead others to do wrong*, ⁴²and will throw them into the fiery furnace, where they will cry and grind their teeth. ⁴³Then *the righteous will shine like the sun in their Father's kingdom*. If you have ears, listen!"

The Treasure, the Pearl, and the Fish

⁴⁴"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field. When a man found it, he buried it again and was so delighted with it he went and sold everything he had and bought that field.

⁴⁵"Here's another picture of the kingdom of heaven: A dealer was looking for fine pearls. ⁴⁶When he found a very expensive pearl, he went and sold everything he had and bought it.

⁴⁷"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake, and it gathered all kinds of fish. ⁴⁸When it was full they pulled it on the shore, sat down, and picked

By the Lake of Galilee, fall, 28

out the good fish and put them in containers but threw the bad ones away. "So it will be at the end of the world. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where they will cry and grind their teeth.

"Did you understand all this?"

"Yes," they answered.

"And so every Bible student trained for the kingdom of heaven," He told them, "is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new things and old."

"When Jesus had finished these parables, He left that place.

His Last Visit to Nazareth

"He went to His hometown and taught the people in their synagog in such a way they were amazed. "Where did He get this wisdom and the power to do these miracles?" they asked. "Isn't He the carpenter's son? Isn't His mother's name Mary, and aren't James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas His brothers? "And aren't all His sisters here with us? Where did He get all this?" So they turned against Him.

"A prophet is without honor only in his hometown and in his family," Jesus told them. "Their unbelief kept Him from doing many great works there.

Herod Kills John

14 At that time Herod, the governor, heard the news about Jesus. "This is John the Baptizer!" he told his servants. "He's risen from the dead, and that's why these powers are working in Him."

"Herod had arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison on account of Herodias, the wife of his

brother Philip. "because John was telling him, "It isn't right for you to have her." Herod wanted to kill him but was afraid of the people because they considered John a prophet.

"When Herod's birthday was celebrated, the daughter of Herodias danced before the guests. Herod was so delighted with her he swore to give her anything she might ask for.

"Urged on by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptizer."

"Then the king felt sorry. But he had sworn to do it, and there were the guests—so he ordered it given to her. "He sent and had John's head cut off in prison. "And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, who took it to her mother.

"John's disciples came and took his body away and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus.

Jesus Feeds Five Thousand

"When Jesus heard about John, He left in a boat and went to a deserted place to be alone. The people heard of it and followed Him on foot from the towns. "When Jesus stepped out of the boat, He saw a big crowd. He felt sorry for them and healed their sick.

"In the evening the disciples came to Him. "This is a deserted place," they said, "and it's late. Send the crowds away to the villages to buy themselves some food."

"They don't need to go away," Jesus answered them. "You give them something to eat."

"All we have here is five loaves and two fish," they told Him.

"Let Me have them," He said.

"He ordered the people to sit down on the grass. Then taking the five loaves and the two fish and

*Galilee, east of Jordan,
Bethsaida-Julias, January to April 29*

looking up to heaven. He blessed them. Breaking the loaves, He gave them to the disciples, and they gave them to the people. "All of them ate and had a hearty meal. They picked up the pieces that were left—twelve baskets full.

"Some five thousand men had eaten, not counting women and children.

Jesus Walks on Water

"Jesus quickly made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side while He dismissed the people. "After sending them away, He went up the hill to be alone and pray. When it got late, He was there alone.

"The boat, now many hundred yards from the shore, was troubled by the waves because the wind was against them.

"Toward morning He came to them, walking on the lake. "When the disciples saw Him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and they cried out in terror.

"Immediately He talked to them. "Have courage," He said. "It is I. Don't be afraid."

"Lord, if it's You," Peter answered Him. "order me to come to You on the water."

"Come," He said. So Peter got out of the boat, walked on the water, and went toward Jesus. "But when he saw the wind, he was frightened and started to sink. "Lord, save me!" he cried.

"Quickly Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him. "How little you trust Me!" He said to him. "Why did you doubt?"

"When they stepped into the boat, the wind stopped. "And the men in the boat bowed down before Him

and said, "You certainly are God's Son."

"They crossed over and came to the shore at Gennesaret. "The men of that place recognized Jesus and sent messengers all around that country, and the people brought Him all the sick ones, "and they begged Him just to let them touch the tassel of His garment. All who touched it were made well.

Unclean Hands

15 Then some Pharisees and Bible scholars came to Him from Jerusalem. "Why do Your disciples sin against the rules handed down by our fathers?" they asked. "They don't wash their hands when they eat."

"Why do you sin against God's commandment for the sake of your own rules?" He asked them. "For example, God has said: *Honor father and mother*, and: *Anyone who curses father or mother must die*. 'But you say, 'Whoever tells his father or mother, "I'm giving God anything by which I might help you," doesn't have to honor his father.' "For the sake of your rules you have set aside what God has said. "Hypocrites, Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: *"These people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from Me. "They worship Me in vain, teaching for doctrines rules which are only human."*

"Then He called the people and told them: "Listen to Me and understand this: "What comes into his mouth doesn't make a person unclean, but what goes out of his mouth makes him unclean."

"Then the disciples came to Him. "Do you know the Pharisees were

15
4 Ex 20 12
21 17
Lv 20 9
Dt 5 16
8 9 15 29 13

offended when they heard You say that?" they asked Him.

¹¹"Any plant My Father in heaven didn't plant," He answered, "will be torn out by the roots. ¹²"Let them go; they are blind leaders. When one blind man leads another, both will fall into a ditch."

¹³"Tell us what You mean by this illustration," Peter said to Him.

¹⁴"Are you still as dull as the others?" He asked. ¹⁵"Don't you know that everything that goes into the mouth goes into the stomach and so passes away? ¹⁶But what goes out of the mouth comes from the heart, and that makes a person unclean. ¹⁷Yes, out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual sins, stealing, lies, slanders. ¹⁸These are the things that make a person unclean. But eating without washing your hands doesn't make you unclean."

A Non-Jewish Woman

²¹Leaving that place, Jesus went away to the neighborhood of Tyre and Sidon.

²²There was a Canaanite woman of that territory who came out and called, "Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David! A devil is making my daughter miserable."

²³But He didn't answer her a word. Then His disciples came to Him and urged Him, "Send her away. She's yelling after us."

²⁴"I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel," He answered.

²⁵She came and bowed down before Him. "Lord, help me!" she said.

²⁶"It isn't good," He answered, "to take the children's bread and throw it to the puppies."

²⁷"You're right, Lord," she said, "but even the puppies eat some of

the crumbs that drop from their masters' table."

²⁸Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, you have a great faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." At that moment her daughter was made well.

²⁹Jesus left that place and went along the shore of the Lake of Galilee. Then He went up a hill and sat there.

³⁰Many people came to Him, bringing the lame, blind, crippled, deaf, and many others and laid them at His feet. He made them well, ³¹so that the people were surprised to find that the dumb talked, the cripples had sound limbs, the lame walked around, and the blind could see. And they praised the God of Israel.

Jesus Feeds Four Thousand

³²Jesus called His disciples. "I feel sorry for the people," He said. "They've been with Me three days now and have nothing to eat. I don't want to let them go without eating; they may get exhausted on the way."

³³"Where could we get enough bread in a wilderness to feed such a crowd?" His disciples asked Him.

³⁴"How many loaves do you have?" Jesus asked them.

"Seven," they said, "and a few small fish."

³⁵He ordered the people to sit down on the ground. ³⁶Then He took the seven loaves and the fish, gave thanks, broke them, and gave them to the disciples, and they gave them to the people.

³⁷All of them ate and had enough. They picked up the pieces that were left—seven baskets full. ³⁸Four thousand men had eaten, not counting women and children.

³⁹Then He dismissed the people.

Near Tyre and Sidon and east of the Lake of Galilee, spring and summer, 29

A Proof from Heaven

He stepped into the boat and came into the neighborhood of Magadan.

16 The Pharisees and Sadducees came and, to test Him, asked Him to show them some wonderful proof from heaven.

“He answered them, “In the evening you say, ‘The weather will be fine, because the sky is red.’ ‘And in the morning: ‘There will be a storm today, because the sky is red and gloomy.’ You know how to judge the appearance of the sky correctly but can’t judge the signs of the times.”^d

“The wicked and unfaithful people of today demand a proof, and the only proof they’ll get is that of Jonah.”

Then He left them and went away.

The Yeast of the Pharisees

⁵When the disciples started out for the other side, they forgot to take bread.

⁶Jesus said to them, “Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!”

⁷As they were arguing about this, they mentioned, “We didn’t take any bread.”

⁸Aware of what was going on, Jesus asked, “Why are you arguing about not having any bread? You have so little faith! ⁹Don’t you understand yet, and don’t you remember the five loaves for the five thousand and how many baskets full you picked up? ¹⁰Or the seven loaves for the four thousand and how many baskets full you picked up? ¹¹Why don’t you see I wasn’t talking to you about bread? But

beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!”

¹²Then they understood He didn’t warn them against the yeast in bread but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

“You Are the Son of God”

¹³When Jesus came to the neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi. He asked His disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”

¹⁴“Some say John the Baptizer,” they answered, “others Elijah, still others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.”

¹⁵“Who do you say I am?” He asked them.

¹⁶“You are the promised Christ,” Simon Peter answered, “the Son of the living God!”

¹⁷“Blessed are you, Simon, son of John,” Jesus answered him, “because no flesh and blood, but My Father in heaven has revealed this to you. ¹⁸I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church, and the forces of hell will not overpower it. ¹⁹I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Anything you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and anything you free on earth will be freed in heaven.”

²⁰Then He warned the disciples not to tell anyone that He was the promised Savior.

“I Will Die and Rise Again”

²¹After this, Jesus Christ kept pointing out to His disciples He had to go to Jerusalem, suffer much from the elders, ruling priests, and Bible scholars, be killed, and then on the third day rise.

²²But Peter took Him aside and

^dJesus’ words in vv 2–3 are lacking in some of our oldest manuscripts.

started to correct Him, "God be merciful to You, Lord! This must never happen to You!"

²⁷Turning, He said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You're tempting Me to sin, because you're not thinking what God thinks but what men think."

Take the Cross

²⁸Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If you want to follow Me, deny yourself, take up your cross, and come with Me. ²⁹If you want to save your soul, you will lose it. But if you will lose your soul for Me, you will find it. ³⁰What good will it do you to win the whole world and lose your soul? Or what would you give to buy back your soul? ³¹The Son of Man is going to come with His angels in His Father's glory, and then *He will give each one according to what he has done.* ³²Let Me assure you, there are some standing here who will never taste death till they see the Son of Man coming to rule as King."

Jesus Shows His Glory

17 After six days Jesus took with Him Peter, James, and John, the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain to be alone with them.

¹He was transfigured before them, His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as light. ²And there Moses and Elijah appeared to them and were talking with Him.

³"Lord," Peter said to Jesus, "it's good for us to be here. If You wish, I'll put up three shelters here, one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

⁴He was still speaking when a bright cloud suddenly overshadowed

them, and a voice came out of the cloud: "This is My Son whom I love and delight in. Listen to Him!"

⁵When the disciples heard this, they fell down with their faces on the ground; they were terrified. ⁶But Jesus came and touched them. "Get up," He said, "and don't be afraid." ⁷They looked up and saw no one but Jesus.

⁸On their way down the mountain Jesus ordered them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen till the Son of Man has risen from the dead."

⁹So the disciples asked Him, "Why, then, do those who know the Bible say, 'First Elijah has to come'?"

¹⁰"Elijah does come," He answered, "and *must put everything in order again.* ¹¹But I tell you Elijah has already come, and people didn't know him but treated him as they pleased. In the same way they're going to make the Son of Man suffer."

¹²Then the disciples understood He was talking about John the Baptist.

The Epileptic Boy

¹When they came to the people, a man came to Jesus and knelt before Him. ²"Lord," he said, "have pity on my son. He's epileptic and very sick. Often he falls into fire or into water. ³I brought him to Your disciples, but they couldn't make him well."

⁴"O you unbelieving and perverted people!" Jesus answered. "How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring him here to Me."

⁵Jesus talked sharply to the devil, and he came out of the boy, and after that the boy was well.

Philip's Caesarea, summer, 29

¹⁵
²⁷ Ps 62:12
¹⁷
⁵ Ps 2:7
¹⁵ 42:1
¹¹ Mt 4:5-6
¹⁷

"Afterwards, when Jesus was alone, the disciples came to Him. "Why couldn't we drive out the spirit?" they asked.

"You have so little faith," He told them. "I tell you the truth, if you have faith no bigger than a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Then you can do anything."^e

"I Will Die and Rise Again"

"While they were getting together as a group in Galilee, Jesus told them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, but on the third day He will rise." Then they felt very sad.

A Coin in a Fish's Mouth

"When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the temple tax came to Peter. "Doesn't your Teacher pay the temple tax?" they asked.

"Certainly," he answered.

Peter went into the house, but before he could speak, Jesus asked him, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the world collect toll or tax—from their children or from other people?"

"From other people," he answered.

"Then the children are free," Jesus told him. "But we don't want to give them a reason to think wrong of us. So go to the lake and throw in a hook. Take the first fish that comes up, open its mouth, and you will find a coin. Take that and give it to them for Me and you."

^eOur two oldest manuscripts lack v. 21: "This kind goes out only by prayer and fasting." See Mark 9:29.

^fOur two oldest manuscripts lack v. 11: "The Son of man came to save the lost." See Luke 19:10.

Who Is the Greatest?

18 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is really the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

"He called a little child and had him stand in front of them. "I tell you the truth," He said to them, "if you don't change and become like little children, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven. "If you become humble like this little child, you are the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. "And if you welcome a child like this in My name, you welcome Me."

Do I Lead Others to Sin?

"If anyone leads into sin one of these little ones who believe in Me, it would be better for him to have a big millstone hung around his neck and be drowned in the lake where it's deep. "Woe to the world because it tempts people to sin! Temptations to sin must come, but woe to that man who tempts others to sin!

"If your hand or your foot makes you sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to go into life without one hand or one foot than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into the everlasting fire. "If your eye makes you sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to go into life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hellfire.

"Be careful not to despise one of these little ones. I tell you their angels in heaven always see the face of My Father in heaven.^f

Galilee, late summer, 29

¹⁷“What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them gets lost, will he not leave the ninety-nine in the hills and go and look for the sheep that’s wandering away? ¹⁸“And if he finds it, I tell you he’s certainly more delighted with it than with the ninety-nine that didn’t get lost. ¹⁹“So your Father in heaven doesn’t want one of these little ones to be lost.”

Tell Him His Fault

²⁰“If your brother sins against you, go, and when you’re alone with him, show him how he is wrong. If he listens to you, you have won your brother. ²¹“But if he won’t listen, take one or two with you so that *you have two or three witnesses for everything*. ²²“If he won’t listen to them, tell it to the church. But if he won’t even listen to the church, treat him like a pagan and a tax collector. ²³“I tell you the truth, whatever you don’t forgive on earth will not be forgiven in heaven, and whatever you forgive on earth will be forgiven in heaven.

²⁴“Again I tell you, if two of you here on earth agree to ask for anything, My Father in heaven will certainly do it for you. ²⁵“Where two or three have come together to be with Me, there I am among them.”

Forgive!

²⁶Then Peter came to Jesus and asked Him, “Lord, how often do I have to forgive my brother who sins against me? Seven times?”

²⁷“I tell you,” Jesus answered him, “not seven times but seventy times seven times.

²⁸“That is why the kingdom of

heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his slaves.

²⁹“When he began to do so, there was brought to him one who owed him ten thousand talents.^a ³⁰“But he couldn’t pay it, and so the master ordered him, his wife, his children, and all he had to be sold to pay the debt.³¹“Then the slave got down on his knees and, bowing low before him, begged: ‘Be patient with me, and I’ll pay you everything.’

³²“The master felt sorry for his slave, freed him, and canceled his debt. ³³“But when that slave went away, he found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii.^b He grabbed him and started to choke him. ‘Pay what you owe,’ he said.

³⁴“Then his fellow slave got down on his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I’ll pay you.’ ³⁵“But he refused and went and put him in prison till he would pay what he owed.

³⁶“When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they felt very sad and went and told their master the whole story.

³⁷“Then his master sent for him. ‘You wicked slave!’ he said to him. ‘I canceled all you owed me, because you begged me. ³⁸“Shouldn’t you also have treated your fellow slave as mercifully as I treated you?’

³⁹“His master was so angry he handed him over to the torturers till he would pay all he owed him.

⁴⁰“That is what My Father in heaven will do to you if each of you will not heartily forgive his brother.”

^aOne talent of silver weighed about as much as 1,500 silver dollars.

^bOne denarius was a day’s pay.

Husband and Wife

19 When Jesus finished saying this, He left Galilee and went to the part of Judea on the other side of the Jordan. ²Large crowds followed Him, and He made them well there.

³Some Pharisees, coming to Him to test Him, asked Him, "Is it right for a man to divorce his wife for any reason?"

"Haven't you read," He asked them, "He who created them from the beginning *made them a male and a female?*" ⁵And He added: "*That is why a man will leave his father and mother and live with his wife, and the two will be one flesh.*" ⁶And so they are no more two but one flesh. Now, what God has joined together man must not separate."

⁷"Why, then, did Moses order a man to *make out a divorce paper and divorce his wife?*" they asked Him.

He answered them, "Because your minds are closed, Moses let you divorce your wives, but originally there was no such thing. ⁹I tell you, if anyone divorces his wife, except for adultery, and marries another, he's living in adultery."

¹⁰"If a man has to have such grounds in dealing with his wife," the disciples told Him, "it's better not to marry."

"Not all can do this," He told them, "only those to whom it has been given. ¹²Some can't marry because they were born that way. Others, because they have been mutilated by men. And still others have decided to do without marriage for the kingdom of heaven. If anyone can do it, let him do it."

Jesus Loves Children

¹³"Then some people brought little children to Jesus to have Him lay His hands on them and pray. But the disciples sternly told them not to do it.

"Let the little children come to Me," Jesus said, "and don't keep them away. The kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." ¹⁵He laid His hands on them and then went away.

The Rich Young Leader

¹⁶"There was one who came and asked Him, "Teacher, what good thing should I do to get everlasting life?"

"Why do you ask Me about something good? Only One is good. If you want to go into life, keep the commandments."

"Which commandments?" he asked Him.

Jesus said, "Do not murder. Do not commit adultery. Do not steal. Do not lie. ¹⁸Honor father and mother, and Love your neighbor like yourself."

"I've kept all these," the young man told Him. "What else do I need?"

"If you want to be perfect," Jesus told him, "go, sell what you have, give the money to the poor, and you'll have a treasure in heaven. Then come and follow Me."

²¹When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he was very rich.

"I tell you the truth," Jesus said to His disciples, "it is hard for a rich man to get into the kingdom of heaven. ²³Again I tell you it's easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to get into God's kingdom."

²⁴The disciples, hearing this, were

19
4 Gn 1:27
5:2
5 Gn 2:24
7 Dt 24:1
10 19 Ex 20
12:16 Dt
5:16-20
19 Lv 19:16

Perea, before the Passover, 30

dumfounded. "Who, then, can be saved?" they asked.

²⁶"Men can't do this," Jesus said as He looked at them, "but *God can do anything.*"

²⁷Then Peter spoke up: "Look! We gave up everything and followed You. So what will we get?"

²⁸"Let Me assure you," Jesus said to them, "in the new life, when the Son of Man sits on His throne of glory, you who followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones and rule the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹And everyone who gave up homes, brothers or sisters, father, mother, or children, or fields for Me will get many times as much, and then everlasting life. ³⁰But many who are first will be last, and many who are last will be first."

"The Last Will Be First"

20 "The kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a place who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard. ²He agreed with the workers to pay them a denarius a day and sent them into his vineyard. ³About nine o'clock he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. "You go into the vineyard too," he told them, "and I'll pay you what's right." So they went.

⁵"He went out again about twelve o'clock and three o'clock and did the same thing. ⁶About five o'clock he went out and found some others standing around. "Why are you standing here all day long doing nothing?" he asked them.

⁷"Nobody has hired us," they answered him.

"You go into the vineyard too," he told them.

⁸"When evening came, the owner of the vineyard told his manager,

"Call the men and give them their pay. Start with the last and go on to the first."

⁹"Those who started working around five o'clock came, and each got a denarius. ¹⁰When the first ones came, they expected to get more, but each of them, too, got a denarius. ¹¹They took it, but they grumbled against the owner: ¹²"These last men worked only one hour, and you've treated them exactly like us who have worked hard all day in the blazing sun."

¹³"Friend, I'm doing you no wrong," he answered one of them. "You agreed with me on a denarius, didn't you? ¹⁴Take your money and go. I want to give this last man as much as I give you. ¹⁵Don't I have the right to do as I please with what is Mine? Or are you jealous because I'm generous?"

¹⁶"In this way the last will be first and the first last."

The Cup of Suffering

¹⁷When Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, He took the twelve by themselves and said to them on the way: ¹⁸"Look, we're going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the ruling priests and Bible experts, who will condemn Him to die ¹⁹and hand Him over to the Gentiles to be mocked, scourged, and crucified, but on the third day He will rise."

²⁰Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and bowed before Him to ask Him for something.

²¹"What do you want?" He asked her.

She told Him, "Promise that one of my two sons will sit at Your right and the other at Your left in Your kingdom."

*Perea, Jericho, before the Passover,
30*

²⁶ Gn 18:14;
Jb 42:2;
Zch 8:6

24 "You don't know what you're asking," Jesus answered. "Can you drink the cup I'm going to drink?"

"We can," they told Him.

25 "You'll drink My cup." He told them. "But sitting at My right and left is something I can give only to those for whom My Father prepared it."

26 "When the other ten heard about it, they got angry with James and John. 27 Jesus called them and said: "You know the rulers of the nations are lords over them, and their great men are tyrants over them. 28 But among you it's different. Anyone who wants to become great among you must be your servant, 29 and anyone who wants to be first among you must be your slave, 30 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and give His life as a ransom for all people."

Two Blind Men

31 As they were leaving Jericho, a large crowd followed Him. 32 And there were two blind men sitting by the road. When they heard, "Jesus is passing by," they called, "Lord, have pity on us, Son of David!"

33 The crowd urged them to be quiet. But they called all the louder, "Lord, have pity on us; Son of David!"

34 Jesus stopped and called them. "What do you want Me to do for you?" He asked.

35 "Lord, we want to see," they told Him.

36 Jesus felt sorry for them and touched their eyes, and immediately they could see. And they followed Him.

The King Comes to Jerusalem

21 When they came near Jerusalem and had reached Beth-

phage and the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples. 22 "Go into the village ahead of you." He told them, "and without any trouble you'll find a donkey tied up and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to Me. 'If anybody says anything to you, say, 'The Lord needs them,' and immediately he will send them.'"

"This happened so that what the prophet said would come true:

³*Tell the daughter of Zion,*

⁴*"Look! Your King is coming to you,*

gentle, riding on a donkey and on a colt of a donkey."

"The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. 37 They brought the donkey and the colt and laid their garments on them; and Jesus sat on them. 38 Most of the people spread their garments on the road. Others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 39 The people who went ahead of Him and followed Him were shouting:

"Our Savior, the Son of David!

Blessed is He who is coming in the Lord's name!

Our Savior—in the highest heavens!"

"When He came into Jerusalem, the whole city was excited, asking, "Who is this?"

"The crowds answered, "This is the Prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

Cleansing the Temple

40 Jesus went into the temple and put out all who were selling and buying in the temple and upset the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those who sold pigeons. 41 "It is written," He told them, "My house should be called a house of

21
5 14 42 11
Zch 9:9
9 Ps 118
25-26
13 14 56 7
Joh 7:11

*Palm Sunday and Monday, April
2—3, A.D. 30*

prayer, but you're making it a *den of robbers!*"

¹⁴Blind and lame persons came to Him in the temple, and He made them well.

¹⁵When the ruling priests and the Bible experts saw the wonderful things He did, and the children shouting in the temple, "*Our Savior, the Son of David!*" they didn't like it at all. ¹⁶"Do You hear what they're saying?" they asked Him.

"Yes," Jesus answered them. "Haven't you ever read: *You have made children and babies at the breast praise You?*"

¹⁷He left them and went out of the city to Bethany and spent the night there.

Nothing but Leaves

¹⁸In the morning as He went back to the city, Jesus was hungry. ¹⁹and seeing a fig tree by the road, He went up to it and found nothing on it but leaves. "May no fruit ever grow on you again!" Jesus said to it. And immediately the fig tree dried up.

²⁰The disciples were surprised to see this. "How did the fig tree dry up so quickly?" they asked.

²¹"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered them, "if you believe and don't doubt, you will not only do what I did to the fig tree, but if you will say to this mount, ⁱ'Be lifted up and be thrown into the sea,' ⁱit will be done. ²²Anything you ask for in prayer, believe, and you will get it."

From Heaven

²³When He came to the temple and was teaching, the ruling priests and the elders of the people came to Him. "By what authority are you

doing these things?" they asked. "And who gave You the right to do them?"

²⁴Jesus answered them, "I will ask you a question. And if you answer Me, I'll tell you by what authority I'm doing these things. ²⁵John's baptism—was it from heaven or from men?"

They argued among themselves, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will ask us, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' ²⁶But if we say, 'From men,' we're afraid of the people; they all think John is a prophet." ²⁷So they answered Jesus, "We don't know."

Then Jesus also told them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I'm doing these things."

Say and Do

²⁸"Now, what do you think of this? A man had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.'

²⁹"'I won't,' he answered. Later he changed his mind and went.

³⁰"The father went to the other one and told him the same thing. He answered, 'I will, sir,' but didn't go.

³¹"Which of the two did what the father wanted?"

They answered, "The first."

Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, tax collectors and prostitutes are going into God's kingdom ahead of you. ³²John came to you in a righteous way, but you didn't believe him; the tax collectors and prostitutes believed him. But even when you had seen that, you didn't change your minds and believe him."

ⁱThe Mount of Olives

ⁱThe Dead Sea, which can be seen from the Mount of Olives.

God's Vineyard

³³“Listen to another parable:

“A man who owned property *planted a vineyard*. He *put a wall around it, cut a winepress into the rock, and built a watchtower*. Then he rented it out to workers and left home.

³⁴“When the grapes were getting ripe, he sent his servants to the workers to get his share of the grapes. ³⁵The workers took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. ³⁶Then he sent other servants, this time a larger number, and they treated these the same way.

³⁷“Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’

³⁸“When the workers saw the son, they said to one another, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him and get his inheritance.’ ³⁹So they took him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.

⁴⁰“Now, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those workers?”

“He was told, “He will have those scoundrels die a miserable death and rent out the vineyard to other workers who will bring him the grapes when they’re ripe.”

⁴²Jesus asked them, “Haven’t you ever read in your Bible: *The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. The Lord has done it, and we think it is wonderful?*

⁴³“That is why I tell you, God’s kingdom will be taken away from you and be given to a people who will do its works. ⁴⁴“Anyone who falls on that Stone will be dashed in pieces, and if it falls on anyone, it will scatter him like dust.”

⁴⁵When the ruling priests and Pharisees heard His stories, they

knew He was talking about them. ⁴⁶They wanted to grab Him but were afraid because the people thought He was a prophet.

Come to the Wedding!

22 Again Jesus used parables in talking to them. He said:

²²“The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding for his son. ²³He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding, but they refused to come. ²⁴Then he sent other slaves and said to them, ‘Tell the people who are invited, “Look here! I prepared my dinner. My bulls and fattened calves are killed, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding.”’

²⁵“But they paid no attention and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, ²⁶and the rest took his slaves, shamefully mistreated them, and murdered them.

²⁷“The king got angry. He sent his soldiers, and they killed those murderers and burned their city.

²⁸“Then he said to his slaves: ‘The wedding is ready, but the people who were invited didn’t deserve the honor. ²⁹Now go where the roads leave the city, and call everybody you find there to the wedding.’ ³⁰Those slaves went out on the roads and brought in all the people they found, bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests.

³¹“When the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man without a wedding garment. ³²‘Friend,’ he asked him, ‘how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’

“The man couldn’t say a thing. ³³Then the king told the servants, ‘Tie him hand and foot, and throw him out into the dark. There he will cry and grind his teeth.’

*In the temple, Tuesday, April 4,
A.D. 30*

33 15 5 1-2
42 Ps 118
22-23

14“Many are invited, but few are chosen.”

Taxes

15Then the Pharisees went and plotted to trap Him with a question. 16They sent their disciples with Herod's men to say to Him: “Teacher, we know You're honest and really teach God's way and don't care what others think, because You don't favor any special persons. 17Now tell us: What do You think? Is it right to pay a tax to Caesar or not?”

18Seeing through their wicked way, Jesus asked, “Why do you test Me, you hypocrites? 19Show Me the coin with which the tax is paid.”

They brought Him a denarius. 20“Whose head is this and whose inscription?” He asked them.

21“Caesar's,” they said.

“Give Caesar what is Caesar's,” He told them, “and God what is God's.”

22They were surprised to hear this. Then they let Him alone and went away.

The Dead Live

23On that day some Sadducees, who say the dead don't rise, came to Him with this question: 24“Teacher, Moses said: *If anyone dies childless, his brother should marry his widow and have children for his brother.* 25Now, there were seven brothers among us. The first married and died, and since he had no children, he left his widow to his brother. 26The second brother did the same, and so did the third and the rest of the seven. 27Last of all the woman died. 28Now, when they rise from the dead, which of the seven will be her husband? You know they all married her.”

29“*You're wrong,*” Jesus answered them. “You don't know the Scriptures or God's power. 30When the dead rise, men and women don't marry but are like angels in heaven. 31About the dead rising—didn't you read what God told you: 32*I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?* He's not the God of the dead but of the living.”

33His teaching amazed the people who heard Him.

Love God and Your Neighbor

34When the Pharisees heard He had silenced the Sadducees, they got together. 35One of them, an expert in the Law, tested Him by asking Him, 36“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

37Jesus answered him, “*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your life, and with all your mind.* 38This is the greatest and most important commandment. 39The next is like it: *Love your neighbor like yourself.* 40All the Law and the prophets depend on these two commandments.”

David's Son

41While the Pharisees were still together, Jesus asked them, 42“*What do you think of the promised Savior? Whose Son is He?*”

“David's,” they answered Him.

43He asked them, “Then how can David by the Spirit call Him Lord? He says: 44*The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right till I put Your enemies under Your feet.'* 45Now, if David calls Him Lord, how can He be his Son?”

46Nobody could answer Him, and after that nobody dared to ask Him another question.

*In the temple, Tuesday, April 4,
A.D. 30*

Beware!

23 Then Jesus said to the crowd and to His disciples:

"The Bible experts and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Do everything they tell you, and follow it; but don't do what they do, because they don't do what they say. They tie together heavy loads that are hard to carry and lay them on the shoulders of others, but they won't raise a finger to move them.

"They do everything in order to be seen by others. They make their phylacteries broad and the tassels of their garments long.^k They like the places of honor at dinners and the front seats in synagogos,⁷ to be greeted in the marketplaces and have people call them rabbi. But don't you let them call you rabbi, because you have only one Teacher, and you are all brothers. And don't call anyone on earth your father; you have only one Father, and He is in heaven. Don't have others call you teachers; you have only one Teacher, and that is Christ. The greatest among you will be one who serves you. If you honor yourself, you will be humbled, but if you humble yourself, you will be honored."

Woe!

"Woe to you Bible experts and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You lock

people out of the kingdom of heaven. You won't come into it yourselves, and when others try to come in, you won't let them."

"Woe to you Bible experts and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You go around lake and land to convert a single person, and when he's converted, you make him twice as fit for hell as you are.

"Woe to you blind guides! You say, 'If anyone swears by the temple, that's nothing. But if anyone swears by the gold in the temple, he must keep his oath.' Blind fools! Which is greater, the gold or the temple that made the gold holy? Or again, 'If anyone swears by the altar, that's nothing. But if anyone swears by the gift that's on it, he must keep his oath.' You blind men! Which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift holy? If you swear by the altar, you swear by it and by everything on it. If you swear by the temple, you swear by it and by Him who lives there. And if you swear by heaven, you swear by God's throne and by Him who is sitting on it.

"Woe to you Bible experts and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of mint and dill and cummin but have neglected the more important things of the Law: to be just, merciful, and trustworthy. You should have done the one without neglecting the other. Blind

^kA phylactery was a small leather box fastened by a leather strap on the forehead or on the left arm. In the box were pieces of parchment on which were written the words of Ex 13:1-10, 11-16; Deut 6:4-9, 13-21.—An Israelite wore a tassel on each of the four corners of his outer garment. (Num 15:33-40; Deut 22:12)

⁷Our oldest manuscripts do not have v. 14: "Woe to you Bible scholars and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You swallow the widow's houses and then, to cover up, make long prayers. For this you'll be punished all the more. See Mark 12:40; Luke 20:47.

*In the temple. Tuesday, April 4.
A.D. 30*

guides! You strain out the gnat but swallow the camel.

²³“Woe to you Bible experts and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of a cup and of a dish, but inside they’re full of greed and uncontrolled lust. ²⁴You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and of the dish in order to make also the outside of it clean. ²⁵Woe to you Bible experts and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You’re like white-washed graves that look beautiful on the outside but inside are full of dead men’s bones and every kind of decay. ²⁶So on the outside you look good to people, but inside you’re full of hypocrisy and crime.

²⁷“Woe to you Bible experts and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build the tombs of the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous ²⁸and say, ‘If we had lived at the time of our fathers, we wouldn’t have helped them murder the prophets.’ ²⁹And so you testify against yourselves that you are the sons of those who murdered the prophets. ³⁰Go on, finish what your fathers started!

³¹“You snakes! Brood of vipers! How can you escape being condemned to hell? ³²That’s why I’m sending you men to speak God’s Word, men who are wise and know the Bible. Some of them you will kill and crucify. Others you will whip in your synagogues and hunt from town to town, ³³so that all the innocent blood poured on the ground will come on you, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, Barachiah’s son, whom you murdered between the holy place and the altar. ³⁴I tell you, all this will certainly come on the

people of today.

³⁵“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you murder the prophets and stone those sent to you! How often I wanted to bring your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you didn’t want to! ³⁶Now your *house will be left to you a deserted place*. ³⁷I tell you, you will not see Me again till you say, ‘*Blessed is He who is coming in the Lord’s name.*’”

Sorrow Ahead!

24 When Jesus walked out of the temple and was going away, His disciples came to show Him the buildings of the temple. ²“You see all these things?” Jesus asked them. “I tell you the truth, not a stone will be left on another here but will be torn down.”

³When He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, His disciples came to Him alone, saying, “Tell us, when will this be and how can we tell when You’re coming back and the world will come to an end?”

“Be careful not to let anyone deceive you,” Jesus answered them. ⁴“Many will come using My name, and saying, ‘I am the promised Christ,’ and will deceive many.

“You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you don’t get alarmed. It *must happen*, but that’s not the end yet. ⁵*Nation will fight against nation, and kingdom against kingdom*, and there will be famines and earthquakes in different places. ⁶But all these are only the first pains.^m

“Then they will hand you over to those who will make you suffer, and they will kill you, and all nations will hate you on account of My name. ⁷Then *many will fall away*

²³
38 Jer 12 7
22 5
39 Ps 118
25-26
24
6 Dn 2 28
7 Is 19 2
2 Ch 15 6
10 Dn 11 41

^mAs in childbirth, sharper pains will follow before the Savior comes in glory.

and betray one another and hate one another. ¹¹Many false prophets will arise and lead many people astray. ¹²And because there will be more and more wickedness, the love of most people will turn cold. ¹³But endure to the end, and you will be saved.

¹⁴“This good news of the Kingdom must be preached all over the world so that all nations hear the truth, and then the end will come.”

Jerusalem Will Be Destroyed

¹⁵“When you see what the prophet Daniel told about, *the abomination laying waste the land* and standing *in the holy place* (anyone who reads this should understand it),¹⁶then if you’re in Judea, flee to the hills. ¹⁷If you’re on the roof, don’t come down to get the things in your house. ¹⁸If you’re in the field, don’t turn back to get your garment.

¹⁹“Woe to the women who in those days are expecting babies or nursing them. ²⁰Pray that it may not be winter or a Sabbath when you flee. ²¹It will be a time of great *misery such as hasn’t been from the beginning of the world till now* and never will be again. ²²And if that time had not been cut short, nobody would be saved. But that time will be cut short for the sake of those whom He has chosen.”

Jesus Is Coming

²³“If anyone tells you then, ‘Look, here is Christ!’, or, ‘There He is!’ don’t believe it, ²⁴because false Christs and false *prophets will come and do great miracles and wonders* to deceive if possible even those whom God has chosen. ²⁵You see, I’ve told you this before it happens. ²⁶So when you’re told, ‘There He is in the wilderness,’ don’t go out; or,

‘Here He is in the inner rooms,’ don’t believe it. ²⁷The Son of Man will come like the lightning that flashes from the east to the west.—²⁸Where the dead body is, there the vultures will gather.

²⁹“Right after the misery of that time *the sun will turn dark, the moon will stop shining, the stars will be falling from the sky, and the powers of heaven will be shaken.* ³⁰Then the sign announcing the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then *all the people on earth will mourn* when they see *the Son of Man coming on the clouds in the sky* with power and great glory. ³¹And *with a loud trumpet call* He will send out His angels, and they will *gather* His chosen ones *from the north, south, east, and west, from one end of the sky to the other.*

³²“Learn this lesson from a fig tree: When its branch gets tender and grows leaves, you know summer is near. ³³So also when you see all these things, you know that He is near, at your door.

³⁴“I tell you the truth, these people will not pass away till all this happens. ³⁵Heaven and earth will pass away, but what I say will not pass away.”

Be Ready!

³⁶“No one knows about that day or hour, not the angels in heaven, not even the Son, but only the Father.

³⁷“When the Son of Man comes, it will be like the time of Noah. ³⁸In the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, and men and women were marrying till the day *Noah went into the ark.* ³⁹They learned nothing till *the flood came* and swept them all away. That’s how it will be when the Son of Man comes.

Mount of Olives, Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30

15 Dn 9:27;
11:31;
12:11
21 Dn 12:1
24 Dn 12:1
29 Is 12:10;
34:6;
Ez 38:7-9
30 Zep 1:2;
10, 12;
Dn 7:13
31 Is 27:13;
Dn 30:4;
Zep 2:8
32-33 Gn
7:5-7

⁴⁰“Then there will be two men in the field—one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹“Two women will be grinding at a mill—one will be taken and the other left.

⁴²“Watch, then, because you don’t know which day your Lord is coming. ⁴³“You know if the owner of a house had known what time of the night the burglar was coming, he would have stayed awake and not let anyone break into his house. ⁴⁴“You too get ready, because the Son of Man is coming when you don’t expect Him.

⁴⁵“Now, who is the faithful and sensible slave whom the Master has put in charge of his servants to give them their food at the right time? ⁴⁶“Blessed is that slave whom his master finds doing this when he comes. ⁴⁷“I tell you, he will certainly put him in charge of all his property. ⁴⁸“But if that slave is wicked and says to himself, ‘My master is staying a long time,’ ⁴⁹and starts to beat his fellow slaves and eats and drinks with the drunkards, ⁵⁰“the master of that slave will come one day when he’s not expecting him and at a time he doesn’t know ⁵¹and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. There they will cry and grind their teeth.”

The Bridegroom Is Coming

25 “Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten girls who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ³The foolish girls brought their lamps, but they took no extra oil. ⁴The wise took flasks of oil

with their lamps. ⁵“But the bridegroom delayed, and so they all dozed off to sleep.

⁶“At midnight there was a shout: ‘Here’s the bridegroom! Come out and meet him!’ ⁷Then all those girls woke up and got their lamps ready.

⁸“But the foolish asked the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil. Our lamps are going out.’

⁹“The wise girls answered, ‘There will never be enough for us and for you. Better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’

¹⁰“While they were away buying it, the bridegroom came, and the girls who were ready went with him to the wedding, and the door was shut.

¹¹“Later the other girls also came and said, ‘Lord, lord, open the door for us!’

¹²“‘I tell you the truth,’ he answered them, ‘I don’t know You.’

¹³“Keep awake, then, because you don’t know the day or the hour.”

Three Kinds of Workers

¹⁴“It’s like a man going on a trip. He called his slaves and put his money in their hands. ¹⁵He gave one man \$10,000,^a another \$4,000, and another \$2,000, each according to his ability. Then he left.

¹⁶“The one who got \$10,000 immediately went and put it into business and made another \$10,000. ¹⁷The one who had \$4,000 did the same and made another \$4,000. ¹⁸But the one who got \$2,000 went and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

¹⁹“After a long time the master of those slaves came and had them give

^aIt is hard to estimate the real value of a “talent.” It is here taken to be equal to \$2,000.

an account. ²⁰The one who got \$10,000 came and brought another \$10,000. 'Master,' he said, 'you let me have \$10,000. See, I've made another \$10,000.'

²¹"Well done, good and faithful slave!' his master answered him. 'You proved you could be trusted with a little. I will put you in charge of something big. Come and be happy with your master.'

²²"The one who got \$4,000 came and said, 'Master, you let me have \$4,000. See, I've made another \$4,000.'

²³"Well done, good and faithful slave!' his master answered him. 'You proved you could be trusted with a little. I will put you in charge of something big. Come and be happy with your master.'

²⁴"Then came also the one who got \$2,000. 'Master,' he said, 'I found out you're a hard man. You get grain where you didn't sow, and you gather where you didn't scatter. ²⁵I was afraid, so I went and hid your \$2,000 in the ground. There's your money!'

²⁶"'You wicked and lazy slave!' his master answered him. 'You knew I get grain where I didn't sow and gather where I didn't scatter?

²⁷Then you should have invested my money with the bankers, and when I came back, I could have gotten my money back with interest. ²⁸Take the \$2,000 away from him, and give it to the one who has \$10,000.

²⁹Whoever has anything will receive, and so he will have more and more. And from him who doesn't have what he should have, even what he has will be taken away. ³⁰Throw this good-for-nothing slave out into the dark where there will be crying and grinding of teeth.'

Jesus Will Judge the World

³¹"When the Son of man comes in His glory and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His throne of glory. ³²And all nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them from one another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³and He will have the sheep stand at His right but the goats at His left.

³⁴"Then the King will say to those at His right, 'Come, you whom My Father blessed, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the time the world was made. ³⁵I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me a drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me into your homes; ³⁶naked, and you gave Me something to wear; sick, and you looked after Me; in prison, and you visited Me.'

³⁷"Then the righteous will ask Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You a drink? ³⁸When did we see You a stranger and take You into our homes, or naked and give You something to wear? ³⁹When did we see You sick or in prison and visit You?'

⁴⁰"And the King will answer them, 'Let Me assure you, anything you did for one of My brothers here, however humble, you did for Me.'

⁴¹"Then He will say to those at His left, 'Go away from Me, you cursed ones, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

⁴²I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; thirsty, and you didn't give Me a drink; ⁴³a stranger, and you didn't take Me into your homes; naked, and you didn't give Me anything to wear; sick and in

²⁵
³¹ Zch 14:5

prison, and you didn't look after Me.'

⁴⁴"Then they, too, will ask, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and didn't help You?'

⁴⁵"Then He will answer them, 'I tell you the truth, anything you didn't do for one of these, however humble, you didn't do for Me.'

⁴⁶"Then *these* will go away to *everlasting* punishment, but the *righteous* to *everlasting* life."

The Plot

26 When Jesus finished saying all this, He told His disciples, ²⁴"You know that in two days the Passover will be celebrated, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified."

²⁵Then the ruling priests and the elders of the people met in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas. ⁴⁶They plotted by some trick to arrest Jesus and kill Him. ¹⁵But they said, "Not in the festival crowd, or there may be a riot among the people."

Mary Anoints Jesus

¹Jesus came to Bethany and went into the home of Simon the leper. ²There a woman came to Him with an alabaster jar of expensive perfume, and she poured it on His head while He was lying at the table.

³The disciples saw it and didn't like it. "Why should there be such a waste?" they asked. ⁴"This could have been sold for a big sum and the money given to the poor."

⁵Knowing what was going on, Jesus asked them, "Why do you trouble the woman? She has done a

beautiful thing to Me. ⁶"The poor you always have with you, but you will not always have Me. ⁷She poured this perfume on My body to prepare Me for My burial. ⁸I tell you, wherever this good news is preached in the whole world, certainly what she has done will also be told in memory of her."

Judas Plans to Betray Jesus

⁹Then one of the twelve, called Judas, the man from Kerioth, went to the high priests. ¹⁰"What will you give me?" he asked. "I will betray Him to you."

They weighed out thirty shekels^o of silver for him. ¹¹And from then on he was looking for a chance to betray Him.

The Passover

¹²On the first of the Passover days of bread without yeast the disciples came to Jesus. "Where do You want us to get things ready for You to eat the Passover?" they asked.

¹³"Go into the city," He said, "to a certain man and tell him: 'The Teacher says, "My time is near. I'm going to celebrate the Passover with My disciples at your house.'" "

¹⁴The disciples did as Jesus directed them and got the Passover ready.

¹⁵In the evening He lay down with the twelve for the supper.

"Is It I?"

¹⁶While they were eating, He said: "I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray Me!"

¹⁷Feeling deeply hurt, they asked Him one by one, "You don't mean me, Lord?"

¹⁸"One who is dipping into the

^oA silver shekel weighed as much as our half dollar.

bowl with Me will betray Me!" He answered. ²⁴"The Son of Man is going away as it is written about Him, but woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for that man if he had never been born."

²⁵"You don't mean me, Master?" asked Judas, who was going to betray Him.

"I do!" He told him.

The Lord's Supper

²⁶While they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it. He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take and eat. This is My body."

²⁷Then He took a cup and gave thanks. He gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you. ²⁸This is My blood of the covenant, poured out for all to forgive their sins.

²⁹"I tell you, I will not drink again of this product of the vine till that day when I drink it with you in a new way in My Father's kingdom."

³⁰Then they sang a hymn.^P

"You Will Deny Me"

They started out for the Mount of Olives.

³¹Then Jesus said to them, "Tonight you will all turn against Me. It is written: I will *strike down the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.* ³²But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you to Galilee."

³³"Even if they all turn against You," Peter answered Him, "I'll never turn against You."

³⁴"I tell you the truth," Jesus told him, "tonight before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times."

³⁵"Even if I have to die with You,"

^PPerhaps Psalms 115 to 118

Peter told Him, "I'll never deny You!" All the other disciples said the same thing.

Gethsemane

³⁶Then Jesus went with the disciples to a place called Gethsemane and told them, "Sit down here while I go over there and pray."

³⁷Taking Peter and Zebedee's two sons with Him, He started to feel sad and troubled. ³⁸Then He said to them,

"My soul is so full of sorrow I am almost dying. Stay here and keep awake with Me."

³⁹Going ahead a little, He bowed down with His face on the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from Me. But let it not be as I want it but as You want it."

⁴⁰Coming to the disciples, He finds them asleep. He says to Peter, "So you couldn't keep awake with Me one hour! "Stay awake and pray that you may not be tempted. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

⁴¹Then He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass by without My drinking it, Your will be done."

⁴²He came again and found them asleep. They couldn't keep their eyes open.

⁴³Leaving them again, He went and prayed the same prayer a third time. ⁴⁴Then He came to the disciples. "Are you going to sleep on now and rest?" He asked them. "Now the time has come, and the Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁵Get up, let us go. Here comes the man to betray Me!"

*Gethsemane, Thursday, April 6.
A.D. 30*

The Arrest

"While He was still talking, there came Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the ruling priests and elders of the people. ⁴⁸The traitor had given them a signal. "The One I kiss," he said, "is the Man. Grab Him."

"Then Judas quickly stepped up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Master!" and kissed Him.

⁵⁰"Friend, what are you here for?" Jesus asked him.

Then the others came forward, took hold of Jesus, and arrested Him. ⁵¹One of the men with Jesus reached for his sword and drew it. He struck the high priest's slave and cut off his ear. ⁵²Then Jesus told him, "Put your sword back in its place. All who take the sword must die by the sword. ⁵³Or do you think I couldn't call on My Father to send right now more than 70,000 angels to help Me? ⁵⁴How, then, could the Bible be true when it says this must happen?"

⁵⁵Then Jesus said to the crowd, "You came out to arrest Me with swords and clubs as if I were a robber! Day after day I sat and taught in the temple, and you didn't arrest Me. ⁵⁶But all this has happened so that what the prophets have written would come true."

Then all the disciples left Him and ran away.

The First Trial Before the Jewish Court

⁵⁷Those who arrested Jesus took Him to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the Bible scholars and the elders had been called together. ⁵⁸Peter followed Him at a distance till he came to the high priest's

courtyard. Going inside, he sat with the attendants to see how this would end.

⁵⁹The ruling priests and the whole Jewish court tried to get false testimony against Jesus in order to kill Him ⁶⁰but didn't find any, although many came forward to give false testimony. At last two men came forward, ⁶¹saying, "He said, 'I can tear down God's temple and build it in three days.'"

⁶²The high priest got up and asked Him, "Don't You have anything to say to this? What are these men testifying against You?"

⁶³But Jesus was silent.

Then the high priest said to Him, "Swear by the living God, and tell us, are You the promised Savior, the Son of God?"

⁶⁴"I am," Jesus answered him.

⁶⁴ Ps 110:1
Dn 7:13

"But I tell you, from now on you will all see *the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven.*"

⁶⁵Then the high priest tore his robes. "He has blasphemed!" he declared. "Why do we need any more witnesses? You just heard the blasphemy. ⁶⁶What's your verdict?"

"He must die!" they answered.

⁶⁷Then they spit in His face, struck Him with their fists, and some slapped Him, ⁶⁸saying, "Prophecy, You Christ, and tell us: Who hit You?"

Peter Denies Jesus

⁶⁹Peter was sitting out in the courtyard. A maid came to him, saying, "You too were with Jesus, the Galilean."

⁷⁰But he denied it in front of all of them: "I don't know what you're talking about."

⁷¹As he went out to the entrance,

Jerusalem, Friday, April 7

another maid saw him. "He was with Jesus from Nazareth," she told those who were there.

"Again Peter denied, and he swore, "I don't know the Man!"

"After a little while the men who were standing there came and told Peter, "Sure, you're one of them. Anyone can tell by the way you talk."

"Then he started to curse and swear, "I don't know the Man!" Just then the rooster crowed, "and Peter remembered Jesus saying, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." And he went outside and cried bitterly.

The End of Judas

27 In the morning all the ruling priests and the elders of the people decided to kill Jesus. ²⁷They bound Him, led Him away, and handed Him over to Pilate, the governor.

^{9-10 Zch 11} When Judas, who betrayed Him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he felt sorry and brought the thirty shekels of silver back to the high priests and elders. "I have sinned," he said. "I have betrayed innocent blood."

"What do we care about that?" they asked. "See to it yourself."

^{12-13 Jer 32 6-9} Then he threw the money into the temple and left. He went away and hanged himself.

"The high priests took the money. "It isn't right to put this into the temple treasury," they said; "it's blood money." ²⁸So they decided to buy with it the potter's field for the burial of strangers. ²⁹That's why that field has ever since been called the Field of Blood. ³⁰Then what the prophet Jeremiah said came true: *I took the thirty shekels of silver, the price of Him on whom some men of*

Israel set a price, "and I gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me.

Before Pilate

"Jesus stood before the governor. "Are You the King of the Jews?" the governor asked Him.

"Yes," Jesus answered.

"While the ruling priests and elders were accusing Him, He said nothing. ¹³Then Pilate asked Him, "Don't You hear how many accusations they are bringing against You?"

¹⁴But Jesus didn't answer him in regard to anything that was said, so that the governor was very much surprised.

Barabbas

¹⁵Now, at every festival the governor used to free one prisoner whom the crowd wanted. ¹⁶Just then there was a well-known prisoner by the name of Barabbas. ¹⁷When the people had gathered, Pilate asked them, "Whom do you want me to set free for you, Barabbas or Jesus, who is called Christ?" ¹⁸He knew they had handed Jesus over to him because they were jealous.

¹⁹While he was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent someone to tell him, "Let that righteous Man alone. I suffered much in a dream last night on account of Him."

²⁰But the ruling priests and elders persuaded the people to ask for Barabbas and kill Jesus.

²¹"Which of the two," the governor asked them, "do you want me to set free for you?"

They said, "Barabbas."

²²"Then what should I do with Jesus, who is called Christ?" Pilate asked them.

Jerusalem, Friday, April 7, A.D. 30

"He must be crucified!" all of them said.

²¹"Why, what wrong has He done?" he asked.

But they kept yelling all the louder, "He must be crucified!"

²²"When he saw he wasn't getting anywhere, but a riot was breaking out instead, Pilate took water and washed his hands before the crowd. "I am innocent of this One's blood," he said. "See to it yourselves!"

²³And all the people answered, "His blood be on us and on our children."

²⁴Then he freed Barabbas for them, but Jesus he scourged and handed over to be crucified.

"Hail, King!"

²⁷Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the governor's palace and gathered the whole troop of soldiers around Him. ²⁸They took off His clothes and put a scarlet cloak on Him. ²⁹They twisted some thorns into a crown, placed it on His head, and put a stick in His right hand. Then they knelt before Him and mocked Him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" ³⁰They spit on Him, took the stick, and hit Him on the head.

"They Crucified Him"

³¹After mocking Him, they took off the cloak and put His own clothes on Him. Then they took Him away to crucify Him.

³²Going out, they found a man from Cyrene by the name of Simon. They forced him to carry His cross.

³³They came to a place called Golgotha, which means Skull Place. ³⁴They offered Him a drink of wine, mixed with *gall*, but when He tasted it, He refused to drink it. ³⁵They crucified Him. And *they divided His clothes among them by throwing*

lots. ³⁶Then they sat down there and kept watch over Him. ³⁷They put above His head a notice stating why He was being punished. It read: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS. ³⁸Then they crucified two robbers with Him, one at His right and the other at His left.

³⁹Those who passed by abused Him, *shaking their heads* ⁴⁰and saying, "You tear down the temple and build it in three days—save Yourself, if You are God's Son, and come down from the cross." ⁴¹The ruling priests, with the Bible scholars and elders, mocked Him in the same way, saying, ⁴²"He saved others—but He cannot save Himself. He's King of Israel—He should come down from the cross now, and we'll believe Him. ⁴³*He trusts God—God deliver Him now, seeing He delights in Him.* He said, 'I am God's Son.'" ⁴⁴In the same way also the robbers crucified with Him insulted Him.

Jesus Dies

⁴⁵At twelve o'clock darkness came over the whole country and lasted until three in the afternoon. ⁴⁶About three o'clock Jesus called out loud, "*Eli, Eli, lema, sabachthani?*" which means, "My God, My God, why did You forsake Me?" ⁴⁷Hearing Him some of those standing there said, "He's calling Elijah." ⁴⁸And just then one of the men ran, took a sponge, soaked it in *sour wine*, put it on a stick, and *gave Him a drink.* ⁴⁹The others said, "Let's see if Elijah comes to save Him."

⁵⁰But Jesus called out loud again and gave up His spirit. ⁵¹Just then the curtain in the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, the earth was shaken, the rocks were split, ⁵²the graves were opened, and many

*Outside Jerusalem, Good Friday,
April 7, A.D. 30*

34 Ps 69:21
35 Ps 22:18
39 Ps 109:25
43 Ps 22:8
46 Ps 22:1
48 Ps 69:21

bodies of the holy people asleep in death were brought back to life; ²they came out of the graves and after He had risen went into the holy city, where many saw them. ³Now, when the captain and those watching Jesus with him saw the earthquake and the other things happening, they were terrified. "He certainly was the Son of God," they said.

⁴There were many women watching *from a distance*. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to help Him. ⁵Among them were Mary from Magdala and Mary, the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

Jesus Is Buried

¹In the evening there came a rich man from Arimathea by the name of Joseph, who had also become a disciple of Jesus. ²He went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. Then Pilate ordered it given to him.

³Joseph took the body, wrapped it in some clean linen cloth, ⁴and laid it in his own unused grave that he had cut in the rock. After rolling a big stone against the door of the grave, he went away. ⁵Mary from Magdala and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the grave.

The Guard

¹The next day—the Saturday after the day of preparation—the ruling priests and Pharisees met with Pilate. ²"Sir," they said, "we remember how that deceiver said while He was still alive, 'On the third day I will rise.' ³Now, order the grave to be made secure till the third day, or His disciples may come and steal Him and tell the people, 'He rose from the dead.' Then the last deception will be worse than the first."

⁴"Take a guard," Pilate told them; "go and make it as secure as you know how."

⁵So they went and secured the grave by sealing the stone and setting the guard.

Jesus Rises

28 After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary from Magdala and the other Mary went to look at the grave:

¹There was a great earthquake. The Lord's angel came down from heaven, went and rolled the stone away and sat on it. ²He was as bright as lightning, and his clothes were as white as snow. ³The guards were so afraid of him they shook and became like dead men.

⁴"Don't be afraid," the angel said to the women. "I know you're looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁵He is not here. He has risen as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying. ⁶And go quickly, tell His disciples, 'He has risen from the dead. You know, He is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see Him.' Now, I have told you."

⁷They hurried away from the grave with fear and great joy and ran to tell His disciples.

⁸And there—Jesus met them and said, "Good morning!" They went up to Him, took hold of His feet, and worshiped Him.

⁹Then Jesus said to them, "Don't be afraid. Go, tell My brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me."

The Guards

"While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and told the high priests everything that happened.

*Easter Sunday, April 9, A.D. 30
Galilee, before the Ascension*

¹²These met with the elders and agreed on a plan. They gave the soldiers a large sum of money ¹³and told them, "Say, 'His disciples came at night and stole Him while we were sleeping.' ¹⁴And if this comes to a hearing before the governor, we'll persuade him and see that you have nothing to worry about."

¹⁵They took the money and did as they were told. And that story has been spread among the Jews to this day.

"Go!"

¹⁶The eleven disciples went to the

mountain in Galilee where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷When they saw Him, they worshipped Him, but some doubted.

¹⁸Coming nearer, Jesus spoke to them. "I have been given all power in heaven and on earth." He said. ¹⁹"Go and make disciples of all people: Baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teach them to do everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always till the end of the world."

MARK

1 BEGINNING THE GOOD NEWS about Jesus Christ, God's Son:

²It is written in the prophet Isaiah: *I will send My messenger ahead of You*

to prepare the way for You.

³A voice will be calling in the wilderness:

"Prepare the way for the Lord; make the paths straight for Him."

⁴So John the Baptizer came into the wilderness, preaching that people repent and be baptized to have their sins forgiven. ⁵All Judea and all the people of Jerusalem were coming out to him. As they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River.

⁶John was dressed in camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist. And he lived on grasshoppers and wild honey.

⁷He preached: "The One who is mightier than I is coming after me. I'm not good enough to bend down and untie His shoe straps. ⁸I have baptized you with water. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

John Baptizes Jesus

⁹It was in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰Just as He stepped out of the water, He saw heaven torn open and the Spirit coming down as a dove on Him. ¹¹And a voice from heaven said, "You are *My son*, whom I love. *I am delighted* with You."

The Devil Tempts Jesus

¹²Then the Spirit drove Him out into the wilderness. ¹³and He was in the wilderness for forty days while Satan tempted Him. He was there with the wild animals. And the angels served Him.

"Come with Me"

¹⁴After John had been put in prison, Jesus went to Galilee and preached God's good news: ¹⁵"The time has come, and God's kingdom is here. Repent, and believe the good news."

¹⁶As He was walking along the Lake of Galilee, He saw Simon and Simon's brother Andrew (who were fishermen) casting a net into the lake. ¹⁷"Come, follow Me," Jesus told them, "and I will make you fishers of men." ¹⁸Immediately they left their nets and went with Him.

¹⁹Going on a little farther, He saw James, Zebedee's son, and his brother John in their boat mending the nets. ²⁰Then He called them, and they left their father Zebedee with the hired men in the boat and followed Him.

Jesus Drives Out a Devil

²¹Then they went to Capernaum. The next Sabbath Jesus went into the synagog and began to teach. ²²His teaching amazed the people because He taught them as one who had authority and not like the Bible scholars.

At the Jordan, late in 26 to January, 27

1
2 Mt 3:1
3 Lk 4:3
11 Ps 2:7
14 42:1

²³There was in their synagog just then a man with an unclean spirit. ²⁴And he screamed, "Leave us alone, Jesus from Nazareth! You've come to destroy us! I know who You are—God's Holy One."

²⁵Jesus talked sharply to him: "Be quiet, and come out of him." ²⁶The unclean spirit threw the man into convulsions and with a loud shriek came out of him.

²⁷They were all so amazed they argued with one another: "What is this? A new teaching! With authority! He gives orders to the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."

²⁸The news about Him quickly spread everywhere in all the surrounding country of Galilee.

Peter's Mother-in-Law

²⁹Right after leaving the synagog, they went into the home of Simon ⁴⁴ ⁴⁵ and Andrew. James and John went with them. ³⁰Simon's mother-in-law was down in bed with a fever, and so the first thing they did was to tell Him about her. ³¹He went to her, took her hand, and helped her get up. The fever left her, and she waited on them.

³²In the evening when the sun had gone down, the people brought to Him all the sick and those plagued by devils. ³³The whole town had gathered at His door. ³⁴He healed many who were suffering from various sicknesses and drove out many devils and wouldn't let the devils talk, because they knew Him.

Preaching in Galilee

³⁵In the morning, long before daylight, Jesus got up and went out to a lonely place, and there He prayed. ³⁶Simon and those who were with him searched for Jesus. ³⁷When they found Him, they told

Him, "Everybody's looking for You."

³⁸"Let us go somewhere else," He told them, "to the small towns that are near, so that I may preach there too. That's why I've come."

³⁹He went and preached in their synagogs everywhere in Galilee and drove out the devils.

Jesus Heals a Leper

⁴⁰A leper came to Him and begged Him on his knees, "If You want to, You can make me clean."

⁴¹Jesus felt sorry for him, stretched out His hand, and touched him. "I want to," He said. "Be clean!" ⁴²Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean.

⁴³Jesus sent him away with a stern warning: ⁴⁴"Be careful not to say anything to anyone, but go, *let the priest examine* you, and for your cleansing offer the sacrifices Moses ordered, to show them you're well."

⁴⁵But when he had left, he talked so much and spread the news till Jesus could no longer openly go into a town. He stayed out in lonely places, and still the people kept coming to Him from everywhere.

Jesus Forgives Sins

2 Some days later Jesus came again to Capernaum, and people heard, "He's home." ²So many gathered that there was no room even in front of the door. He was speaking the Word to them.

³Then some people came and brought Him a paralyzed man, carried by four men. ⁴But when they couldn't bring him to Jesus on account of the crowd, they opened up the roof over the place where Jesus was. Through the opening they had dug they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.

Galilee, summer, 27

"Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

"There were some Bible scholars sitting there, and they questioned within themselves: "Why does He say this? He's blaspheming. Who but God alone can forgive sins?"

"Immediately Jesus knew in His spirit what they were thinking. "Why do you have these thoughts in your hearts?" He asked them. "Is it easier to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your bed, and walk'?" "I want you to know the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—then He said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your bed, and go home."

"The man got up, immediately took his bed, and walked out before all of them, so that all were amazed and praised God. "Never have we seen anything like this," they said.

2
Jn 1:24, 8
1 Sm 21:6

Matthew

"Again Jesus went out along the lake. All the people were coming to Him, and He taught them.

"As He passed by, He saw Levi, the son of Alphaeus, sitting in the tax office. "Come with Me," He told him. He got up and went with Him.

"As Jesus was lying down to eat at his home, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with Jesus and His disciples, because there were many who followed Him. "When the Bible scholars, who were Pharisees, saw Him eating with sinners and tax collectors, they asked His disciples, "Why does He eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

"Jesus heard them and answered them: "Those who are healthy don't need a doctor, but the sick. I didn't

come to call righteous people but sinners."

The Bridegroom

"John's disciples and the Pharisees, who were fasting, came to Jesus. "John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast," they told Him. "Why don't Your disciples fast?"

"Jesus asked them, "Can the bridegroom's friends fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they can't fast. "The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and on that day they'll fast.

"Nobody sews a piece of new cloth on an old garment. If you do, the new patch will tear away some of the old cloth, and the hole will get worse. "Nobody pours new wine into old wineskins. If you do, the wine will burst the skins, and the wine and the skins will be lost. Yes, new wine has to be poured into fresh skins."

Lord of the Sabbath

"Jesus was going through the grainfields on a Sabbath. As the disciples walked along, they were picking the heads of grain.

"The Pharisees asked Him, "Look, why are they doing something they shouldn't do on a day of rest?"

"Haven't you ever read what David did," Jesus asked them, "when he and his men were in need and got hungry—how he went into God's house when Abiathar was high priest, and he ate the loaves laid before God, which only the priests had the right to eat? And he gave his men some too."

"Then He added, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the

Galilee, fall, 27, to early in 28

Sabbath. ²⁸The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath."

The Shriveled Hand

3 He went again into a synagog, and there was a man with a shriveled hand. ²Some men were watching Jesus to see if He would heal him on a Sabbath; they wanted to accuse Him of something.

"Get up," He told the man with the shriveled hand, "and come forward." ⁴Then He asked them, "Is it right on a day of rest to do good or to do evil, to save a life or to kill?"

But they were silent. ⁵Looking around at them, He felt angry as well as sorry because their minds were closed. Then He told the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was made healthy again.

⁶But the Pharisees left and immediately started plotting with Herod's men how to kill Him.

Many Are Healed

⁷Jesus went away with His disciples to the lake. A big crowd from Galilee followed Him; and also from Judea, ⁸Jerusalem, Idumea, the other side of the Jordan, and the neighborhood of Tyre and Sidon there were many people who heard about everything He was doing and came to Him. ⁹To keep the crowd from crushing Him He told His disciples to have a small boat ready for Him. ¹⁰He healed many so that all who had diseases rushed up to Him in order to touch Him. ¹¹"Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, they would fall down before Him and yell, "You're God's Son!" ¹²But He strictly ordered them not to tell who He was.

Twelve Apostles

¹³He went up the hill and called those whom He wanted, and they came to Him. ¹⁴He appointed twelve to be with Him and be sent out by Him to preach ¹⁵and have power to drive out devils.

¹⁶He appointed the twelve and gave Simon the name Peter; ¹⁷James, Zebedee's son, and John, the brother of James—He also gave these the name Boanerges, which means "thunderbolts"; ¹⁸Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, and Thomas; James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot; ¹⁹and Judas, the man from Kerioth, who betrayed Him.

Power over the Devil

Then Jesus came home. ²⁰Again such a crowd gathered that Jesus and those with Him couldn't eat. ²¹When His family heard about it, they went to take charge of Him, because they were saying, "He's out of His mind!"

²²The men trained in the Bible who had come down from Jerusalem said, "Beelzebul is in Him," and, "The ruler of the devils helps Him drive out the devils."

²³He called them to Him and pictured it to them in this way: "How can the devil drive out the devil? ²⁴If one part of a kingdom fights another, that kingdom can't stand. ²⁵And if one part of a home fights against the other, it can never stand. ²⁶And so if the devil rebels and fights against himself, he can't stand, but his end has come.

²⁷"Nobody can go into a strong man's house and take away his goods without first tying up the strong man. After that he will rob his house.

Galilee, spring to summer, 28

²⁸"I tell you the truth, anything that people do will be forgiven, their sins and their slanders, though they slander ever so much. ²⁹But anyone who slanders the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven. Yes, he is guilty of an everlasting sin." ³⁰He said this because they had said, "The Spirit in Him is unclean."

The Mother and Brothers of Jesus

³¹His mother and His brothers came. They stood outside and sent someone to Him to ask Him to come out. ³²The crowd sitting around Jesus told Him, "Your mother and Your brothers are outside looking for You."

³³"Who are My mother and My brothers?" He asked them. ³⁴Then looking around at those who sat in a circle around Him, He said, "Here are My mother and My brothers. ³⁵If you do what God wants, you are My brother and sister and mother."

The Sower

4 Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around Him was so very big that He stepped into a boat and sat in it on the lake, while all the people were on the shore, facing the lake. ²Then He used parables to teach them many things.

³"Listen!" He said as He taught them. "A sower went out to sow. ⁴As he was sowing, some seed fell along the road, and the birds came and ate it. ⁵Some seed fell on rocky ground, where it didn't have much soil. Because the soil wasn't deep, the seed came up quickly. ⁶When the sun rose, it was scorched, and because it had not taken root, it withered. ⁷Some seed fell among thorns. The thorns grew up and

choked it, and it produced no grain. ⁸But some seed fell on good ground. It came up, grew, and produced grain, thirty, sixty, and a hundred times as much as was sown." ⁹He added, "You have ears to hear; then listen."

¹⁰When He was alone, the twelve and the others around Him asked Him about the parables.

¹¹"You are given the privilege of knowing the secret of God's kingdom," He answered them, "but to those on the outside everything comes in parables. ¹²*that they may see and yet not see, hear and yet not understand, and so may never turn to Me and let Me forgive them.*

¹³"You don't understand this parable," He said to them. "Then how will you understand any parables?"

¹⁴"The sower sows the Word: ¹⁵And these are the ones along the road where the Word is sown: as soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the Word that was sown into them. ¹⁶It is the same with those in whom the seed falls on rocky ground. As soon as they hear the Word, they welcome it with joy, ¹⁷but it doesn't take root in them. They believe for a while. But when the Word brings them trouble or persecution, they immediately fall away. ¹⁸In others the seed falls among thorns. They hear the Word ¹⁹but the worries of the world, the deceitful pleasure of riches, and the desires for other things come in and choke the Word, and it can't produce anything. ²⁰The ones in whom the seed falls on good ground are those who continue to hear the Word, welcome it, and go on producing good things, thirty, sixty and a hundred times as much as was sown.

Galilee, summer to fall, 28

he ran, bowed down before Him, and yelled at the top of his voice, "Let me alone, Jesus, Son of the Most High God! I tell You by God, don't torture me." Jesus had told him, "You unclean spirit, get out of the man."

"What is your name?" Jesus asked him.

"My name is Six Thousand," he told Him, "because we are many."

They begged Him earnestly not to send them out of the country.

There was a large herd of hogs feeding on the hillside. "Send us to the hogs," they begged Him; "We want to go into them."

He let them do this. The unclean spirits came out and went into the hogs, and the herd, about two thousand hogs, stampeded down the cliff into the lake and was drowned.

Those who had taken care of them ran away and told about it in the town and in the country, and the people came to see what had happened. They came to Jesus and looked at the man who had been plagued by a legion of devils, but now was sitting there dressed and in his right mind; and they were frightened. Those who had seen it told them what had happened to the man plagued by devils and about the hogs. Then the people begged Jesus to leave their country.

As He was stepping into the boat, the man in whom the devils had been begged Jesus to let him go with Him. But Jesus didn't let him. "Go home to your people," He told him, "and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how merciful He has been to you."

So the man left and began to tell publicly in the Ten-Towns how much Jesus had done for him. And all were amazed.

The Daughter of Jairus

When Jesus had again crossed over in the boat to the other side of the lake, a big crowd gathered around Him by the lake.

A synagog leader by the name of Jairus came, and when he saw Jesus, he knelt at His feet and earnestly pleaded with Him: "My little daughter is dying. Come and lay your hands on her so she will get well and live."

He went with him. A big crowd followed Him and pressed Him on all sides. There was a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years. She had suffered much under many doctors and had spent all she had. And she had not been helped at all but had actually gotten worse. Since she heard about Jesus, she came from behind in the crowd and touched His garment. "If I touch His clothes," she said, "I'll get well." Immediately her blood stopped flowing, and she felt in her body her trouble was gone and she was well.

At that moment Jesus felt power had gone from Him. Turning around in the crowd, He asked, "Who touched My clothes?"

"You see how the crowd is pressing you on all sides," His disciples said to Him, "and You ask, 'Who touched me?'"

But He was looking around to see her who had done this. The woman, trembling with fear because she knew what had been done to her, came, bowed down before Him, and told Him the whole truth.

"Daughter," He told her, "your faith made you well. Go in peace, be healthy and rid of your trouble."

While He was still talking, some men came from the home of the

synagog leader. "Your daughter died," they said. "Why trouble the Teacher any more?"

"Paying no attention to what they said, Jesus told the synagog leader, "Don't be afraid! Only believe!"

"He let only Peter, James, and John, the brother of James, go with Him. "So they came to the home of the synagog leader. There He saw the noisy crowd, crying and wailing aloud. "Why do you make a noise and cry?" He asked them when He came into the house. "The child isn't dead; she's sleeping."

"They laughed at Him. But He put them all outside, took the child's father and mother and those who were with Him, and went in where the child was. "He took the child's hand and said to her, "Talitha, koom!" which means, "Little girl, I tell you, wake up!"

"Immediately the girl got up and walked around. She was twelve years old. Then the others were utterly amazed.

"He gave them strict orders not to let anyone know about this. And He told them to give her something to eat.

His Last Visit to Nazareth

6 Leaving that place, Jesus went to His hometown, and His disciples went with Him. "When the Sabbath came, He taught in the synagog. Many who heard Him were amazed. "Where did He get this?" they asked. "What is this wisdom given to Him?" and, "Such miracles His hands are doing! Isn't He the carpenter, Mary's son, and a brother of James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon? And aren't His sisters here with us?" So they turned against Him.

"But Jesus told them, "A prophet is without honor only in his

hometown, among his relatives, and in his family." "He couldn't do any miracle there except lay His hands on a few sick people and make them well. "Their unbelief amazed Him.

Then He went around in the villages and taught.

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

"Jesus called the twelve and sent them out by twos, giving them authority over the unclean spirits. "He gave them these instructions: "Don't take anything with you on the way except a stick—no bread, no bag, and no copper money in your pocket. "But have sandals strapped on your feet. And don't wear two tunics.

"Wherever you go into a home," He told them, "stay there till you leave the place. "If the people of any place don't welcome you or listen to you, leave that place, and shake the dust off the soles of your feet as a warning to them."

"They left and preached that people should repent. "They also drove out many devils and poured oil on many who were sick and made them well.

Herod Kills John

"King Herod heard about Jesus, because His name was now well known. "John the Baptizer has risen from the dead," he said, "and that's why these powers are working in Him." "Others said, "He is Elijah." Still others, "He is a prophet like one of the other prophets." "But when Herod heard about it, he said, "John, whose head I cut off, has risen!"

"Herod had sent men who arrested John, bound him, and put him in prison, because Herod had married Herodias, the wife of his brother

Galilee, January, A.D. 29

Philip. "It isn't right for you to have your brother's wife." John had told Herod.

"Herodias had a grudge against John and wanted to kill him, but she couldn't do it. Herod was afraid of John because he knew John was a good and holy man. So he protected him. When he listened to John, he was very much disturbed, and yet he liked to hear him.

"An opportunity came on Herod's birthday, when he gave a dinner for his noblemen, the tribunes, and the leading men of Galilee. His daughter, that is, the daughter of Herodias, came in and danced, and Herod and his guests were delighted with her. "Ask me for anything you want," the king told the girl, "and I'll give it to you." "And he solemnly swore to her: "I'll give you anything you ask, up to half of my kingdom."

"She went out and asked her mother, "What should I ask for?"

"The head of John the Baptizer," her mother told her.

"She hurried right back to the king. "I want you to give me right now," she demanded, "on a platter the head of John the Baptizer."

"The king felt very sorry. But he had sworn to do it, and there were the guests—so he didn't want to refuse her. "The king quickly sent a guard and ordered him to bring John's head. He went and cut off John's head in prison. "Then he brought the head on a platter and gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother.

"When John's disciples heard about it, they came and took his body and laid it in a grave.

Jesus Feeds Five Thousand

"The apostles gathered around

Jesus and reported to Him everything they had done and taught. "Now you come away to some deserted place." He told them, "where you can be alone, and rest a little." So many were coming and going there wasn't even time to eat.

"So they went away in the boat to a deserted place to be alone. "But many saw them leave and recognized them. And they ran there from all the towns and got there ahead of them. "When Jesus stepped out of the boat, He saw a big crowd and felt sorry for them because they were *like sheep without a shepherd*. He began to teach them many things.

"When it was quite late, His disciples came to Him. "This is a deserted place," they said, "and it's late. "Send them away to the farms and villages around us to buy themselves something to eat."

"You give them something to eat," Jesus answered them.

"Should we go and buy bread for two hundred denarii," they asked Him, "and give it to them to eat?"

"How many loaves do you have?" He asked them. "Go and see."

They found out and said, "Five, and two fish."

"He ordered them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. "They sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties.

"Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, He blessed them. He broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to give to the people. He also gave pieces of the two fish to everybody. "All of them ate and had a hearty meal. "They picked up pieces of bread and of the fish—twelve baskets full. "There were five thousand men who had

Bethsaida-Julias, Lake of Galilee, spring, 29

eaten the bread.

Jesus Walks on Water

"He quickly made His disciples get into the boat and cross over to Bethsaida ahead of Him; meanwhile He would send the people away. "After saying good-by to them, He went up the hill to pray. "When it got late, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and He was alone on the land.

"Jesus saw they were in great trouble as they rowed, because the wind was against them. Toward morning He came to them, walking on the lake. He wanted to pass by them. "They saw Him walking on the lake, and thinking He was a ghost, they cried out, "because they had all seen Him and were terrified.

Immediately He talked to them. "Have courage!" He said. "It is I. Don't be afraid." "He came into the boat with them, and the wind died down. The disciples were completely dumfounded. "They hadn't understood about the loaves. Their minds were dull.

"They crossed over and came to the shore at Gennesaret and anchored there.

"As soon as they stepped out of the boat, the people recognized Him. "They ran all over that part of the country and started to carry the sick on their beds to any place where they heard He was. "And wherever He came—to villages, towns, or farms—they would lay down the sick in their public places and beg Him just to let them touch the tassel of His garment. And all who touched it were made well.

^aSome early manuscripts add
"and dinner tables."

Unclean Hands

7 The Pharisees and some Bible scholars who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus. "They saw some of His disciples eat with unclean hands, that is, without washing them. "(Now the Pharisees, like all other Jews, don't eat without washing their hands up to the wrist—to keep the rules handed down by their fathers. "Coming from the marketplace, they don't eat without first washing; and there are many other rules they've learned to keep—baptizing cups, huge wine jars, and brass pans.^a

"Why don't Your disciples live according to the rules handed down by our fathers?" the Pharisees and the Bible scholars were asking Him. "They eat with unclean hands!"

"He told them, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites as it is written: *These people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from Me.* "They worship Me in vain because they teach men's rules. "You give up God's commandment and keep men's rules." "He added: "You have a fine way of setting aside God's commandment in order to keep your rules! "For example, Moses said: *Honor your father and your mother*, and: *Anyone who curses father or mother must die.* "But you say, 'If anyone says to his father or mother, "Anything by which I might help you is Korban"' (that is, a gift to God), "then you don't let him do anything for his father or his mother anymore. "In this way, by the rules you have taught, you set aside what

⁷
6-7 Is 28:13
10 Ex 20:12
Dt 5:16
Ex 21:17
Lv 20:9

*Probably Capernaum, after the
Passover, 29*

God has said. And you're doing many things like that."

¹⁴Then He called the people again and said to them, "Listen to Me, all of you, and understand this: ¹⁵Nothing that comes from the outside into a person can make him unclean, but what comes out of a person makes him unclean." ¹⁶b

¹⁷When He had left the people and gone home, His disciples asked Him about the illustration.

¹⁸"Are you just as dull as the rest?" He asked them. "Don't you know that nothing coming from the outside into a person can make him unclean, ¹⁹because it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach and so passes away?" (Here Jesus made all foods clean). ²⁰He added: "What comes out of a person makes him unclean. ²¹Instead, from the inside of men's hearts come out evil thoughts, sexual sins, stealing, murders, adulteries, ²²greed, wickedness, cheating, lust, a jealous eye, slander, pride, foolishness. ²³All these evils come from within and make a person unclean."

A Non-Jewish Woman

²⁴Leaving that place, Jesus went away to the neighborhood of Tyre. He went into a house and didn't want anyone to know it but couldn't keep it secret.

²⁵There was a woman in whose little daughter there was an unclean spirit. As soon as she heard about Him, she came and bowed down at His feet. ²⁶The woman wasn't Jewish but was born a Phoenician in Syria. She was asking Him to drive the devil out of her daughter.

²⁷"First let the children eat all they

want," He answered her. "It isn't good to take the children's bread and throw it to the puppies."

²⁸"You're right, Lord," she answered Him, "but even the puppies under the table eat some of the children's crumbs."

²⁹"Because you said this, go!" Jesus told her. "The devil has gone out of your daughter."

³⁰The woman went home and found the little child lying on the bed and the devil gone.

A Deaf and Dumb Man

³¹Jesus again left the country of Tyre and went through Sidon and the country of the Ten-Towns to the Lake of Galilee.

³²Some people brought Him a man who was deaf and tongue-tied, and they urged Jesus to lay His hand on him. ³³Taking him away from the crowd to be alone with him, He put His fingers into the man's ears. He spit and touched his tongue ³⁴and looked up to heaven and sighed. Then He said to him, "Ephphatha!" which means, "Open!" ³⁵His ears were opened, his tongue was set free to speak, and he talked naturally.

³⁶Jesus ordered the people not to tell anyone. But the more He forbade them, the more widely they spread the news. ³⁷They were dumfounded. "He has done everything well," they said. "He even makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak."

Jesus Feeds Four Thousand

8 At that time there were again many people who had nothing to eat. So He called the disciples. "I feel sorry for the people," He said to them. "They've been with Me

^bOur two oldest manuscripts lack v. 16: "If you have ears to hear, listen!" See 4:23.

three days now and have nothing to eat. "If I let them go home without eating, they will get exhausted on the road. Some of them have come a long way."

"Where could anyone get enough bread here in the wilderness to feed these?" His disciples asked Him.

"How many loaves do you have?" Jesus asked them.

"Seven," they answered.

"He ordered the people to sit down on the ground. Then He took the seven loaves, gave thanks, broke them, and gave them to His disciples to hand out, and they handed them to the people. "They also had a few small fish. He blessed them and asked that these too be handed out. "They ate and had a hearty meal. And they picked up the pieces that were left—seven baskets. "There were about four thousand.

Then He dismissed the people.

A Proof from Heaven

"Then Jesus and His disciples got into the boat and came into the neighborhood of Dalmanutha.

"The Pharisees came and started to argue with Him. To test Him, they asked Him for some wonderful proof from heaven.

"With a deep sigh from His spirit He asked, "Why do the people of today want a proof? Surely, I tell you, these people will get no proof!"

"Then He left them.

The Yeast of the Pharisees

He got into the boat again and started to cross to the other side. "They forgot to take bread and had only one loaf with them in the boat.

"Then Jesus definitely warned them: "Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod!"

"Arguing about this with one

another, they mentioned that they had no bread.

"Aware of what was going on, Jesus asked, "Why are you arguing about not having any bread? Don't you know or understand yet? Are your minds closed? "You have eyes—don't you see? You have ears—don't you hear? And don't you remember? "When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of pieces did you pick up?"

"Twelve," they told Him.

"And the seven loaves for the four thousand—how many baskets full of pieces did you pick up?"

"Seven," they answered Him.

"Don't you understand yet?" He asked them.

A Blind Man

"So they came to Bethsaida. There people brought a blind man to Jesus and begged Him to touch Him. "He took the blind man's hand and led him out of the village. Then He spit on his eyes and laid His hands on him. "Can you see anything?" He asked him.

"He looked up. "I see the people," he said. "They look to me like trees walking around."

"When Jesus again laid His hands on his eyes, he saw distinctly; sight came back, and he saw everything clearly. "Jesus sent him home, saying, "But don't go into the village."

"You Are the Promised Savior"

"Then Jesus and His disciples went to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way He asked His disciples, "Who do people say I am?"

"John the Baptizer," they answered Him. "Others say Elijah, and

Lake of Galilee, Philip's Caesarea, summer, 29

still others, one of the prophets.”

“But who do you say I am?” He asked them.

“You are the Christ!” Peter answered Him.

“He warned them not to tell anyone about Him.

“I Will Die and Rise Again”

“Then He was teaching them: “The Son of Man has to suffer much, be rejected by the elders, the ruling priests, and the Bible scholars, be killed, and then rise on the third day.” “He was speaking quite frankly.

But Peter took Him aside and started to correct Him. “Turning, He looked at His disciples and corrected Peter. “Get behind Me, Satan!” He said. “You’re not thinking what God thinks but what men think.”

Take the Cross

“He called the people as well as His disciples. “If you want to follow Me,” He told them, “deny yourself, take up your cross, and come with Me. “If you want to save your soul, you will lose it. But if you will lose your soul for Me and for the good news, you will save it. “What good does it do you to win the whole world and lose your soul? “Or what would you give to buy back your soul? “If among the unfaithful and sinful people of today you’re ashamed of Me and what I say, then the Son of Man will be ashamed of you when He comes with the holy angels in His Father’s glory.

9 “Let Me assure you,” He told them, “there are some standing here who will never taste death till they see God has come to rule with power.”

Jesus Shows His Glory

“After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John with Him and led them up a high mountain to be alone with them.

He was transfigured before them, and His clothes became dazzling white—nobody on earth could bleach them so white. “Elijah and Moses appeared to them and were talking with Jesus.

“Master,” Peter said to Jesus, “it’s good for us to be here. Let’s put up three shelters, one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” “He didn’t know what he was saying; they were so terrified.

“A cloud came and overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud: “This is My Son whom I love. Listen to Him.”

“Suddenly, as they looked around, they no longer saw anyone but Jesus with them.

“On their way down the mountain Jesus ordered them not to tell anyone what they had seen, till the Son of Man had risen from the dead. “They kept in mind what He said and argued with one another, asking, “What is this rising from the dead?” “So they asked Him, “Why do those who know the Bible say, ‘First Elijah has to come’?”

““First *Elijah* does come,” He told them, “and *puts everything in order again*. And what is written about the Son of Man? That He must suffer much and be treated shamefully. “Yes, I tell you, Elijah has come, and people treated him as they pleased, as it is written about him.”

The Epileptic Boy

“When they got back to the other disciples, they saw a big crowd around them and some Bible schol-

Near Philip’s Caesarea, summer, 29

9
7 Ps 27
Dt 18:15
12 Mt 4:5-6

ars arguing with them. ¹⁹Then the whole crowd was amazed to see Jesus, and they ran and welcomed Him.

¹⁶"What is this argument about?" He asked them.

¹⁷"Teacher," someone in the crowd answered, "I brought You my son. There's a speechless spirit in him. ¹⁸Wherever the spirit takes hold of him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth and grinds his teeth and gets rigid. I asked Your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they couldn't do it."

¹⁹"O you unbelieving people!" Jesus answered. "How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring him to Me."

²⁰They brought the boy to Him. As soon as the spirit saw Jesus, it threw the boy into convulsions. He fell on the ground and rolled around and foamed at the mouth.

²¹Jesus asked his father, "How long has he been like this?"

"Since he was a child," he said. ²²"It often threw him into fire or into water to kill him. Oh, if You can do anything, have pity on us and help us."

²³"You say, 'If you can!'" Jesus answered him. "Anything can be done if you believe."

²⁴Immediately the child's father cried out, "I do believe; help me with my unbelief."

²⁵When Jesus saw a crowd quickly gather around Him, He talked sharply to the unclean spirit: "You deaf and dumb spirit, I order you, 'Come out of him, and don't go into him again.'"

²⁶It screamed and wrenched him violently and came out. The boy became like a corpse, so that everybody said, "He's dead."

²⁷Jesus took his hand, helped him

get up, and he stood up.

²⁸When He went into a house and His disciples were alone with Him, they asked Him, "Why couldn't we drive out the spirit?"

²⁹"This kind can be driven out only by prayer," He told them.

"I Will Die and Rise Again"

³⁰Leaving that place, they started to go on byways through Galilee. Jesus didn't want anybody to know about it, ³¹because He was teaching His disciples and telling them: "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, but on the third day after He's killed He will rise."

³²They didn't understand what He said and were afraid to ask Him.

Who Is the Greatest?

³³They went to Capernaum. When He came home, He asked the disciples, "What were you discussing on the way?" ³⁴They were silent because they had on the way discussed who was the greatest.

³⁵He sat down and called the twelve. "If anyone wants to be first," He told them, "he will have to be last of all and serve everybody."

³⁶He took a little child, had him stand in front of them, put His arms around him, and said to them, ³⁷"If you welcome a child like this in My name, you welcome Me. And if you welcome Me, you welcome not only Me but Him who sent Me."

"He Is for Us"

³⁸"Teacher," John said to Jesus, "we saw a man drive out devils in Your name, and we tried to stop him because he hasn't been with us."

³⁹"Don't try to stop him," Jesus said. "Anyone who does a miracle in My name cannot turn around and

Galilee, late summer, 29

speak evil of Me. ⁴⁰Anyone who isn't against us is for us. ⁴¹I tell you, anyone who gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will certainly not lose his reward."

Do I Lead Others to Sin?

⁴²"If anyone leads one of these little ones who believe in Me into sin, it would be better for him to have a big millstone hung around his neck and be thrown into the lake.

⁴³"If your hand makes you sin, cut it off. It is better for you to go into life crippled than to have two hands and go to hell, where the fire can't be put out.^c ⁴⁴If your foot makes you sin, cut it off. It is better for you to go into life with only one foot than to have two feet and be thrown into hell.^c ⁴⁵If your eye makes you sin, throw it away. It is better for you to go into God's kingdom with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, ⁴⁶where *the worm that consumes them doesn't die and the fire isn't put out.*

⁴⁹"Everyone has to be salted with fire. ⁵⁰Salt is good. But if salt loses its taste, how will you make it taste salty again? Keep salt within you, and so live in peace with one another."

Husband and Wife

10 Jesus left that place and went into the country of Judea and on the other side of the Jordan, and again the crowds gathered around Him. And again He taught them as He used to do.

²Some Pharisees came to Him. "Is

it right for a man to divorce his wife?" they asked Him in order to test Him.

³"What did Moses order you to do?" He asked them.

⁴"Moses let a man *make out a divorce paper and divorce his wife,*" they said.

⁵"He wrote this law for you on account of your closed minds," Jesus told them. ⁶"But when God made the world, He in the beginning *made them a male and a female.* ⁷*That's why a man will leave his father and mother* ⁸*and the two will be one flesh.* And so they are no more two but one flesh. ⁹Now, what God has joined together man must not separate."

¹⁰In the house the disciples also asked Him about this. ¹¹"If anyone divorces his wife," He answered them, "and marries another, he's living in adultery with her. ¹²And if a wife divorces her husband and marries another man, she's living in adultery."

Jesus Loves Children

¹³Some people brought babies to Jesus to have Him touch them, but the disciples sternly told them not to do it.

¹⁴But when Jesus saw this, He didn't like it at all. "Let the little children come to Me," He told them. "Don't keep them away. God's kingdom belongs to such as these. ¹⁵I tell you the truth, if you don't receive God's kingdom like a little child, you will not get into it."

¹⁶He took them in His arms, laid His hands on them, and blessed them.

48 15 66 24
10
4 Dt 24 1
6 Gn 1 27
5 2
7-8 Gn 2 24

^cOur two oldest manuscripts lack vv. 44 and 46: "Where their worm doesn't die and the fire isn't put out." See v. 48.

The Rich Young Leader

¹⁷As Jesus was coming out to the road, a man came running to Him and knelt before Him. "Good Teacher," he asked Him, "what should I do to get everlasting life?"

¹⁸"Why do you call Me good?" Jesus asked him. "Nobody is good except One—God. ¹⁹You know the commandments: *Don't murder, Don't commit adultery, Don't steal, Don't lie, Don't rob, Honor your father and mother.*"

²⁰"Teacher," he told Him, "I've kept all these since I was a child."

²¹Jesus looked at him and loved him. "You lack one thing," Jesus told him. "Go, sell everything you have, and give the money to the poor, and you'll have a treasure in heaven. Then come and follow Me."

²²When he heard that, he looked gloomy and went away sad, because he was very rich. ²³Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, "How hard it is for rich people to get into God's kingdom!"

²⁴The disciples were surprised He said that. But Jesus said to them again, "Children, how hard it is to get into God's kingdom! ²⁵It's easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to get into God's kingdom."

²⁶They were more amazed than ever. "Who can be saved?" they asked one another.

²⁷"Men can't do this," Jesus said as He looked at them. "But God can, because *God can do anything.*"

²⁸Then Peter spoke up: "Look! We gave up everything and followed You."

²⁹"Let Me assure you," Jesus said, "everyone who gave up his home, brothers or sisters, mother, father, or children, or fields for Me and for the

good news, ³⁰will certainly get a hundred times as much here in this life: houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children and fields, with persecutions, and in the coming world everlasting life. ³¹But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

The Cup of Suffering

³²As they were on their way up to Jerusalem, Jesus walked ahead of them. They were amazed, and the others who were following Him were afraid. So once again He took the twelve with Him and told them what was going to happen to Him: ³³"Look, we're going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the ruling priests and the Bible scholars, who will condemn Him to die and hand Him over to the Gentiles. ³⁴They'll mock Him and spit on Him, scourge Him and kill Him. But on the third day He will rise."

³⁵James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him. "Teacher," they said to Him, "we want You to do for us what we ask."

³⁶"What do you want Me to do for You?" He asked them.

³⁷"Let one of us sit at Your right," they told Him, "and the other at Your left in Your glory."

³⁸"You don't know what you're asking," Jesus answered them. "Can you drink the cup I'm drinking or be baptized with the baptism with which I'm being baptized?"

³⁹"We can," they told Him.

"You'll drink the cup I'm drinking," Jesus told them, "and be baptized with the baptism with which I'm being baptized. ⁴⁰But sitting at My right or left is something I can give only to those for whom it is prepared."

19 E=20
12-16,
DI 5, 19-20
27 Gn 18:14,
JOB 42:2,
Zch 8:6

Perea, before the Passover, 30

"When the other ten heard about it, they got angry with James and John. "Then Jesus called them and told them, "You know that those who are considered rulers of the nations are lords over them, and their great men are tyrants over them. "But among you it's different. Anyone who wants to become great among you will have to serve you, "and anyone who wants to be first among you will have to be everybody's slave. "Why, even the Son of Man didn't come to be served but to serve and give His life as a ransom for many people."

Blind Bartimaeus

"Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and His disciples and many people were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the road. "When he heard it was Jesus from Nazareth, he began to call, "Son of David, Jesus, have pity on me!"

"Many were urging him to be quiet. But he called all the louder, "Son of David, have pity on me!"

"Jesus stopped and said, "Call him!" They called the blind man and told him, "Cheer up! Get up! He's calling you." "He laid aside his garment, jumped up, and went to Jesus.

"What do you want Me to do for you?" Jesus asked him.

"Master, I want to see again," the blind man told Him.

"Go," Jesus told him; "your faith has made you well."

Immediately he could see, and he followed Him on the road.

The King Comes to Jerusalem

11 When they were getting near Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of

Olives, Jesus sent two of His disciples. "Go into the village ahead of you," He told them, "and just as you go into it, you'll find a young donkey tied up that nobody ever sat on. Untie it and bring it to Me. "And if anybody asks you, 'Why are you doing that?' say, 'The Lord needs it and will promptly send it back here.'"

"They went and found the colt tied to the gate, outside in the street, and they started to untie it.

"What are you doing, untying the colt?" some of the men standing there asked them. "They answered them just as Jesus had told them, and the men let them go.

"So they brought the colt to Jesus, put their garments on it, and He sat on it. "Many spread their garments on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they cut in the fields. "Those who went ahead and those who followed Him were shouting:

"Our Savior!

Blessed is He who is coming in the Lord's name!

"Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!

Our Savior—in the highest heavens!"

"He came into Jerusalem and into the temple and looked around at everything. Since it was late now, He went with the twelve out to Bethany.

Nothing but Leaves

"The next day when they left Bethany, Jesus was hungry. "In the distance He saw a fig tree with leaves, and He went to see if He could find anything on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, because it wasn't the season for figs. "Then He said to the tree,

*Palm Sunday and Monday, April
2—3*

and His disciples heard Him: "May nobody ever eat fruit from you again!"

He Cleanses the Temple Again

¹³When they came to Jerusalem, He went into the temple and proceeded to drive out those who were selling and buying in the temple, and He upset the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those who sold pigeons. ¹⁴He would not let anyone carry a vessel across the temple grounds.

¹⁵Then He taught: "Isn't it written: *My house should be called a house of prayer for all the nations?* But you made it a *den of robbers.*"

¹⁶When the ruling priests and Bible scholars heard Him, they tried to find a way to kill Him. They were afraid of Him, because He amazed all the people by His teaching.

¹⁷When evening came, He would leave the city.

The Fig Tree Is Withered

²⁰When they walked by early in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots up. ²¹Peter, remembering, said to Him, "Master, look! The fig tree You cursed is dried up."

²²"Believe in God!" Jesus answered them. ²³"I tell you the truth, if you will say to this mount, 'Be lifted up and be thrown into the sea,'^d and have no doubt in your mind but believe what you say will be done, it will be done for you. ²⁴That's why I tell you, anything you ask for in prayer, believing that you received it, and you

will have it. ²⁵When you stand and pray, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven will forgive you your sins."^e

From Heaven

²⁷They came again to Jerusalem. As He was walking in the temple, the ruling priests, the Bible scholars, and the elders came to Him. ²⁸"By what authority are You doing these things?" they asked Him. "Or who gave You the right to do them?"

²⁹Jesus answered them, "I will ask you a question. You answer Me, and then I'll tell you by what authority I'm doing these things. ³⁰John's baptism—was it from heaven or from men? Answer Me."

³¹They argued among themselves, "If we say, 'From Heaven,' He will ask, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' ³²But should we say, 'From men?'" They were afraid of the people. Everybody thought John certainly was a prophet. ³³So they answered Jesus, "We don't know."

Then Jesus told them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I'm doing these things."

God's Vineyard

12 Then He used stories in talking to them:

"A man *planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, cut a vat into the rock, and built a watchtower.* Then he rented it out to workers and left home.

²At the right time he sent a slave to the workers to get from them a share of the products of the

^dBy this mount Jesus means the Mount of Olives; by the sea He means the Dead Sea, which can be seen from the Mount of Olives.

^eOur two oldest manuscripts lack v. 26: "But if you don't forgive, your Father in heaven will not forgive your sins." See Matt. 6:14-15.

vineyard. ¹³But they took him, beat him, and sent him back empty-handed. ¹⁴He sent another slave to them. They hit him on the head and treated him shamefully. ¹⁵He sent another, and that one they killed. Then many others. Some of these they beat, and others they killed.

¹⁶“He had one more, a son, whom he loved. Finally he sent him to them saying, ‘They will respect my son.’

¹⁷“But those workers said to one another, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him, and then we’ll get the inheritance.’ ¹⁸They took him, killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard.

¹⁹“What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and kill the workers and give the vineyard to others. ²⁰Haven’t you read this in your Bible: *The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. “The Lord has done it, and we think it is wonderful!”*

²¹They wanted to grab Him, because they knew His story was aimed at them, but they were afraid of the crowd. So they let Him alone and went away.

Taxes

¹They sent some Pharisees and some of Herod’s men to Him in order to trap Him with a question. ²“When they came to Him, they said, ‘Teacher, we know You’re honest and don’t care what others think, because You don’t favor any special persons but You really teach God’s way. Is it right to pay a tax to Caesar or not? ³“Should we pay it or not?”

Seeing through their hypocritical way, Jesus asked them, “Why do you test Me? Bring Me a denarius; I want to see it.”

⁴“They brought it. “Whose head is this and whose inscription?” He asked them.

“Caesar’s,” they told Him.

⁵“Give Caesar what is Caesar’s,” Jesus told them, “and God what is God’s.” He amazed them.

The Dead Live

¹“The Sadducees, who say the dead don’t rise, came to Him with this question: ²“Teacher, Moses wrote for us: *If anyone dies and leaves a wife but no child, his brother should marry his widow and have children for his brother.* ³Now, there were seven brothers. The first took a wife, died, and left no children. ⁴The second married her, died, and left no children. So did the third. ⁵None of the seven left any children. Last of all the woman died too. ⁶When the dead rise, whose wife will she be? You know, the seven had her as wife.”

⁷Jesus asked them, “Aren’t you wrong because you don’t know your Bible or God’s power? ⁸When they rise from the dead, men and women don’t marry but are like angels in heaven. ⁹About the dead rising, didn’t you read in the book of Moses, in the story of the bush, how God told him: *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?* ¹⁰He’s not the God of the dead but of the living. You’re badly mistaken!”

Love God and Your Neighbor

¹One of the men trained in the Bible came to Him. Hearing the others argue with Him and seeing how well Jesus answered them, he asked Him, “Which is the most important of all the commandments?”

²Jesus answered, “The most im-

10-11 Ps 118
22-23
19 Gn 28.8
Dt 25.5-6
26 Ex 3.6

*In the temple, Tuesday, April 4.
A.D. 30*

portant is: *Listen, Israel, the Lord our God alone is Lord.* ³⁰Then love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your life, with all your mind, and with all your strength. ³¹The next is: *Love your neighbor like yourself.* No other commandment is greater than these."

³²"Right, Teacher!" the Bible scholar said to Him. "You told the truth: *He is the only One, and there is no other beside Him,* ³³and *loving Him with all your heart, with all your understanding, and with all your strength, and loving your neighbor like yourself* is more than all the burnt offerings and sacrifices."

³⁴When Jesus saw how sensibly he answered, He told him, "You're not far from God's kingdom."

Nobody dared to ask Him another question.

David's Son

³⁵While Jesus was teaching in the temple, He asked, "How can the Bible scholars say the promised Savior is David's Son? ³⁶David himself by the Holy Spirit said: *The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right till I put Your enemies under Your feet.'* ³⁷David himself calls Him Lord. Then how can He be his Son?"

Beware!

The big crowd liked to hear Him. ³⁸As He taught, He said, "Beware of certain teachers of the Law, who like to go around in long robes, be greeted in the marketplaces, ³⁹sit in the front seats in synagogues, and have the places of honor at dinners. ⁴⁰They swallow the houses of widows, and then, to cover up, make

long prayers. They will be punished all the more."

A Cent

"As Jesus sat facing the contribution boxes, He was watching how people put money into them. Many rich people put in much. ⁴²A poor widow came and dropped in two small coins, worth about a cent.

⁴³He called His disciples. "I tell you," He said to them, "this poor widow certainly put in more than all the others who put in money. ⁴⁴All the others took some of what they had left over and dropped it in, but she put in what she needed herself, all she had—all she had to live on."

Sorrow Ahead!

13 As He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher, look at those wonderful stones and buildings!"

²¹"You see these large buildings?" Jesus asked him. "Not a stone will be left on another here but will be torn down."

²²When He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, facing the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately: "Tell us, when will this be, and how can we tell when all this is going to happen?"

²³"Be careful not to let anyone deceive you," Jesus told them. "Many will come using My name and saying, 'I am He,' and will deceive many.

²⁴"When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, don't get alarmed. *It must happen,* but that's not the end yet. *Nation will fight against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.* There will be earthquakes in differ-

29-30 Dt 6 4-5
31 Lv 19 18
32-33 Dt 4
35 6 4-5
33 Lv 19 18
1 Sm 15 22
36 Ps 110 1
13
7 Dn 2 28
8 2 Ch 15 6
16 19 2

ent places, and famines. These are only the first pains.†

“Be on your guard! Men will hand you over to their courts and whip you in their synagogs. You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake to tell them the truth. “The good news must be preached to all nations before the end comes. “When they are taking you away to hand you over to the authorities, don’t worry beforehand what you will say. But say whatever is given you to say when the time comes; you see, it isn’t you speaking but the Holy Spirit.

“A brother will betray his brother to death, and a father his child. *Children will rebel against their parents* and kill them. “Everybody will hate you because of My name. But endure to the end, and you’ll be saved.”

Jerusalem Will Be Destroyed

“When you see *the abomination laying waste the land* and standing where it should not be (anyone who reads this should understand it), then if you’re in Judea, flee to the hills. “If you’re on the roof, don’t come down and go into your house to get anything. “If you’re in the field, don’t turn back to get your garment.

“Woe to the women who in those days are expecting babies or nursing them. “Pray that it won’t happen in winter. “*It will be a time of misery such as never has been from the beginning* of the world that God made *until now* and never will be. “And if the Lord had not cut short that time, nobody would be saved. But to help those whom He

has chosen, God has cut short the time.”

Jesus Is Coming

“If anyone tells you then, ‘Look, here is Christ!’ or, ‘There He is!’ don’t believe it. “False Christs and false prophets will come and do *miracles and wonders* to deceive if possible those whom God has chosen. “Be on your guard. You see, I’ve told you everything before it happens.

“Now, after the misery of that time *the sun will turn dark, the moon will stop shining, and the stars will be falling from the sky.* And the powers of heaven will be shaken. “Then people will see the *Son of Man coming in the clouds* with great power and glory. “And then He will send the angels and *gather His chosen ones from the north, south, east, and west, and from one end of the world to the other.*

“Learn this lesson from a fig tree: When its branch gets tender and grows leaves, you know summer is near. “So also when you see those things happen, you know He is near, at your door.

“I tell you the truth, these people will not pass away till all this happens. “Heaven and earth will pass away, but what I say will not pass away.”

Be Ready!

“No one knows about that day or hour, not the angels in heaven, not the Son, only the Father. “Be careful and watch, because you don’t know when it will happen. “It’s like a man who went on a trip. As he left home, he put his slaves in

12 Mt 7:6
14 Dn 8:27
11:31
12:11
19 Dn 12:1
22 Dt 12:1
24-25 Lk 13
16: 34-6
Ez 38:7-8
26 Dn 7:12
27 Dt 32:6
Zch 2:6

†As in childbirth, sharper pains will follow before the Savior comes in glory.

*Mount of Olives, Jerusalem,
(Bethany), April 4 (1)*

charge, assigned work to every one, and ordered the doorkeeper to watch. ³³Watch, then, because you don't know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, at the time when the rooster crows, or early in the morning. ³⁴Make sure he doesn't come suddenly and find you asleep. ³⁵What I tell you, I tell everyone: 'Watch!'"

The Plot

14 It was two days before the festival of the Passover and of bread without yeast. The ruling priests and the Bible scholars were looking for some treacherous way to arrest Jesus and kill Him. ²They said, "Not in the festival crowd, or there will be a riot among the people."

Mary Anoints Jesus

³While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of Simon the leper and was lying at the table, a woman came with an alabaster jar of perfume, real nard and very expensive. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on His head.

"Some who were there felt annoyed and said to one another, "Why was the perfume wasted like this? ⁴This perfume could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor." And they were grumbling at her.

⁵"Let her alone," Jesus said. "Why should you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to Me. ⁶The poor you always have with you, and you can help them whenever you want to, but you will not always have Me. ⁷She has done what she could. She came ahead of time to pour the perfume on My body to

prepare it for burial. ⁸I tell you, wherever the good news is preached in the whole world, certainly what she has done will also be told in memory of her."

Judas Plans to Betray Jesus

⁹Judas, the man from Kerioth, one of the twelve, went to the high priests to betray Jesus to them. ¹⁰They were delighted to hear it and promised to give him money. So he was looking for a chance to betray Him.

The Passover

¹²On the first of the Passover days of bread without yeast, when it was customary to kill the Passover lamb, the disciples asked Jesus, "Where do You want us to go and get things ready for You to eat the Passover?"

¹³He sent two of His disciples and told them: "Go into the city, and you will meet a man carrying a jar of water. Follow him, ¹⁴and when he goes into a house, tell the owner: 'The Teacher asks, "Where is My room in which I can eat the Passover with My disciples?"' ¹⁵Then he will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Get the things ready for us here."

¹⁶The disciples left, went into the city, and found everything as He had told them. And so they got the Passover ready.

¹⁷In the evening He came there with the twelve.

"Is It I?"

¹⁸While they were still lying down and eating, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, one of you is going to betray Me, one who is *eating with Me!*"

¹⁹They felt hurt and asked Him one after another, "You don't mean me?"

*Jerusalem, Tuesday, Thursday,
April 4, 6*

²⁰“One of the twelve,” He told them, “one who is dipping into the bowl with Me. ²¹The Son of Man is going away as it is written about Him, but woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for that man if he had never been born.”

The Lord's Supper

²²While they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it. He broke it and gave it to them and said, “Take it. This is My body.”

²³Then He took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them. And they all drank of it. ²⁴He told them, “This is My *blood of the covenant*, poured out for all.

²⁵“Surely, I tell you, I will not drink again of the product of the vine until that day when I drink it in a new way in God's kingdom.”

²⁶Then they sang a hymn.⁸

“You Will Deny Me”

They started out for the Mount of Olives.

²⁷Then Jesus told them, “You will all turn against Me, because it is written: *I will strike down the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.* ²⁸But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.”

²⁹“Even if they all turn against You,” Peter answered Him, “I will not.”

³⁰“I tell you the truth,” Jesus told him, “tonight, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.”

³¹But he kept insisting all the more, “If I have to die with You, I'll never deny You.” All the others said the same thing.

⁸Perhaps Psalms 115 to 118.

Gethsemane

³²They came to a place called Gethsemane, and He said to His disciples, “Sit down here while I pray.”

³³He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He started to feel terror and grief. *“I am so full of sorrow,”* ³⁴He told them, “I am almost dying. Stay here and keep awake.”

³⁵Going ahead a little, He bowed down to the ground and prayed that if it were possible He might not have to suffer what was ahead of Him. ³⁶“My Father,” He said, “You can do anything. Take this cup away from Me. But let it not be as I want it but as You want it.”

³⁷He came and found them asleep. “Simon, are you sleeping?” He asked Peter. “So you couldn't keep awake one hour! ³⁸Stay awake and pray that you may not be tempted. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

³⁹He went away again and prayed the same as before. ⁴⁰He came again and found them asleep—they couldn't keep their eyes open and didn't know what to say to Him.

⁴¹He came back a third time. “Are you going to sleep on now and rest?” He asked them. “It's enough. The time has come. Now the Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴²Get up, let us go. Here comes the man to betray Me!”

The Arrest

⁴³Just then, while Jesus was still talking, Judas, one of the twelve, came with a crowd of men with swords and clubs from the ruling priests, the Bible scholars, and the

²⁴ Ex 24:8
Jer 31:32
Zech 9:11
27 Zech 12:7
33 Ps 42:5
43:5

elders. "The traitor had given them a signal. "The One I kiss is the Man," he said. "Grab Him, take Him away, and don't let Him escape."

"When he came there, he quickly stepped up to Jesus and said, "Master!" and kissed Him.

"Then the men took hold of Jesus and arrested Him. "One of those who were standing near Him drew his sword, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his ear.

"Did you come out to arrest Me," Jesus asked them. "with swords and clubs as if I were a robber? "Day after day I was with you as I taught in the temple, and you didn't arrest Me. But what the Bible says has to come true."

"Then all the disciples left Him and ran away. "One young man who also was following Him had nothing on but a linen cloth. They tried to grab him. "but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked.

62 Ps 110:1.
Dn 7:1

The First Trial Before the Jewish Court

"The men took Jesus to the high priest, and all the ruling priests, elders, and Bible scholars were coming together. "Peter followed Him at a distance and even went into the high priest's courtyard. And he was sitting with the attendants, warming himself at the fire.

"The ruling priests and the whole Jewish court tried to get some testimony against Jesus in order to kill Him but couldn't find any.

"While many gave false testimony against Him, their statements didn't agree.

"Then some got up and gave this false testimony against Him: "We heard Him say, 'I will tear down this temple, made by human hands, and in three days build another not made

by human hands.'" "But even on this point their statements didn't agree.

"Then the high priest stepped forward. "Don't You have anything to say to this?" he asked Jesus. "What are these men testifying against You?"

"But He was silent and didn't answer.

Again the high priest asked Him, "Are You the promised Savior, the Son of the Blessed?"

"I am," Jesus said. "And you will all see *the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven.*"

"Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, "Why do we need any more witnesses? "You've heard the blasphemy. What do you think?"

Then all condemned Him, saying He must die. "Some of them started to spit at Him. They covered His face, hit Him with their fists, and told Him, "Prophecy!" The attendants also slapped Him when they took charge of Him.

Peter Denies Jesus

"While Peter was down in the courtyard, one of the high priest's maids came and saw Peter warming himself. "You too were with the Man from Nazareth—this Jesus," she said, looking at him.

"But he denied it: "I don't know Him, and I don't know what you're talking about."

He went out to the entrance. Then a rooster crowed.

"The maid saw him. "He's one of them," she also told those who were standing around. "Again he denied.

After a little while those who stood near him also told Peter,

April 7, A.D. 30

"Sure, you're one of them, because you're a Galilean!"

⁷Then he started to curse and swear: "I don't know this Man you're talking about." ⁸Just then a rooster crowed a second time, and Peter remembered Jesus telling him: "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." And he started to cry.

Before Pilate

15 As soon as it was morning, the ruling priests, the elders, and the Bible scholars, that is, the whole Jewish court, came to a decision. They bound Jesus, took Him away, and handed Him over to Pilate.

²Pilate asked Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?"

"Yes," Jesus answered him.

³The ruling priests were accusing Him of many things.

"Don't You have anything to say to this?" Pilate asked Him again. "See how many accusations they're bringing against You!"

⁴But Jesus didn't answer him anymore, so that Pilate was surprised.

Barabbas

⁶Now, at every festival Pilate used to free a prisoner whom the people asked for. ⁷There was a man by the name of Barabbas. He was in prison with the rebels who in their revolt had committed a murder. ⁸And the crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them as he had done before. ⁹Pilate answered them by asking, "Do you want me to free the King of the Jews for you?" ¹⁰He knew the ruling priests had handed Jesus over to him because they were jealous.

¹¹The ruling priests stirred up the

people to get him to free Barabbas for them instead.

¹²"Now, what should I do with Him you call the King of the Jews?" Pilate again asked them.

¹³Then they yelled, "Crucify Him!"

¹⁴"Why, what wrong has He done?" Pilate asked them.

But they yelled all the louder, "Crucify Him!"

¹⁵Then Pilate, wanting to satisfy the people, freed Barabbas for them, but Jesus he scourged and handed over to be crucified.

¹⁶The soldiers took Him into the courtyard of the governor's palace and called together the whole troop of soldiers. ¹⁷They put a purple cloak on Him, twisted some thorns into a crown and placed it on His head, ¹⁸and started to greet Him: "Hail, King of the Jews!" ¹⁹They hit Him on the head with a stick, spit on Him, knelt, and worshiped Him.

"They Crucified Him"

²⁰After mocking Him, the soldiers took off the purple cloak and put His own clothes on Him. Then they took Him out to crucify Him. ²¹A certain Simon from Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was on his way in from the country, and as he was going to pass by, they forced him to carry the cross of Jesus.

²²They took Him to the Golgotha place, which means Skull Place. ²³They tried to give Him wine mixed with myrrh, but He didn't take it. ²⁴They crucified Him. And they divided His clothes among them by throwing lots for them to see what each one should get. ²⁵It was nine in the morning when they crucified Him. ²⁶There was a notice stating why Jesus was being punished; it read: THE KING OF THE JEWS. ²⁷With

Good Friday, April 7, A.D. 30

Him they crucified two robbers, one at His right hand and the other at His left.^h

²⁹Those who passed by were abusing Him, *shaking their heads* and saying, "Ha! You tear down the temple and build it in three days—³⁰come down from the cross, and save Yourself!" ³¹In the same way the ruling priests and the Bible scholars made fun of Him among themselves and said, "He saved others—He can't save Himself. ³²The promised Savior, the King of Israel, should now come down from the cross. He should let us see that, and we'll believe Him." Those crucified with Him also were insulting Him.

Jesus Dies

³³When twelve o'clock came, darkness came over the whole country and lasted till three in the afternoon. ³⁴At three o'clock Jesus called out aloud, "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*" which means, "My God, My God, why did You forsake Me?"

³⁵Hearing Him, some of those standing near said, "Listen! He's calling Elijah." ³⁶Someone ran, soaked a sponge in *sour wine*, put it on a stick, and *gave Him a drink*. "Let's see," he said, "if Elijah comes to take Him down."

³⁷Then Jesus called out loud and died. ³⁸And the curtain in the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

³⁹When the captain who stood facing Jesus saw how He gave up His spirit, he said, "This Man certainly was the Son of God!"

⁴⁰There were women watching

from a distance. Among them were Mary from Magdala and Mary, the mother of James the Less and of Joseph, and Salome. "While He was in Galilee, they had followed Him and helped Him. There were also many other women who had come up to Jerusalem with Him.

Jesus Is Buried

⁴¹In the evening, since it was the day of preparation, that is, Friday, ⁴²Joseph from Arimathea, an important member of the Jewish court who also was waiting for God's kingdom, dared to go to Pilate and ask for Jesus' body.

⁴³Pilate was surprised He was already dead. He called the captain and asked him, "Has He died already?" "When the captain told him, Pilate let Joseph have the body.

⁴⁴Joseph bought some linen, took the body down, wrapped it in the linen, and laid it in a grave that had been cut in the rock, and rolled a stone against the door of the grave.

⁴⁵Mary from Magdala and Mary the mother of Josès watched where He was laid.

Jesus Rises

16 On Saturday evening Mary from Magdala, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices to go and anoint Jesus.

²On Sunday they were coming to the grave very early when the sun was up. ³"Who is going to roll away the stone for us from the door of the grave?" they asked one another; 'it was very large. But when they looked up, they saw the stone had been rolled back. ⁴As they went into the grave, they saw a

29 Ps 109:25
34 Ps 22:1
36 Ps 69:21
40 Ps 38:11

^hOur oldest manuscripts lack v. 28: "And what the Bible said came true, He will be counted among criminals." See Luke 22:37.

young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting at the right. And they were amazed.

“Don’t be amazed,” he told them. “You’re looking for Jesus from Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen. He is not here. See the place where He was laid. But go and tell His disciples and Peter, He is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see Him, as He told you.”

They went out and hurried away from the grave, because they were trembling and bewildered. They were so frightened they didn’t tell anybody anything.ⁱ

The Living Savior

After Jesus rose early on Sunday, He showed Himself first to Mary from Magdala, out of whom He had driven seven devils. She went and told the news to those who had been with Him and were now mourning and crying. When they heard He was alive and had been seen by her, they didn’t believe it.

Later He appeared in a different form to two of them as they were walking into the country. They

went back and told the others, but these didn’t believe them either. Still later He showed Himself to the eleven while they were lying at the table, and He scolded them because their minds were closed and they didn’t believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.

Then He told them, “Go everywhere in the world and preach the good news to the whole world.

He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who doesn’t believe will be damned.

The believers will have these proofs: In My name they will drive out devils. They will speak new languages. They will pick up snakes. If they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them. They will lay their hands on the sick, and these will get well.”

After talking with them, the Lord was taken up to heaven and sat down at the right of God.

They went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed the Word by the wonderful proofs that went with it.

¹⁶
^{19 2 K 2:11.}
^{Ps 110:1}

ⁱThe two oldest manuscripts lack Mark 16:9-20 but end Mark’s Gospel with v. 8.

LUKE

1 MANY HAVE UNDERTAKEN to plan and write a story of what has been done among us, ²just as we heard it from those who from the first became eyewitnesses and servants of the Word. ³For this reason I too decided to check everything carefully from the beginning and to write it down in the proper order for you, excellent Theophilus, ⁴so that you will be sure what you have heard is true.

An Angel Comes to Zacharias

⁵When Herod was king in the country of the Jews, there was a priest by the name of Zacharias. He belonged to the division of priests named after Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶Both were righteous before God as they lived blamelessly according to all the rules and regulations of the Lord.

⁷But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren and both were old.

⁸Once Zacharias was on duty with his division and serving as priest before God. ⁹According to the custom of the priests he was chosen by lot to go into the Lord's temple to burn incense. ¹⁰All the people were praying outside while he was burning incense.

¹¹Then he saw the Lord's angel standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹²Zacharias was startled to see him and was terrified.

¹³"Don't be afraid, Zacharias," the angel told him. "*Your prayer has been heard. You and your wife*

Elizabeth will have a son, and you must call him John. He will be your joy and delight, and many will be glad he was born.

¹⁴"He will be a great man before the Lord. *He will drink no wine or liquor. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. And he will bring many in Israel back to the Lord their God. He will go ahead of Him with the spirit and power of Elijah. to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to think as righteous men—and so to get a people thoroughly prepared for the Lord.*"

¹⁵"How can I be sure of this?" Zacharias asked the angel. "I'm an old man, and my wife is old."

¹⁶"I am Gabriel!" the angel answered him. "I stand before God and was sent to speak to you and tell you this good news. ¹⁷And now, you will be silent and not able to talk till the day this happens, because you didn't believe what I said. But it will come true at the right time."

¹⁸Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zacharias and were surprised he was staying so long in the holy place. ¹⁹When he did come out, he couldn't speak to them. Then they realized he had seen a vision in the holy place. He kept motioning to them and wasn't able to talk.

²⁰When the days of his service were over, he went home. ²¹After this, his wife Elizabeth conceived and for five months she didn't show herself in public. ²²"The Lord did

Judea, October, 6 B.C.

this for me," she said. "I was feeling ashamed among people, but He was kind and helped me, and I don't have to feel ashamed any more."

The Angel Comes to Mary

²⁸In the sixth month God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁹to a virgin engaged to a man by the name of Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

³⁰Coming into her home, the angel said, "Greetings, you blessed one. The Lord is with you."

³¹Startled by what he said, she tried to figure out what such a greeting might mean.

³²"Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her. "God is good to you. ³³You see, you will conceive and have a son, and you will call Him JESUS. ³⁴He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. ³⁵And the Lord will give Him the throne of His ancestor David. He will be King over the people of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will never end."

³⁶"How can this be?" Mary asked the angel. "I've had no relations with a husband."

³⁷"The Holy Spirit will come over you," the angel answered her, "and a power of the Most High God will overshadow you. And for that reason the Holy One to be born will be called the Son of God." ³⁸Now there is also Elizabeth, your relative. She is old, but she too conceived. People call her childless, but she's now in her sixth month. ³⁹There's nothing that God will not be able to do."

⁴⁰"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "Let it happen to me as you said."

Then the angel left her.

Mary Visits Elizabeth

⁴¹Then Mary hurried away to the hill country to a town of Judah.

⁴²There she went into the home of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.

⁴³"When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb. Then Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴⁴and she shouted, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the Child in your womb. ⁴⁵But how does this happen to me that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁶The moment I heard your greeting, the baby leaped with delight in my womb. ⁴⁷And you are happy for believing that the Lord will do what He promised you."

⁴⁸Mary said:

⁴⁹My soul magnifies the Lord,

⁵⁰and my spirit delights in God, my Savior,

⁵¹because He has looked kindly at His humble servant.

Yes, from now on the people in all the ages will call me blessed.

⁵²He has done great things to me— He who is mighty and whose name is holy

⁵³and who is always merciful to those who fear Him.

⁵⁴"Mighty are the deeds He has done with His arm.

He has scattered those who feel and think so proudly.

⁵⁵He has pushed strong rulers down from their thrones and lifted up lowly people.

⁵⁶Those who were hungry He has filled with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty-handed.

⁵⁷"He has come to help His servant Israel, because He wants to remember His mercy

31 Is 7:14
32-33 2 Sm 7
12-14 16
18 9:7
Mt 4:7
1 Ch 17
12-14
37 Gen 18:14
46-47 1 Sm 2
1, Heb 3:18
48 1 Sm 1:11
49 Ps 111:9
18 57:15
50 Ps 103:17
51 Ps 88:10
52 Job 12:19
5:11
Ez 21:26
53 Ps 107:9
54 Is 41:8-9
Ps 98:3

Nazareth to Judea, March, 5 B.C.

¹⁹(as *He promised our fathers*),
the mercy He has for Abraham
and his descendants forever."

²⁰Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months and then went back home.

John Is Born

²¹The time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she had a baby boy. ²²Her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had been unusually kind to her, and they were happy with her.

²³On the eighth day they came to circumcise the baby. They were going to call him Zacharias because that was his father's name. ²⁴But his mother spoke up. "No!" she said. "He's going to be called John."

²⁵"But there's nobody among your relatives who has that name," they told her.

²⁶Then they motioned to his father to see what name he might want him to have. ²⁷He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, saying, "His name is John." They were all surprised.

²⁸Just then he got his speech back and could talk again. He began to speak, praising God.

²⁹All who lived around them were overawed. And all over the hills of Judea people kept talking about all these things. ³⁰All who heard of them kept them in mind. "What is this child going to be?" they asked. It was clear—the Lord's hand was with him.

³¹His father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and he prophesied:

³²"*Praise the Lord, the God of Israel,*

because He has visited His people and prepared a ransom for them.

³³And He has raised up a Horn of salvation for us in the family

of His servant David,

³⁴as He said long ago through His holy prophets

³⁵that *He would save us from our enemies,*

from the power of all who hate us.

³⁶He wanted to be *merciful to our fathers*

and *keep in mind His holy covenant,*

³⁷the *oath He swore to our father Abraham*

³⁸to rescue us from our *enemies* and let us serve Him without fear

³⁹in holiness and righteousness before Him all our life.

⁴⁰"And you, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High God.

You will go *ahead of the Lord to prepare the ways for Him,*

⁴¹to tell His people they can be saved

by the forgiveness of their sins,

⁴²because our God is merciful and will let a heavenly Sun rise among us,

⁴³to shine on those who sit in the dark

and in the shadow of death

and to guide our feet into the way of peace."

⁴⁴The child John grew and became strong in spirit. He lived in the wilderness till he appeared publicly before Israel.

Jesus Is Born

2 In those days Caesar Augustus ordered a census taken of the whole world. ²This census took place before Quirinius was ruling Syria. ³Everybody went to register, each to his own town.

⁴Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to David's town, called Bethlehem, in

Bethlehem, December 25, 5 B.C.

55 Gen 17 7
 Mi 7 20
 68 Ps 41 13
 72 18
 89 52
 106 48
 111 9
 69 1 Sm 2 10
 Ps 18 2
 132 17
 71 Ps 106 10
 72 Mi 7 20
 72-74 Gen 22
 16-17
 Lv 26 42
 Ps 105 8-9
 106 45
 76 Mi 3 1
 79 Ps 107 10
 15 9 2
 15 59 8

Judea, because he was one of the descendants of David. ⁴to register with Mary, his fiancée, who was going to have a child.

⁵And while they were there, the time came for her to have her child. ⁶She had her first Son, and she wrapped Him in baby clothes and laid Him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.

The Shepherds

⁷There were shepherds not far away, living in the field and taking turns watching their flock during the night.

⁸Then the Lord's angel stood by them, and the Lord's glory shone around them. They were terrified. ⁹"Don't be afraid," the angel said to them. "I have good news for you. A great joy will come to all the people: ¹⁰the Savior, who is Christ the Lord, was born for you today in David's town. ¹¹And this is how you will know Him: you will find a Baby all wrapped up and lying in a manger."

¹²Suddenly there was with the angel a large crowd of the angels of heaven, who were praising God and saying: ¹³"Glory to God in the highest heavens, and on earth peace among people who have His goodwill!"

¹⁴When the angels had left them and gone to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "The Lord has told us what has happened. Let's go to Bethlehem and see it."

¹⁵They hurried over there and searched until they found Mary and Joseph, and the Baby lying in the manger. ¹⁶When they had seen Him, they told others what they had been told about this Child. ¹⁷And everybody was surprised to hear the story the shepherds told.

¹⁸But Mary treasured all these things in her heart and kept thinking about them.

¹⁹The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for everything they had heard and seen. It was just as they had been told.

In the Temple

²⁰On the eighth day the time came to circumcise the Child, and He was called Jesus, the name the angel gave Him before He was conceived.

²¹When the time came for them to be purified according to the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took Jesus up to Jerusalem to give Him to the Lord ²²(as it is written in the Law of the Lord: *Every firstborn boy should be called the Lord's holy one*) ²³and to offer a sacrifice according to the Law of the Lord, *a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.*

²⁴Now, there was in Jerusalem a man by the name of Simeon. He was a good man, fearing God and waiting for the One who would comfort Israel. The Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁵The Holy Spirit had told him that before he would die he would see the promised Christ sent by the Lord.

²⁶Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple. When the parents brought in the Child Jesus to do for Him what was customary according to the Law, ²⁷Simeon took Him in his arms, praised God, and said:

²⁸"Lord, now You are letting Your servant go in peace as You promised,

²⁹because my eyes have seen Your salvation

³⁰that You prepared for all people to see,

³¹a light to shine on the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel."

2
22 L^v 12:6
23 Ex 13:12
24 L^v 5:7 11
12:6
Num 8:10
30 Is 40:5
32 Is 42:6
46:12 49:6

Bethlehem, Jerusalem, December to February, 5—4 B.C.

"His father and mother were surprised such things were said about Him. "Then Simeon blessed them and said to His mother Mary. "Here is what this Child is appointed for: Many in Israel will fall and rise again because of Him; and He'll be a sign that many will talk against, "to show what they're thinking in their hearts. And pain, like a sword, will go through your own soul too."

"Anna, a prophetess, was also there. She was a daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was now very old. When she was a girl, she had married a man and lived with him seven years.

"After that she was a widow till she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped day and night, fasting and praying. "She too came forward just then, thanked God, and talked about the Child to all who were looking for Jerusalem to be set free.

"When Joseph and Mary had done everything the Law of the Lord told them to do, they went back to Galilee to their town of Nazareth.

The Boy Jesus

"The little Child grew big and strong and full of wisdom, and God's love was with Him.

"Every year His parents would go to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. "And so when He was twelve, they went up for the festival as usual.

"When the festival days were over and they started for home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. But His parents didn't know about it. "They thought He was with the others who were traveling with them. After traveling a day, they started to look for Him among their

relatives and friends. "When they didn't find Him, they went back to Jerusalem, looking for Him.

"Two days later they found Him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. "His understanding and His answers surprised all who heard Him.

"His parents were amazed to see Him there. "Son, why did You do this to us?" His mother asked Him. "See how anxiously Your father and I have been looking for You!"

"Why were you looking for Me?" He asked them. "Didn't you realize I must be concerned about My Father's affairs here in His house?" "But they didn't understand what He told them.

"Then He went back with them to Nazareth. And He obeyed them.

His mother kept all these things in her heart. "And Jesus grew wiser and taller and *won the approval of God and of people.*

John Prepares the Way

3 In the fifteenth year of the rule of Emperor Tiberius, Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod ruled Galilee, his brother Philip ruled Iturea and Trachonitis, Lysanias ruled Abilene, and Annas and Caiaphas were the high priests. Then God spoke to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. "He went into the whole Jordan valley and preached: "Repent and be baptized to have your sins forgiven." "This was what the prophet Isaiah had said in his book:

A voice will be calling in the wilderness:

"Prepare the way for the Lord; Make the paths straight for Him.

Every ravine must be filled,

And every mountain and hill must be cut down.

A.D. 8

The crooked must be made straight

And the rough roads smooth.

"All people must see how God saves them."

"So he would say to the crowds who were coming out to be baptized by him, "Brood of snakes, who warned you to run away from the punishment waiting for you? "Do the works that show you have repented. And don't start telling yourselves, 'Abraham is our father.' I tell you, God can raise children for Abraham from these stones. "The ax is now ready to strike at the roots of the trees, and any tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰"What should we do?" the crowds asked him.

¹¹"If you have two garments," he answered them, "share them with him who has none, and if you have food, do the same."

¹²Some tax collectors also came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked him, "what should we do?"

¹³"Don't collect more money than you're ordered to collect," he told them.

¹⁴Some soldiers also asked him, "And what should we do?"

¹⁵"Don't use threats or blackmail to get money from anyone," he told them, "but be satisfied with your pay."

¹⁶The people were expecting something and all were wondering if John was perhaps the promised Savior. ¹⁷John answered them all: "I baptize you with water. But the One who is mightier than I is coming. I'm not good enough to untie His shoe straps. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁸He has the winnowing shovel in His hand to clean up His

threshing floor and gather the wheat into His barn, but the chaff He'll burn in a fire that can't be put out."

¹⁹And so with many other challenging words he was telling the people the good news.

In Prison

¹When John was showing Herod, the governor, how wrong he was in regard to his brother's wife Herodias and all the other wicked things Herod did, ²he, on top of everything, locked John up in prison.

John Baptizes Jesus

¹When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. While He was praying, heaven opened, ²and the Holy Spirit came down on Him in the bodily form of a dove. And a voice from heaven said, ³"You are *My Son*, whom I love. *I am delighted with You.*"

⁴Jesus was about thirty years old when He began His work.

The Son of Man

¹Jesus was a son, as people thought, of Joseph, of Heli, of Matthat, of Levi, of Melchi, of Jannai, of Joseph, ²of Mattathias, of Amos, of Nahum, of Esli, of Naggai, ³of Maath, of Mattathias, of Semein, of Josech, of Joda, ⁴of Joanan, of Rhesa, of Zerubbabel, of Shealtiel, of Neri, ⁵of Melchi, of Addi, of Cosam, of Elmadam, of Er, ⁶of Jesus, of Eliezer, of Jorim, of Mattathat, of Levi, ⁷of Simeon, of Judas, of Joseph, of Jonam, of Eliakim, ⁸of Melea, of Menna, of Mattatha, of Nathan, of David, ⁹of Jesse, of Obed, of Boaz, of Salmon, of Nahshon, ¹⁰of Amminadab, of Ram, of Admin, of Arni, of Hezron, of Perez, of Judah, ¹¹of Jacob, of Isaac, of Abraham, of Terah, of Nahor,

*East of the Jordan, spring, 27
Jordan River, January and
Februarv. 27*

³⁵of Serug, of Reu, of Peleg, of Eber, of Shelah, ³⁶of Cainan, of Arphaxad, of Shem, of Noah, of Lamech, ³⁷of Methuselah, of Enoch, of Jared, of Mahalaleel, of Cainan, ³⁸of Enos, of Seth, of Adam, of God.

The Devil Tempts Jesus

4 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan. For forty days the Spirit led Him in the wilderness ²while the devil tempted Him. He ate nothing during those days, and when they were over, He got hungry.

³The devil said to Him, "If You're God's Son, tell this stone to become a loaf of bread."

"It is written," Jesus answered him, "*A man doesn't live on bread alone.*"

⁴The devil took Him up and in a moment showed Him all the kingdoms of the world. ⁵"I'll give You all this power and glory," the devil told Him, "because it was given to me and I give it to anyone I please. ⁶So, if You'll worship me, all this will be Yours."

"It is written," Jesus answered him, "*Worship the Lord, your God, and serve Him only.*"

⁷The devil took Him into Jerusalem and had Him stand on the edge of the temple. "If You're God's Son," he told Him, "jump down from here. ⁸It is written: *He will order His angels to watch carefully over you. They will carry you in their hands and never let you stub your foot against a stone.*"

"It is written," Jesus answered him, "*Don't test the Lord your God.*"

⁹When the devil had finished every way of tempting Him, he left Him till the right time would come.

Nazareth Rejects Jesus

"With the power of the Spirit

Jesus went back to Galilee. The news about Him spread all over the surrounding country. ¹²He taught in their synagogues, and everybody praised Him.

¹³Then Jesus came to Nazareth, where He had been raised. On the Sabbath He went into the synagogue as He used to do. He got up to read ¹⁴and was given the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling the scroll, He found the place where it says:

¹⁵The Spirit of the Lord is on Me because—

He anointed Me

To tell the poor the good news.

He sent Me

To announce to prisoners, "You are free."

to the blind, "You will see again."

To free those who are broken down.

¹⁶To announce a season when the Lord welcomes people.

¹⁷He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. Everybody in the synagogue was watching Him closely ¹⁸as He said, "Today, while you're listening, what is written here has come true."

¹⁹All spoke well of Him and were surprised to hear the beautiful words flowing from His lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they were asking.

²⁰He answered them: "You will undoubtedly quote to Me the proverb 'Doctor, heal yourself!' and say, 'We've heard about everything You did in Capernaum. Do the same here in Your hometown.' ²¹I tell you," He added, "it is true no prophet is accepted in his hometown.

²²"Let Me tell you this truth: There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when it didn't rain for

Nazareth, summer, 27

4 01 4 3
8 01 6 13
10-11 Pa 91
11-12
12 01 6 16
18-19 15 58 6
61 11 2

three years and six months and there was a big famine all over the country. ²⁶But Elijah wasn't sent to anyone except a widow at *Zarephath in the territory of Sidon*. ²⁷And there were lepers in Israel at the time of the prophet Elisha. But no one except *Naaman* from Syria was made clean."

²⁸As they were listening, all in the synagog became furious. ²⁹They got up, pushed Him out of the town, and took Him to a brow of the hill on which their town was built, to hurl Him down the cliff. ³⁰But He walked right through them and went away.

Jesus Drives Out a Devil

³¹He went down to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, and was teaching people on a Sabbath. ³²His teaching amazed them because He spoke with authority.

³³In the synagog there was a man with a spirit of an unclean devil. He screamed out loud. ³⁴"Oh, leave us alone, Jesus from Nazareth! You've come to destroy us! I know who You are—God's Holy One."

³⁵Jesus talked sharply to him: "Be quiet, and come out of him." The devil hurled him into the crowd, then came out of him without doing him any harm.

³⁶They were all amazed and said to one another, "What kind of speaking is this? With authority and power He gives orders to the unclean spirits, and out they go."

³⁷So the news about Him spread to every place in the surrounding country.

Peter's Mother-in-Law

³⁸Leaving the synagog, Jesus went to Simon's home. Simon's mother-in-law was sick with a high fever,

and they asked Him to help her. ³⁹He went to her and, bending over her, ordered the fever to leave, and it left. She got up immediately and waited on them.

⁴⁰When the sun was going down, all who had sick ones suffering from various diseases brought them to Him. He laid His hands on each of them and made them well. "The devils went out of many, screaming, "You're God's Son." He talked sharply to them and wouldn't let them go on talking, because they knew He was the promised Christ.

⁴¹In the morning He went out to a lonely place. The crowds were looking for Him. When they came to Him, they tried to keep Him from leaving them. ⁴²But He said to them, "I have to tell the good news of God's kingdom also in other towns. That's what I was sent to do."

⁴³Then He kept on preaching in the synagogs of the country of the Jews.

Fishers of Men

5 One day Jesus was standing by the Lake of Galilee, and the people were crowding Him as they were listening to God's Word. ²He saw two boats on the shore of the lake. The fishermen had stepped out of them and were washing their nets. ³So Jesus got into one of the boats (it belonged to Simon) and asked him to go out a little way from the shore. Then He sat down and taught the people from the boat.

⁴When He had stopped speaking, He told Simon, "Take the boat out where the water is deep, and let down your nets for a catch."

⁵"Master," Simon answered, "we've worked hard all night and caught nothing. But if You say so, I'll let down the nets."

⁶When the men had done this,

Galilee, summer and winter.
27—28

they caught a very large number of fish, and their nets started to tear. ⁷So they waded to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They came, and now they filled both boats so that they started to sink.

⁸When Simon Peter saw this, he fell down at Jesus' knees. "Leave me, Lord," he said. "I'm a sinful man." ⁹He and all who were with him were amazed to see the fish they had caught, ¹⁰and so were James and John, Zebedee's sons, who were Simon's partners.

"Don't be afraid," Jesus told Simon. "From now on you're going to catch men."

¹¹So when they had brought the boats to the shore, they left everything and followed Him.

Jesus Heals a Leper

¹²One day Jesus was in a town ¹³where there was a man who had leprosy all over his body. When he saw Jesus, he bowed down to the ground. "Lord," he begged Him, "if You want to, you can make me clean."

¹⁴Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him. "I want to," He said. "Be clean!" Immediately the leprosy left him.

¹⁵"Don't tell anyone," Jesus ordered him, "but go, *let the priest examine* you, and for your cleansing offer the sacrifice Moses ordered, to show them you're well."

¹⁶But the news about Jesus spread all the more, and big crowds were gathering to hear Him and have their diseases healed. ¹⁷And He would go away to lonely places and pray.

Jesus Forgives Sins

¹⁸One day as He was teaching, Pharisees and Bible teachers were

sitting there. They had come from every village in Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem. And Jesus had the Lord's power to heal.

¹⁹Then some men brought a paralyzed man on a bed and tried to take him in and lay him in front of Jesus. ²⁰But when they couldn't find a way to get him in on account of the crowd, they went up on the roof and through the tiles let him and the bed down among the people, right in front of Jesus.

²¹When Jesus saw their faith, He said, "Man, your sins are forgiven." ²²Then the Bible scholars and the Pharisees began to argue, saying, "Who is this fellow, talking such blasphemies? Who but God alone can forgive sins?"

²³Jesus knew what they were thinking. "Why do you have such thoughts in your hearts?" He asked them. ²⁴"Is it easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?" ²⁵"I want you to know the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"—then He said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your bed, and go home."

²⁶Immediately the man got up in front of them, took the bed he had been lying on, and went home, praising God.

²⁷All were amazed and praised God. Fearfully they declared, "You wouldn't believe what we've seen today!"

Matthew

²⁸After that He went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting in the tax office. "Come with Me," He told him. ²⁹He got up, left everything, and went with Him.

³⁰Then Levi gave a big dinner for Him at his home, and there was a big crowd of tax collectors and others

Galilee, early in 28

who were eating with them.

³⁰The Pharisees and their Bible scholars complained to His disciples: "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

³¹"Those who are healthy don't need a doctor," Jesus answered them, "but the sick. ³²I didn't come to call righteous people, but sinners to repent."

The Bridegroom

³³"John's disciples as well as the disciples of the Pharisees often fast and say prayers," they said to Him. "Why do Yours eat and drink?"

³⁴Jesus asked them, "Can you make the bridegroom's friends fast while the bridegroom is with them? ³⁵The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and in those days they will fast."

³⁶He pictured it to them in this way: "Nobody tears a piece of cloth from a new garment and sews it on an old garment. If you do, you'll tear the new cloth, and the patch from the new won't match the old. ³⁷Nobody pours new wine into old wineskins. If you do, the new wine will burst the skins and run out, and the skins will be ruined. ³⁸New wine has to be poured into fresh skins.

³⁹"Nobody who has drunk old wine wants the new. 'The old tastes good,' he says."

Lord of the Sabbath

6 While Jesus was walking through grainfields on a Sabbath, His disciples were picking the heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands, and eating them.

¹Some of the Pharisees asked, "Why are you doing something you shouldn't do on a day of rest?"

²"Haven't you read what David did," Jesus asked them, "when he and his men were hungry—'how he went into God's house and took the loaves laid before God, and ate them and gave his men some? Only the priests had the right to eat them.'" ³Then He added, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

The Shriveled Hand

⁴On another Sabbath Jesus went into a synagog and taught. And there was a man whose right hand was shriveled. ⁵But the Bible scholars and the Pharisees were watching Jesus to see if He would heal him on a Sabbath. They wanted to find something to accuse Him of.

⁶But He knew what they were thinking; so He said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Get up and come forward." The man got up and stood there. ⁷Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it right on a Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save a life or to kill?" ⁸After looking around at all of them, He told the man, "Stretch out your hand." He did, and his hand was made healthy again.

⁹They were furious and began to discuss with one another what they could do to Jesus.

Twelve Apostles

¹⁰In those days Jesus went out to the hill to pray, and He prayed to God all night.

¹¹When it was day, He called His disciples. He chose twelve of them and called them apostles: "Simon, whom He also gave the name Peter, and his brother Andrew; James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, ¹²Matthew and Thomas; James, the son of Alphaeus; Simon, called Zealot; ¹³Judas, the son of James;

Near Capernaum, spring and early summer, 28

and Judas, the man from Kerieth, who became a traitor.

Many Are Healed

¹⁷He went down with them and stood on a level place with a big crowd of His disciples and very many people from the whole country of the Jews, from Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear Him and have their diseases healed. ¹⁸And those who were plagued by unclean spirits were made well. ¹⁹All the people were trying to touch Him, because power came from Him and made them all well.

Blessing and Woe

²⁰Jesus looked at His disciples and said:

¹"Blessed are you who are poor— you have God's kingdom.

²Blessed are you who are hungry now— you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who are crying now— you will laugh.

³Blessed are you when people hate you, exclude you from their company, insult you, reject your name as evil because you believe in the Son of Man.

⁴In that day rejoice and leap for joy, because you have a great reward in heaven. You see, that's how their fathers treated the prophets. ⁵But—

Woe to you who are rich— you've had your comfort.

⁶Woe to you who are well fed now— you will be hungry.

Woe to you who are laughing now—

you will mourn and cry aloud.

⁷Woe to you when everybody

speaks well of you— that is how their fathers treated the false prophets."

Love Your Enemies

²⁶"But I tell you who are listening, love your enemies, be kind to those who hate you, ²⁷bless those who curse you, and pray for those who insult you. ²⁸If anyone hits you on your cheek, offer him the other cheek. If anyone takes your coat, don't stop him from taking your shirt. ²⁹If anyone asks you for anything, give it to him. And if anyone takes what is yours, don't insist on getting it back.

³⁰"Treat others just as you want them to treat you.

³¹"If you love those who love you, how should anyone be especially pleased with you? Even sinners love those who love them. ³²If you help those who help you, how should anyone be especially pleased with you? Sinners do that too. ³³If you lend anything to those from whom you expect to get something, how should anyone be especially pleased with you? Sinners also lend to sinners to get back what they lend. ³⁴No, love your enemies, help them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then you will have a great reward and will be the sons of the Most High God, since He is kind to people who don't thank Him and are wicked. ³⁵Be merciful as your Father is merciful."

Criticize Yourself

³⁶"Don't judge, and you will not be judged. Don't condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. ³⁷Give, and it will be given you. A good measure, pressed together, shaken down, and

running over, will be put into your lap. You see, the measure you use will be used for you."

"He pictured it to them in this way: "Can a blind man lead another blind man? Won't they both fall into a ditch? "A pupil is not above his teacher. But anyone who is well trained will be like his teacher.

"And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye and don't notice the log in your own eye? "How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' as long as you don't see the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first throw the log out of your own eye. Then you'll see clearly enough to take the speck out of your brother's eye."

Hear and Do!

"A good tree doesn't bear bad fruit, or a bad tree good fruit. "Every tree is known by its fruit. You don't pick figs from thorn-bushes, or grapes from brambles. "A good man produces good things from the good stored in his heart, and an evil man produces evil from his evil stored there. What you say flows from your heart.

"Why do you call Me Lord, Lord, but don't do what I tell you?

"I will show you what kind of man anyone is who comes to Me and hears and does what I say. "He's like a man who built a house. He dug deep and laid the foundation on a rock. When there was a flood, the torrent dashed against that house. But it couldn't move it, because it was built right. "Anyone who hears what I say but doesn't do it is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the torrent dashed against it, that

house immediately collapsed and went down with a big crash."

A Believing Captain

7 When Jesus had finished all He had to say to the people who heard Him, He went to Capernaum. There a certain captain's servant was sick. He was dear to him and now he was dying. The captain heard about Jesus and sent some Jewish elders to ask Him to come and save his slave's life. They came to Jesus and earnestly pleaded with Him, "He deserves to have You do this for him, 'because he loves our people and built the synagog for us."

"So Jesus went with them. He wasn't far from the house when the captain sent friends to tell Him, "Lord, don't bother. I'm not good enough for You to come under my roof. And so I didn't think I was fit to come to You either. But just say a word, and my slave will be made well. I'm only a man who has to obey others, but I have soldiers under me. I tell one, Go, and he goes. And another, Come, and he comes. And my slave, Do this, and he does it."

"Surprised to hear him say this, Jesus turned to the crowd following Him. "I tell you," He said, "not even in Israel have I found such faith."

"When the men who had been sent went back to the house, they found the slave well again.

Jesus Raises a Widow's Son

"Soon after this, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and His disciples and a large crowd went with Him. "As He came near the gate of the town, a dead man was carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow. A big crowd from the town was with her.

Near Capernaum, early summer, 28

"When the Lord saw her, He felt sorry for her. "Don't cry," He told her.

"He went up to the open coffin and touched it, and the men who were carrying it stood still. "Young man," He said. "I tell you, wake up." "The dead man sat up and started to talk. And Jesus gave him to his mother.

"They were all overawed and praised God. "A great prophet has risen among us," they said, and, "God has come to help His people." "This story about Jesus spread all over the country of the Jews and in all the surrounding territory.

John Sends Two Disciples

"John's disciples told him about all these things. "Then John called two of his disciples and sent them to ask the Lord, "Are You the One who is coming, or should we look for someone else?"

"The men came to Jesus and said, "John the Baptizer sent us to ask You, 'Are You the One who is coming, or should we look for someone else?'"

"Just then He had healed many people of their diseases, ailments, and evil spirits and had given sight to many who were blind.

"Go," Jesus answered, "tell John what you've seen and heard: *The blind see*, the lame walk, lepers are made clean, *the deaf hear*, the dead are raised, and *the poor hear the good news*—"and blessed is anyone who doesn't turn against Me."

About John

"When John's messengers had left, Jesus talked to the crowds about John:

"What did you go out into the wilderness to see—a reed shaken by

the wind? "What, then, did you go out to see—a man dressed in soft robes? Those who wear fine clothes and live in luxury you'll find in the palaces of kings.

"What, then, did you go out to see—a prophet? Let Me assure you, far more than a prophet. "This is the one of whom it is written: '*I will send My messenger ahead of You to prepare Your way before You.*' "I tell you, no woman's son is greater than John, and yet the least in God's kingdom is greater than he.

"By letting John baptize them, all the people who heard him, even the tax collectors, admitted that God was right. "But the Pharisees and the learned men of the Law, by not letting John baptize them, rejected what God had planned for them.

"How should I picture the people of this age? What are they like? "They're like little children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, 'We played a tune on the flute for you, but you didn't dance. We sang a funeral song, but you didn't weep.' "John the Baptizer has come; he doesn't eat bread or drink wine, and you say, 'There's a devil in him!' "The Son of Man has come; He eats and drinks, and you say, 'Look at the glutton and drunkard, the friend of tax collectors and sinners!' "And yet wisdom is shown to be right by all her children."

"She Loved Much"

"One of the Pharisees invited Jesus to eat with him. He went into the Pharisee's home and lay down for the meal.

"In the town there was a sinful woman. When she found out He was eating at the Pharisee's home, she brought a flask of perfume "and

Galilee, summer, 28

7
15 1 K 17:23
22 16 29:18
35 5 6:1
27 Ex 23:20
Mt 3:1

stood behind Him at His feet. She was weeping and started to wet His feet with her tears. Then with the hair of her head she dried His feet, kissed them, and poured perfume on them.

³⁹The Pharisee who had invited Jesus saw this and said to himself, "If He were a prophet, He would know who is touching Him and what kind of woman she is. She's a sinner."

⁴⁰"Simon," Jesus answered him, "I have something to tell you."

"Say it, Teacher," he said.

⁴¹"Two men owed a moneylender some money: One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴²When they couldn't pay it back, he was kind enough to cancel the debt for both of them. Now, which of them will love him more?"

⁴³"I suppose," Simon answered, "the one who had the bigger debt canceled."

"You're right," Jesus told him. ⁴⁴Then, turning to the woman, He said to Simon, "You see this woman? I came into your home, and you gave Me no water for My feet, but she wet My feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. ⁴⁵You gave Me no kiss, but ever since I came in, she hasn't stopped kissing My feet. ⁴⁶You poured no oil on My head, but she poured perfume on My feet. ⁴⁷That's why I tell you her sins are forgiven, many as they are. You see, she has loved much. Of course, he to whom little is forgiven loves only a little."

⁴⁸Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." ⁴⁹His fellow guests began to ask among themselves, "Who is This that He should even forgive sins?"

⁵⁰Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith saved you. Go in peace!"

Through Galilee

8 After this Jesus traveled from one town and village to another, preaching and telling the good news of God's kingdom. The twelve were with Him. ²Also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and diseases: Mary, also called the woman from Magdala (seven devils had gone out of her); ³Johanna, the wife of Herod's manager Chusa; Susanna; and many other women. They supported Jesus and His disciples with their property.

The Sower

"When a big crowd was gathering and people were coming to Him from every town, He told them a parable:

¹"A sower went out to sow his seed. As he was sowing, some seed fell along the road and was trampled on, and the birds in the air ate it. ²Some fell on a rock. It came up and withered because it had no moisture. ³Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it. ⁴But some seed fell on good ground, and it came up and produced a hundred times as much as was sown."

When He had said this, He called out, "You have ears to hear. Then listen!"

⁵His disciples asked Him what this parable meant. ⁶"You are given the privilege to know the secrets of God's kingdom," He answered, "but to the others they come in parables that *they may see and yet not see, and hear and yet not understand.*

⁷"This is what the parable means: The seed is God's Word. ⁸The people along the road are those who hear it. Then the devil comes and takes the Word out of their hearts to

Galilee, summer and fall, 28

keep them from believing and being saved. ¹¹In others it falls on a rock. As soon as they hear it, they welcome the Word with joy, but it doesn't take root in them. They believe for a while, but when they're tempted, they desert. ¹²In others the seed falls among thorns. They hear the Word, but as they go along, worries, riches, and pleasures of life choke them, and they don't produce anything good. ¹³But in others the seed falls on good ground. They are the ones who hear the Word and keep it in a good and honest heart and go on faithfully producing good things.

¹⁴"Nobody lights a lamp and hides it under a jar or puts it under a bed. No, you put it on a lampstand so that those who come in will see the light. ¹⁵Everything hidden will be uncovered, and every secret will be known and come to the light.

¹⁶"Be careful, then, how you listen! If you have something, you'll be given more. But if you don't have what you should have, even what you think you have will be taken away from you."

The Mother and Brothers of Jesus

¹⁹His mother and His brothers came to Him but couldn't get near Him on account of the crowd. ²⁰Jesus was told, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside and want to see You."

²¹"My mother and My brothers are these," He answered them, "who hear and do what God says."

Wind and Water Obey Him

²²One day He and His disciples stepped into a boat. "Let us cross over to the other side of the lake," He said to them. They started

out. ²³And as they were sailing along, He fell asleep.

A violent storm hit the lake, the boat was filling with water, and they were in danger. ²⁴So they went to Him and woke Him up. "Master, Master!" they called, "we're drowning."

He got up and ordered the winds and the waves to stop. They stopped and it became calm. ²⁵"Where is your trust?" He asked them.

Frightened and amazed, they asked one another, "Who is He? He orders even the winds and the water, and they obey Him!"

The Gerasenes

²⁶They landed in the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. ²⁷When He stepped out on the shore, a man from the town who had devils in him met Him. He had worn no clothes for a long time. He wouldn't stay in a house but in the burial places. ²⁸When he saw Jesus, he screamed and bowed down before Him. "Let me alone, Jesus, Son of the Most High God," he shouted. "I beg You, don't torture me." ²⁹Jesus had been ordering the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For a long time it had a firm hold on him. He had been bound with chains on hands and feet and had been kept under guard, but he would tear the chains and be driven by the devil into lonely places.

³⁰"What is your name?" Jesus asked him.

"Six Thousand," he answered, because many devils had gone into him. ³¹They begged Him not to order them to go into the bottomless pit.

³²There was a herd of many hogs feeding on the hillside. So they begged Him to let them go into these.

By the Lake of Galilee, fall, 28

He let them. ³⁷The devils came out of the man and went into the hogs, and the herd stampeded down the cliff into the lake and was drowned.

³⁸But when those who had taken care of the hogs saw what had happened, they ran away and told about it in the town and in the country. ³⁹The people went out to see what had happened. They came to Jesus and found the man from whom the devils had gone out, now sitting dressed and in his right mind at Jesus' feet; and they were frightened. ⁴⁰Those who had seen it told them how the man plagued by devils had been made well.

⁴¹Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them, because terror had gripped them.

He got into a boat and started back. ⁴²Now, the man from whom the devils had gone out begged Jesus to let him be with Him. But He sent him away and told him, ⁴³"Go home and tell how much God has done for you." So the man left and preached all over the town how much Jesus had done for him.

The Daughter of Jairus

⁴⁴When Jesus came back, the people welcomed Him, because they were all expecting Him.

⁴⁵A synagog leader by the name of Jairus came and, kneeling at Jesus' feet, begged Him to come to his home. ⁴⁶because his only daughter, about twelve years old, was dying. As he went, the crowd almost crushed Him.

⁴⁷There was a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years. Nobody could cure her. ⁴⁸She came to Him from behind and touched the tassel of His garment, and immediately her blood stopped flowing.

"Who touched Me?" Jesus asked.

When everybody denied having touched Him, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding You and pressing against You."

⁴⁹"Somebody did touch Me," Jesus said. "I noticed that power went from Me."

⁵⁰When the woman saw she was discovered, she came trembling, bowed down before Him, and in front of all the people told why she touched Him and how she was made well immediately.

⁵¹"Daughter," He told her, "your faith made you well. Go in peace!"

⁵²While He was still speaking, someone came from the synagog leader. "Your daughter is dead," he said. "Don't trouble the Teacher any more."

⁵³Hearing this, Jesus told him, "Don't be afraid! Only believe, and she'll get well."

⁵⁴Coming into the house, He let only Peter, John, James, and the child's father and mother go in with him. ⁵⁵Everybody was crying and beating the breast, mourning her. "Don't cry," He said. "She isn't dead; she's sleeping."

⁵⁶They laughed at Him, because they knew she had died. ⁵⁷He took her hand and called, "Girl, wake up!" ⁵⁸Her spirit returned, and she got up immediately. Jesus ordered that she be given something to eat. ⁵⁹And her parents were amazed. But He ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened.

Jesus Sends Out the Twelve

9 Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all devils and to heal diseases. ²He sent them to preach God's kingdom and heal the sick.

³"Don't take anything with you on

Capernaum, fall, 28

the way." He told them, "no stick or bag or bread or money. Don't take two tunics. "When you go into a home, stay there, and from there go out. "If people don't welcome you, leave that town, and shake the dust off your feet as a warning to them."

"They left and went from village to village, telling the good news everywhere and healing the sick.

Has John Come Back?

"Herod, the governor, heard about everything Jesus was doing and didn't know what to make of it, because some people said, "John has risen from the dead"; "others, "Elijah has appeared"; still others, "One of the old prophets has risen."

"I cut off John's head," Herod said. "Now who is this about whom I hear such things?" And he wanted to see Jesus.

Jesus Feeds Five Thousand

"The apostles came back and told Jesus all they had done. He took them away with Him near a town called Bethsaida in order to be alone. "But the crowds found out about it and followed Him. He welcomed them, talked to them about God's kingdom, and healed those who needed healing.

"Toward the end of the day the twelve came to Him and told Him, "Send the crowd away to the villages and farms around us to get shelter and find food. We're here in a deserted place."

"You give them something to eat," He told them.

"All we have is five loaves and two fish," they answered, "unless perhaps we go and buy food for all these people." "There were about five thousand men.

Then He told His disciples, "Have

them sit down in groups of about fifty." "They did this and got them all seated.

"He took the five loaves and the two fish, looked up to heaven, blessed them and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to give to the people.¹⁷All of them ate and had a hearty meal. And they picked up the pieces that were left—twelve baskets full.

"You Are the Promised Savior"

"Once when He was praying and only His disciples were with Him, He asked them, "Who do people say I am?"

"John the Baptizer," they answered Him; "others say Elijah, and still others that one of the old prophets has come back to life."

"And you," He asked them, "who do you say I am?"

"The Christ whom God has sent," Peter answered.

"But He gave them strict orders not to tell anyone about this.

Take the Cross

"The Son of Man has to suffer much," He said, "be rejected by the elders, ruling priests, and Bible scholars, be killed, and then rise on the third day."

"And He told all of them, "If you want to follow Me, deny yourself, take up your cross every day, and come with Me. "If you want to save your life, you will lose it. But if you will lose your life for Me, you will save it. "What good does it do you to win the whole world and destroy or lose yourself? "If you're ashamed of Me and what I say, then the Son of Man will be ashamed of you when He comes in His glory and the glory of the Father and the holy angels.

*Galilee, east of Jordan,
Bethsaida-Julias, January to April.*

“Let me assure you, there are some standing here who will never taste death till they see God’s kingdom.”

Jesus Shows His Glory

“About a week after He said this, Jesus took Peter, James, and John with Him and went up the mountain to pray. “While He was praying, His face changed and looked different, and His clothes got dazzling white. “And there were two men talking with Him; they were Moses and Elijah. “They appeared in glory and were talking about His leaving this world, which was to happen at Jerusalem.

“But Peter and the men with him had been overcome by sleep. Waking up, they saw His glory and the two men standing with Him. “When these were leaving Him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it’s good for us to be here. Let’s put up three shelters, one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” He didn’t know what he was saying.

“While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them. They were frightened as they went into the cloud. “Then a voice came out of the cloud: “This is *My Son whom I have chosen. Listen to Him.*” “When the voice had spoken, they saw Jesus was alone.

They kept silent and in those days told nobody anything of what they had seen.

The Epileptic Boy

“The next day, when they had come down from the mountain, He met a large crowd. “Then a man in the crowd called, “Teacher, I beg You, look at my son, he is my only child. “A spirit takes hold of him, and suddenly he shrieks. It throws

him into convulsions, and he foams at the mouth. It will hardly stop mistreating him. “I asked Your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they couldn’t do it.”

““O you unbelieving and perverted people!” Jesus answered. “How long must I be with you and put up with you! Bring your son here.”

“While the boy was coming, the devil dashed him on the ground and threw him into convulsions.

Jesus talked sharply to the unclean spirit, made the boy well, and gave him back to his father. “All were amazed to see God’s wonderful power.

“I Will Die and Rise Again”

While everybody thought how wonderful everything was that Jesus was doing, He said to His disciples. “Listen carefully to what I say. The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men.”

“But they didn’t know what He meant. It was hidden from them so that they didn’t understand it. And they were afraid to ask Him about it.

“A discussion got started among them as to which of them was the greatest. “But Jesus knew what they were thinking. He took a little child, had him stand by Him, “and said to them, “If you welcome this little child in My name, you welcome Me. And if you welcome Me, you welcome Him who sent Me. You see, if anyone is the least of all of you, he is great.”

“He Is for Us”

““Master,” John said, “we saw a man driving out devils in Your name, and we tried to stop him, because he’s not one of us.”

““Don’t stop him,” Jesus told him.

Near Philip’s Caesarea, Galilee, summer, 29

9
35 Pk 27
H 42 1
Dn 18 15

"anyone who is not against you is for you."

To Jerusalem

³¹As the time was coming nearer for Him to be taken up to heaven, He showed He was determined to go to Jerusalem. ³²He sent messengers ahead of Him. They went and stopped in a village of the Samaritans to arrange a place for Him to stay. ³³But the people didn't welcome Him, because He was going to Jerusalem. ³⁴When His disciples James and John saw this, they asked, "Lord, do You want us to order *fire to come down from heaven and burn them up?*"

³⁵But He turned and sternly corrected them. ³⁶So they went on to another village.

"I Will Follow, but—"

³⁷As they were walking along the road, a man said to Him, "I will follow You anywhere You go."

³⁸"Foxes have holes," Jesus told him, "and birds in the air have nests, but the Son of Man doesn't have a place to lay His head."

³⁹He told another man, "Follow Me."

"Lord, first let me go and bury my father," he asked.

⁴⁰But Jesus told him, "Let the dead bury their dead. But you go and tell about God's kingdom."

⁴¹"I will follow You, Lord," said another, "but first let me say good-by to my people at home."

⁴²"Anyone who lays his hand on a plow," Jesus answered him, "and keeps looking back isn't fit for God's kingdom."

Seventy-Two Missionaries

10 After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent

them out by twos to go ahead of Him to every town and place where He intended to go.

²"There's much grain to be cut, but there are only a few workers," He told them. "Ask the Owner of the crop to send out workers to bring in His grain. ³Go! I'm sending you like lambs among wolves. ⁴Don't carry a purse, a bag, or shoes, and don't stop to greet anyone on the way. ⁵When you go into a house, say first, 'May there be peace in this house.' ⁶If a man of peace lives there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will come back to you. ⁷Stay in that house and eat and drink whatever they have, since a worker earns his pay. Don't move from one house to another. ⁸When you go into any town and the people welcome you, eat what they serve you. ⁹Heal the sick that are there, and tell the people, 'God's kingdom has come close to you!'

¹⁰"But if you go into a town and they don't welcome you, go out on its streets and say, ¹¹'The dust of your town has clung to our feet—we're wiping it off in protest against you! But realize this: God's kingdom has come near you!' ¹²I tell you, on that Day it will be easier for Sodom than for that town.

¹³"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would long ago have repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. ¹⁴In the Judgment it will be easier for Tyre and Sidon than for you. ¹⁵And you, Capernaum, will you be *lifted up to heaven? You will go down to hell.*

¹⁶"Anyone who hears you hears Me, and anyone who rejects you rejects Me. But anyone who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me."

Judea, October to December, 29

¹⁷The seventy-two came back delighted. "Lord," they said, "even the devils do what we tell them in Your name."

¹⁸"I watched the devil fall from heaven like lightning," He told them. ¹⁹"You know, I've given you the power to *step on snakes* and scorpions and to trample on all the enemy's power, and nothing will hurt you. ²⁰Only don't be glad that the spirits obey you but that your names are written in heaven."

²¹In that hour the Holy Spirit filled Jesus with joy. "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth," He said, "for hiding these things from wise and intelligent people and revealing them to little children. Yes, Father, I praise You for wanting it to be that way.

²²"My Father has put everything in My hands. Only the Father knows the Son. And only the Son—and anyone to whom the Son wants to reveal Him—knows the Father."

²³Turning to His disciples, He said to them alone, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. ²⁴I tell you, many prophets and kings longed to see what you see but didn't see it, and hear what you hear but didn't hear it."

The Good Samaritan

²⁵Then an expert in the Law came forward to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what do I do to get everlasting life?"

²⁶"What is written in the Law?" Jesus asked him. "What do you read there?"

²⁷"*Love the Lord your God with all your heart,*" he answered, "*and with all your life and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor like yourself.*"

²⁸"You're right," Jesus told him.

"Do that and you will live."

²⁹But he wanted to justify himself. So he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

³⁰Jesus went into the matter and said:

"A man going from Jerusalem down to Jericho fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him, struck him blow after blow, and went away leaving him half dead.

³¹"Just at that time a priest happened to go along that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³²So did also a Levite who came to the place: he looked at him and passed by on the other side.

³³"Then a Samaritan, as he was traveling, came near him, and when he saw him, he felt sorry for him. ³⁴He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Take care of him,' he said, 'and anything else you spend on him I'll repay you when I come back.'

³⁶"Which of those three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who had fallen into the hands of the robbers?"

³⁷"The one who was kind enough to help him," he said.

"Go and do as he did," Jesus told him.

Mary Listens to Jesus

³⁸As they were walking along, Jesus came to a village where a woman by the name of Martha welcomed Him to her home. ³⁹She had a sister by the name of Mary. She sat down at Jesus' feet and listened to what He said.

Judea, October to December, 29

¹⁸ Ps 87:12
²⁷ Dt 6:5.
²⁸ Lv 19:18
²⁹ Lv 18:5

"But Martha was worried about all she had to do for them. So she came and asked, "Lord, don't You care that my sister has left me and I have to do the work alone? Now tell her to help me."

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered her, "you worry and fuss about a lot of things. "But there's only one thing you need. Mary has made the right choice, and it must not be taken away from her."

The Lord's Prayer

11 Once Jesus was praying in a certain place. When He stopped, one of His disciples asked Him, "Lord, teach us to pray as John taught his disciples."

He told them, "When you pray, say:

'Father, may Your name be kept holy,

Your kingdom come,

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

'Give us every day our daily bread.

'Forgive us our sins, as we, too, forgive everyone who sins against us.

And don't bring us into temptation.'

Pray!

"Suppose one of you has a friend," Jesus said to His disciples, "and you go to him at midnight and ask him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves. 'A friend of mine on a trip has dropped in on me, and I have nothing to serve him.' 'Will he answer from within, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can't get up and give you anything'? 'I tell you, although he won't get up and give you anything even though he's your friend, yet because you

persist, he'll get up and give you anything you need.

"So I tell you: Ask and it will be given to you. Search and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened for you. "Anyone who asks receives; anyone who searches finds; and anyone who knocks, the door will be opened for him.

"If your son asks you, his father, for a fish, will any of you give him a snake instead of a fish? "Or if he asks for an egg, will you give him a scorpion? "Now if you, bad as you are, know enough to give your children good gifts, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

Power over the Devil

"He was driving out a devil who was speechless. When the devil had gone out, the speechless man spoke.

The people were amazed. "But some of them said, "He drives out the devils with the help of Beelzebul, who rules over the devils." "Others, meaning to test Him, demanded that He show them some wonderful proof from heaven.

"Knowing what they were thinking, He said to them, "If one part of any kingdom fights against another part, it loses its people, and one house falls on another. "If the devil fights against himself, how can his kingdom stand? I say this because you say Beelzebul helps Me drive out the devils. "But if Beelzebul helps Me drive out the devils, who helps your sons drive them out? That's why they'll be your judges. "But if God's finger helps Me drive out the devils, then God's kingdom has come to you.

"When a strong man, completely armed, guards his palace, his property is not disturbed. "But

*Judea, October to December, 29
Near Capernaum, summer, 28*

when someone stronger than he attacks him and defeats him, he'll take away his whole armor, in which he trusted, and divide the plunder.

²³"Anyone who is not with Me is against Me, and anyone who doesn't help Me gather, scatters.

²⁴"When an unclean spirit comes out of a man, he goes through dry places looking for rest but doesn't find any. Then he says, 'I'll go back to the home I left.' ²⁵He comes and finds it swept and decorated. ²⁶Then he goes and takes home with him seven other spirits worse than himself, and they go in and live there. In the end that man is worse than he was before."

Hear Him!

²⁷When Jesus said this, a woman in the crowd called loud to Him. "Blessed is the mother who bore You and nursed You."

²⁸"Yes," He said, "but blessed are those who listen to God's Word and keep it."

²⁹As the people were crowding around Him, He said, "These people of our time are wicked. They're looking for a proof, but the only proof they'll get is Jonah. ³⁰As Jonah became a proof to the people of Nineveh, so the Son of Man will be a proof to these people. ³¹The queen of the south will rise up in the Judgment with the men of today and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear Solomon's wisdom; and here you see more than Solomon. ³²The men of Nineveh will rise up in the Judgment with the people of today and condemn them, because they repented when Jonah preached; and here you see more than Jonah."

Your Light

³³"You don't light a lamp and put it in a cellar or under the peck measure but on the lampstand so that those who come in will see it shine.

³⁴"Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, you have light for your whole body. But when your eye is bad, your body is dark! ³⁵Then see to it that the light in you isn't dark. ³⁶Now if you have light for your whole body and no part of it is dark, it will all have light just as when a lamp shines brightly on you."

Warnings

³⁷Jesus had been speaking, when a Pharisee invited Him to eat at his home. So He went in and lay down to eat. ³⁸But the Pharisee was surprised to see He didn't wash before the meal.

³⁹The Lord said to him, "You Pharisees keep cleaning the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you're full of greed and wickedness. ⁴⁰You fools, didn't He who made the outside make the inside too? ⁴¹Just give your heart in helping the poor, and you'll find everything clean.

⁴²"But woe to you Pharisees! You give a tenth of mint, rue, and every vegetable, and you fail to be just and to love God. You should have done these without neglecting the others.

⁴³"And woe to you Pharisees! You like to have the seats of honor in the synagogues and to be greeted in the marketplaces. ⁴⁴Woe to you! You're like the unmarked graves people walk over without knowing what they are."

⁴⁵"Teacher," one of the men of the

*Near Capernaum, summer. 28
Judea, November to December. 29*

Law said to Him, "when You say that, You insult us too."

"Woe also to you experts in the Law!" He said. "You load people with burdens they can hardly carry, but not with one finger will you touch these burdens yourselves. Woe to you! You build monuments for the prophets your fathers murdered. So you are witnesses and approve of what your fathers did. They murdered them, and you just build something. That's why God's wisdom has said: I will send them prophets and apostles, and they will murder or persecute some of them so that the people of today may be punished for the blood of all the prophets poured out since the world was made, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zachariah, who was killed between the altar and the temple. Yes, I tell you, the people of today will be punished for it.

"Woe to you experts in the Law! You've taken away the key to knowledge. You didn't go in yourselves and kept out those who tried to go in."

When Jesus went outside, the Bible scholars and the Pharisees fiercely opposed Him and cross-examined Him about many things, watching Him closely to trap Him in something He might say.

Don't Be Afraid of Men

12 When so many thousands of people came together that they trampled on one another, Jesus began to speak first to His disciples: "Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees—I mean, their hypocrisy. Everything that's covered will be uncovered, and every secret will be known. Everything you said in the dark will be heard in the light, and

what you whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be announced from the roofs. But I tell you, My friends, don't be afraid of those who kill the body and then can't do any more. I will point out the One you must fear. Fear Him who after killing you has the power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear Him!

"Aren't five sparrows sold for two cents? And God doesn't forget any one of them. Why, even the hairs on your heads are all counted! Don't be afraid—you're worth more than many sparrows! I tell you, whoever will confess Me before other people, him the Son of Man will confess before God's angels. Anyone who denies Me before other people will be denied before God's angels. Anyone who will speak against the Son of Man will be forgiven. But he who slanders the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

"When they bring you before synagogs, rulers, and authorities, don't worry how you will defend yourselves or what you will say. When that time comes, the Holy Spirit will teach you what to say."

Don't Be Greedy

"Teacher," someone in the crowd said to Him, "tell my brother to give me my share of the property our father left us."

"Man," He asked him, "who appointed Me to be your judge or to divide your property?"

"Be careful," He told the people. "Guard against every kind of greed. Even if you have more than enough, your property doesn't give you life."

Then He told them a story:

"A rich man had good crops on his land. What am I going to do?" he said to himself. 'I have no place to store my crops.' Finally he said,

Judea, November to December, 29

'This is what I'll do: I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones and store all my grain and goods in them. "Then I'll say to myself, You have a lot of good things stored up for many years. Take life easy, eat, drink, and enjoy yourself.'

"But God said to him, 'You fool, tonight you die. And what you've prepared—who will get it?' "That's how it is when you store up goods for yourself and aren't rich in God.

"That is why I tell you," He said to His disciples: "Don't worry about what you'll eat to keep alive or what you'll wear on your bodies. "Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. "Look at the crows. They don't sow or cut gain, they have no storeroom or barn; and yet God feeds them. You're worth much more than birds. "And can any of you by worrying add anything to your life? "If you can't do even the smallest thing, why worry about the rest? "See how the flowers grow. They don't work or spin. Yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory didn't dress like one of them. "If that's how God dresses the grass, which lives in the field today and tomorrow is thrown into a stove, how much more certainly will He put clothes on you—who trust Him so little? "So don't just think of what you'll eat or drink, and don't worry. "The people in the world run after all these things, but your Father knows you need them. "Only be eager to have Him as your King, and you'll get these things too. "Don't be afraid, little flock, your Father in his kindness has decided to give you the kingdom.

"Sell what you have and give the money to the poor. Make yourselves purses that don't wear out and a

treasure that will never be used up—in heaven, where no thief gets near it and no moth destroys it. "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be."

Be Ready

"Be ready for action with belts fastened and lamps burning. "Like men waiting for their master when he comes back from a wedding, so that they can open the door for him the moment he comes and knocks. "Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds watching when he comes. I tell you he'll certainly fasten his belt, have them lie down for a meal, and come and serve them. "Even if he comes in the middle of the night or toward morning and finds them that way, blessed are they.

"You know if the owner of a house had known just when the burglar was coming, he would not have let anyone break into his house. "You, too, get ready, because the Son of Man is coming when you don't expect Him."

"Lord," Peter asked, "by this illustration do you mean to warn us—or everybody else too?"

"The Lord asked, "Who do you suppose is the manager that can be trusted and has good sense, whom the master will put in charge of his servants to give them their share of food at the right time? "Blessed is that slave whom his master will find doing just this when he comes. "I tell you he certainly will make him manager of all his property. "But if that slave says to himself, 'My master isn't coming back for some time,' and starts to beat the other slaves, men and women, and eats, drinks, and gets drunk. "The master of that slave will come one day

Judea, November to December. 29

when he's not expecting him and at a time he doesn't know and will cut him in pieces and put him with the unfaithful.

⁴⁷"That slave who knew what his master wanted and didn't prepare himself or do what he wanted will get many blows. ⁴⁸But he who didn't know and did things for which he deserved to be beaten will get few blows. If you were given much, much will be expected of you, and if much was entrusted to you, all the more will be demanded of you."

Sorrow Ahead

⁴⁹"I have come to bring fire on earth, and how glad I would be if it were already started! ⁵⁰I must be baptized with a baptism, and how I am troubled till it is done!

⁵¹"Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you—to bring division. ⁵²From now on five in one family will be divided, three against two and two against three. ⁵³A father will be against a son and a son against a father, a mother against a daughter and a daughter against her mother, a mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

This Is Your Opportunity

⁵⁴"When you see a cloud coming up in the west," Jesus said to the people, "you immediately say, 'There's going to be a heavy rain,' and so it rains. ⁵⁵And when you see a wind blowing from the south, you say, 'It's going to be hot,' and so it is. ⁵⁶You hypocrites! You can tell what the appearance of the earth and of the sky means. How is it that you can't interpret this present time?

⁵⁷Why don't you yourselves decide what is right?

⁵⁸"When you go with your opponent to be tried before a ruler, do your best to settle with him on the way, or he may drag you before the judge, and the judge will hand you over to the officer, and the officer will put you in prison. ⁵⁹I tell you, you will never get out till you pay the last cent."

Repent

13 At that time some men were there to tell Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. ²Jesus asked them, "Do you think, because this happened to them, those Galileans must have been worse sinners than all the other Galileans? ³I tell you, no. And if you don't repent, you will all perish as they did. ⁴Or those eighteen the tower at Siloam fell on and killed—do you think they must have been worse transgressors than all the other people living in Jerusalem? ⁵I tell you, no. And if you don't repent, you will all perish as they did."

Another Year

⁶He told them this story:

"A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard. He came looking for fruit on it but didn't find any. ⁷So he said to the man who worked the vineyard, 'Look here! For the last three years I've come looking for figs on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down. Why should it waste the ground?'"

⁸"'Master,' he answered him, 'let it stand one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it; ⁹it may have figs next year. If not, cut it down.'"

⁵³ Mt. 12:7-6

Sick for Eighteen Years

¹Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on a Sabbath, ²and there was a woman whom a spirit had crippled for eighteen years. She was bent over and couldn't stand up straight. ³When Jesus saw her, He called her and said, "Woman, you're rid of your trouble." ⁴He laid His hands on her, and immediately she stood up straight and praised God.

⁵But the synagog leader was annoyed with Jesus for healing on a Sabbath. "There are six days to do your work," he told the people. "Come on those days and get healed, but not on the day of rest."

⁶"You hypocrites!" the Lord answered him. "Doesn't every one of you on a Saturday untie his ox or donkey from the manger and take it out to water? ⁷And this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom the devil has bound these eighteen years, shouldn't she on the day of rest be freed from what bound her?"

⁸As He said this, all His enemies had to feel ashamed, but all the common people were happy over the wonderful things He was doing.

Mustard Seed and Yeast

¹⁰"What is God's kingdom like," He asked, "and what will I compare it with? ¹¹It's like a mustard seed a man took and planted in his garden. It grew to be a tree, and the birds in the air nested in its branches.

¹²"With what should I compare God's kingdom?" He asked again. ¹³"It's like yeast a woman mixed into a bushel of flour till it was all fermented."

The Narrow Door

²⁴Then Jesus went and taught in one town and village after another

on His way to Jerusalem.

²⁵Someone asked Him, "Lord, are only a few people saved?"

²⁶"Struggle to get in through the narrow door," He told them. "I tell you, many will try to get in and not succeed. ²⁷After the Owner of the house gets up and closes the door, you'll be standing outside and knocking at the door. 'Lord, open up for us' you'll say. But He'll answer you, 'I don't know where you're from.' ²⁸Then you'll say, 'We ate and drank with You, and You taught in our streets.' ²⁹But He'll tell you, 'I don't know where you're from. Get away from Me, all you who do wrong.' ³⁰Then you will cry and grind your teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in God's kingdom but yourselves thrown out. ³¹People will come from the east and the west, the north and the south, and will eat in God's kingdom. ³²You see, some who are last will be first, and some who are first will be last."

Jesus Warns Jerusalem

³⁴Just then some Pharisees came and told Him, "Leave and get away from here; Herod wants to kill You."

³⁵"Go," He answered them, "and tell that fox, 'Listen, today and tomorrow I will drive out devils and do healings, and on the third day I will finish.' ³⁶But I must be on My way today, tomorrow, and the next day, because a prophet just can't be killed outside Jerusalem.

³⁷"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you murder the prophets and stone those sent to you! How often I wanted to gather your children the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you didn't want to! ³⁸Look, now your house is left to you. I tell you, you will not see Me till you say,

Judea, Perea, December to January.
29—30

13
19 Ps 104:12
Ez 17:23
21:6
Dn 4:12, 21
27 Ps 6:8
29 Mt 11:11
35 Jer 12:7
22:5
Ps 118:26

'Blessed is He who is coming in the Lord's name.'"

Dinner Is Ready!

14 Once on a Saturday Jesus went to the home of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal, and they were watching Him carefully.

¹In front of Him was a man who had dropsy. ²This led Jesus to ask the experts in the Law and the Pharisees, "Is it right to heal on a day of rest or not?" ³But they didn't say anything.

So Jesus took hold of the man, made him well, and sent him away. ⁴"If your son or your ox falls into a well," He asked them, "won't anyone of you pull him out immediately on a Sabbath?" ⁵They couldn't answer this.

⁶He noticed how the guests were trying to get the places of honor, and so He used the scene to teach them: ⁷"When anyone invites you to a wedding, don't take the place of honor. He may have invited somebody more important than you. ⁸And he who invited you and him will come and tell you, 'Give this man your place,' and then you'll feel ashamed when you have to take the lowest place. ⁹No, when you're invited, go and take the lowest place, so that when your host comes he'll tell you, 'Friend, move up higher.' Then all your fellow guests will see how you're honored. ¹⁰If you honor yourself, you'll be humbled, but if you humble yourself, you'll be honored."

¹¹Then He told the man who had invited Him, "When you give a dinner or a supper, don't invite your friends, your brothers, your relatives, or rich neighbors. Otherwise they'll invite you too and pay you back. ¹²No, when you give a

banquet, invite the poor, crippled, lame, and blind. ¹³Then you'll be happy because they can't pay you back. You'll be paid back when the righteous rise from the dead."

¹⁴When one of those eating with Him heard this, he said to Jesus, "Blessed is he who will eat bread in God's kingdom."

¹⁵Jesus said to him:

"A man once gave a big dinner and invited many. ¹⁶When it was time for the dinner, he sent his slave to tell those who were invited, 'Come, it's ready now!'

¹⁷Then they all alike began to excuse themselves. 'I bought a field,' the first told him, 'and I've got to go out and see it. Please excuse me.' ¹⁸Another said, 'I bought five teams of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.' ¹⁹And another said, 'I just got married, and that's why I can't come.'

²⁰The slave went back and reported this to his master. Then the master of the house got angry. 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the city,' he told his slave, 'and bring in here the poor, crippled, blind, and lame.'

²¹And the slave said, 'Master, it's done as you ordered, and there's still room.'

²²Then the master told the slave, 'Go out to the roads and stone fences, and make them come in! I want my house to be full. ²³I tell you, none of those men who were invited will taste my dinner.'

Leave Everything

²⁴Large crowds were going with Jesus. Turning to them, He said, ²⁵"If you come to Me and don't hate your father, mother, wife, children, brothers, and sisters and even your

Perea, January, 30

own life, you can't be My disciple. "Whoever doesn't carry his cross and follow Me can't be My disciple.

"If anyone of you wants to build a tower, won't you first sit down and figure out what it costs, to see if you have enough to finish it? "Otherwise, when you've laid a foundation but can't finish the building, all who watch you will make fun of you "and say, 'This fellow started to build but couldn't finish it.'

"Or suppose a king is going into battle against another king. Won't he first sit down and consider if with ten thousand men he can oppose the other coming against him with twenty thousand? "If he can't, then, while the other is still far away, he sends ambassadors to ask for terms of peace. "Just so, anyone of you who doesn't say good-by to everything he has can't be My disciple.

"Now, salt is good. But if the salt loses its taste, how will it be made salty again? "It is no good for the ground or for the manure pile. People throw it away.

"If you have ears to hear, listen!"

Lost—a Sheep

15 All the tax collectors and sinners were coming to Jesus to hear Him. "But the Pharisees and the Bible scholars grumbled and said, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

"So He told them this story:

"If anyone of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them, don't you leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the lost one till you find it? "When you find it, you lay it on your shoulders and are glad. "You go home and call your friends and neighbors together and

say to them, 'Be happy with me. I found my lost sheep!' "So, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine good people who don't need to repent."

Lost—a Coin

"Or suppose a woman has ten coins and loses one. Won't she light a lamp and sweep the house and look for it carefully till she finds it? "When she finds it, she calls her women friends and neighbors together and says, 'Be happy with me. I found the coin I lost.' "So, I tell you, God's angels will be happy over one sinner who repents."

Lost—a Son

"Then Jesus said: "A man had two sons. "The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the property.' So he divided his property between them.

"A few days later the younger son cashed in all he had, left home for a distant country, and there squandered his property by wild living. "When he had spent it all, a bad famine came over that country, and he started to be in need. "So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed hogs. "And he would have been glad to fill up on the pods the hogs were eating. And nobody would give him anything.

"Then he came to his senses and said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more food than they can eat, and here I'm starving to death. "I'll start out and go to my father and tell him, "Father, I've sinned against heaven and against you. "I don't deserve to be called your son anymore. Make me one of your hired men.'"

Perea, February

²⁰“So he started out and went to his father. While he was still far away, his father saw him and felt sorry for him. He ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹“Father,’ the son told him, ‘I’ve sinned against heaven and against you. I don’t deserve to be called your son anymore. Make me one of your hired men.’

²²“Quick,’ the father told his slaves, ‘bring out a robe—the best—and put it on him, put a ring on his finger and shoes on his feet. ²³And bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let’s eat and celebrate. ²⁴“This son of mine was dead and is alive. He was lost and is found.’ And they started to celebrate.

²⁵“Now, his older son was out in the field. As he was coming in, he got near the house—he heard music and dancing! ²⁶Calling one of the servants, he asked, ‘What’s going on here?’

²⁷“Your brother’s home,’ he was told, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he got him back safe and sound.’

²⁸“Then he got angry and wouldn’t go in. So his father came out and begged him. ²⁹But he answered his father. ‘All these years I’ve been working like a slave for you and have never disobeyed your order, and you never gave me even a little goat to celebrate with my friends. ³⁰But as soon as this son of yours came back, who devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.’

³¹“Son,’ the father said to him, ‘you’re always with me, and everything I have is yours. ³²But we had to celebrate and be glad. This brother of yours was dead and is alive. He was lost and is found.’”

The Dishonest Manager

16 Then Jesus said to His disciples:

“There was a rich man whose manager was accused of squandering the man’s property. ²He called the manager. ‘What’s this I hear about you?’ he asked him. ‘Give an account of your management, because you can’t manage my property any longer.’

³“‘What’ll I do?’ the manager said to himself. ‘My master is taking my job away from me. I’m not strong enough to dig; I’m ashamed to beg. I know what I’ll do so that when I’ve lost my job people will welcome me into their homes.’

⁴“So he called everyone who owed his master anything. ‘How much do you owe my master?’ he asked the first.

“‘Eight hundred gallons of oil,’ he answered.

“‘Take your note,’ he said, ‘sit down quick and write “four hundred.”’

⁷“Then he asked another, ‘How much do you owe?’

“‘A thousand bushels of wheat,’ he answered.

“‘Take your note,’ he told him, ‘and write “eight hundred.”’

⁸“And the master praised the dishonest manager for acting so shrewdly.

“In dealing with their own kind of people the men of this world are shrewder than those who are in the light.

⁹“And I tell you, with the money that’s often used in wrong ways win friends for yourselves so that when it’s gone you’ll be welcomed into the everlasting homes. ¹⁰If you can be trusted with very little, you can be trusted with much. And if you’re

Perea, February, 30

dishonest with very little, you're dishonest with much. "If you couldn't be trusted with wicked money, who will trust you with that which is really good? "And if you couldn't be trusted with someone else's things, who will give you your own?"

"No servant can be the slave of two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he'll be loyal to the one and despise the other. You can't serve God and money."

"The money-loving Pharisees heard all this and turned up their noses at Him. "Then He said to them, "You try to make people think you're good, but God knows your hearts. What people consider great is detested by God.

"The Law and the prophets were until John. Since then the good news of God's kingdom is told, and everybody tries to force his way into it. "It is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for the Law to drop one dot of an i.

"Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another is living in adultery. And the man who marries a woman divorced from her husband is living in adultery."

The Rich Man and Lazarus

"There was a rich man who used to dress in purple and fine linen and live in luxury every day. "A beggar by the name of Lazarus was laid at his gate. He was covered with sores "and longed to satisfy his hunger with anything that might fall from the rich man's table. And the dogs would even come and lick his sores.

"One day the beggar died, and the angels carried him to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and

was buried. "Being tormented in hell, he looked up, and though far away, he saw Abraham, and Lazarus at his bosom. "Father Abraham,' he called, 'have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, because I'm suffering in this fire.'

"But Abraham said, 'Remember, son, you had your good things in your life, while Lazarus had his misery. Now he is comforted here, while you're suffering. "In all these things there's a wide chasm fixed between us and you, so that those who might want to cross from here over to you can't do it, nor do any from there come over to us.'

"Then I ask you, father,' he said, 'send him to my father's home—"I have five brothers—to warn them not to get into this place of torture.'

"They have Moses and the prophets,' Abraham said. 'They should listen to them.'

"No, Father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone comes to them from the dead, they'll repent.'

"If they don't listen to Moses and the prophets,' he answered him, 'they won't be convinced even if somebody rose from the dead.'"

When Others Sin

17 "Temptations to sin are sure to come," Jesus told His disciples. "but woe to him through whom they come. "It would be better for him to have a big millstone hung around his neck and to be thrown into the lake than to lead one of these little ones into sin. "Watch yourselves.

"If your brother sins, correct him; and if he's sorry, forgive him. "Even if he sins against you seven times in one day and seven times

comes back to you and says, 'I'm sorry,' forgive him."

Faith and Duty

"Then the apostles said to the Lord, "Give us more faith."

⁶"If you have a faith like a mustard seed," the Lord said, "you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots, and be planted in the lake,' and it would obey you.

⁷"If your slave is plowing or watching sheep and comes in from the field, will any of you say to him, 'Come quickly and eat'? ⁸Or won't you rather tell him, 'Prepare something for me to eat, fasten your belt, and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterwards you eat and drink'? ⁹You won't thank the slave for doing what he was ordered to do, will you? ¹⁰So you too, when you've done all you were ordered to do, say, 'We are slaves who claim no credit. We've only done our duty.'"

Only One Thanks God

"On His way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. ¹²As He came to a village, ten lepers came toward Him. They stopped at a distance ¹³and called out, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"

"When He saw them, He told them, "Go and *let the priests examine you.*"

And here's what happened: As they went, they were cleansed of their leprosy. ¹⁵One of them, seeing he was healed, turned back and loudly praised God. ¹⁶He bowed to the ground at Jesus' feet and thanked Him. And he was a Samaritan.

¹⁷"Weren't there ten cleansed?" Jesus asked. "But the nine—where

are they? ¹⁸Weren't there any who came back to give God glory except this foreigner?"

¹⁹And He told him, "Get up and go! Your faith made you well."

Where Is God's Kingdom?

²⁰"When will God's kingdom come?" the Pharisees asked Jesus.

"People can't see the coming of God's kingdom," He answered them. ²¹"They will not say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!' You see, God's kingdom is now among^a you."

Jesus Is Coming

²²"The time will come," He told the disciples, "when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man and will not see it. ²³People will say, 'Look, there He is!' or, 'Here He is!' Don't go off and run after them.

²⁴"The Son of Man will be like the lightning that flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other. ²⁵But first He must suffer much and be rejected by these people.

²⁶"When the Son of Man comes, it will be like the time of Noah: ²⁷They were eating and drinking, and men and women were marrying till the day *Noah went into the ark*, and *the flood came* and destroyed them all.

²⁸"Or like the time of Lot: They were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. ²⁹But the day Lot left Sodom, *fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed them all.* ³⁰That is how it will be on the day the Son of Man is revealed.

³¹"On that day, if you're on the roof and have your goods in the

¹⁷
¹⁴ Lv. 13:7-9
²⁷ Gen. 7:6-7
²⁹ Gen. 19:24-25

^aThe Greek can mean "among" or "within"

house, don't go down to get them. If you're in the field, don't *turn back*. ^aRemember Lot's wife! ^bIf you try to save your life, you'll lose it, but if you'll lose it, you'll save it.

^c"I tell you, that night there will be two men in one bed. One will be taken and the other left. ^dTwo women will be grinding together. One will be taken and the other left.^b ^eThey asked Him, "Where, Lord?"

"Where there's a dead body," He told them, "there the vultures will gather."

God Hears

18 Jesus told them a story to show that they should always pray and not get tired of it:

^a"In a town there was a judge who didn't fear God or care what people thought. ^bIn that town there was also a widow who kept coming to him and saying, 'Get me justice and defend me against my enemy!'

"For a while he refused to do anything, but then he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care what people think, ^cyet because this widow keeps bothering me, I'll have to see that she gets justice, or she'll keep coming till she wears me out.'"

^dThe Lord added, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. ^eAnd won't God get justice for His chosen ones who cry to Him day and night? Is He slow to help them? ^fI tell you, He will quickly get justice for them. But when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth?"

The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

^aJesus told this story to some who were sure they were righteous and so looked down on everybody else:

^b"Two men went up to the temple to pray. One was a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ^cThe Pharisee stood and prayed by himself: 'God, I thank You I'm not like the other people: robbers, wrongdoers, adulterers, or even like that tax collector. ^dI fast twice a week and give a tenth of all my income.'

^e"But the tax collector, standing a distance away, wouldn't even look up to heaven but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, forgive me, a sinner!'

^f"I tell you, this man, and not the other, went home righteous. Everyone who honors himself will be humbled; but if you humble yourself, you will be honored."

Jesus Loves Children

^a"Some people brought babies to Jesus to have Him touch them. When the disciples saw them, they sternly told them not to do it.

^bBut Jesus called the children to Him and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and don't keep them away. God's kingdom belongs to such as these. ^cI tell you the truth, if you don't receive God's kingdom like a little child, you will not get into it."

The Rich Young Leader

^aAn official asked Him, "Good Teacher, what do I do to get everlasting life?"

^b"Why do you call Me good?"

^bOur three oldest manuscripts, including P⁷⁵, lack v. 36: "Two will be in a field One will be taken and the other left" See Mt. 24:40.

Jesus asked him. "Nobody is good except One—God. ²⁰You know the commandments: *Don't commit adultery, Don't murder. Don't steal, Don't lie, Honor your father and mother.*"

²¹"I've kept all these since I was a child," he said.

²²"When Jesus heard this, He told him, "You still lack one thing: Sell everything you have, distribute the money among the poor, and you'll have a treasure in heaven. Then come and follow Me."

²³When he heard this, he got very sad, because he was very rich. ²⁴Jesus watched him and said, "How hard it is for rich people to get into God's kingdom! ²⁵It's easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to get into God's kingdom."

²⁶Those who heard Him asked, "Who then can be saved?"

²⁷"What men can't do God can do," He answered.

²⁸Then Peter said, "Look, we've left our things and followed You."

²⁹"Let Me assure you," He answered them, "everyone who gave up his home or wife, brothers, parents, or children for God's kingdom ³⁰will certainly get a hundred times as much in this life, and in the coming world everlasting life."

The Shadow of the Cross

¹He took the twelve aside and said to them: "Look, we're going up to Jerusalem, and everything the prophets wrote about the Son of Man will be done: ²He'll be handed over to the non-Jews. They'll mock and insult Him, spit on Him, ³scourge and kill Him. And on the third day He will rise."

⁴But they understood none of this.

It was a mystery to them, and they didn't know what He meant.

A Blind Man

⁵As He came near Jericho, there was a blind man sitting by the road, begging. ⁶Hearing a crowd go by, he tried to find out what it was all about.

⁷"Jesus from Nazareth is passing by," they told him.

⁸He called, "Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!" ⁹Those who went ahead were urging him to be quiet. But he called all the louder, "Son of David, have pity on me!"

¹⁰Jesus stopped and ordered the man brought to Him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

"Lord, I want to see," he said.

¹¹"See!" Jesus told him. "Your faith has made you well."

¹²Immediately he could see, and he followed Jesus, praising God. And all the people praised God for what they had seen.

Zacchaeus

19 He went into Jericho and was passing through it. ²Here there was a man by the name of Zacchaeus. He was an overseer of tax collectors and was rich. ³He was trying to see what kind of person Jesus was, but being a small man, he couldn't see Him on account of the crowd. ⁴So he ran ahead and climbed up a fig-mulberry tree to see Him, because Jesus was coming that way.

⁵When Jesus came to the place, He looked up. "Zacchaeus, hurry down," He told him. "Today I must stay at your home."

⁶He hurried down and was happy to welcome Him. ⁷But all who saw them started to grumble: "He went

*Perea, Jericho, before the
Passover, 30*

to be the guest of a sinful man."

⁸"Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, half of my property I'm giving to the poor, and if I've cheated anybody, I'm paying him back four times as much."

⁹"Today salvation has come to this home," Jesus told him, "since he too is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰The Son of Man came to *look for* and save the lost."

Use God's Gifts

¹¹While they were listening to this, Jesus went on to tell them a story, because He was near Jerusalem and they thought God's kingdom was to appear immediately.

¹²"A nobleman," He said, "went to a distant country to be made a king and then come back. ¹³He called ten of his slaves, gave them a thousand denarii,^c and told them, 'Trade with these till I come.'

¹⁴"But the men of his own country hated him and sent representatives after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.'

¹⁵"But he was made king. When he came back, he said, 'Call those slaves whom I gave the money. I want to see what each one has made by his trading.'

¹⁶"The first came and said, 'Master, your hundred denarii have made a thousand more denarii.'

¹⁷"Well done, my good slave!" he told him. 'You proved you could be trusted in a very small matter. Take charge of ten cities.'

¹⁸"The second came and said, 'Your hundred denarii, master, made five hundred denarii.'

¹⁹"You be in charge of five cities,' he told this one.

²⁰"Then the one who was different

came and said, 'Master, here are your hundred denarii. I put them away in a cloth and kept them there. ²¹I was afraid of you. You're a hard man. You take what you didn't deposit, and you get grain you didn't sow.'

²²"I'll judge you by what you say, you wicked slave!' he told him. 'You knew I'm a hard man, taking what I didn't deposit and getting grain I didn't sow? ²³Why didn't you put my money in the bank? Then, when I came back, I could have collected it with interest.' ²⁴So he told his men, 'Take his hundred denarii away and give them to the man who has a thousand.'

²⁵"Master,' they answered him, 'he has a thousand denarii.'

²⁶"I tell you, everyone who has something will be given more, and anyone who doesn't have what he should have, even what he has will be taken away. ²⁷But those enemies of mine who didn't want me to be their king—bring them here and kill them in front of me.'"

²⁸After Jesus had said this, He continued on His way up to Jerusalem.

The King Is Coming

²⁹When He came near Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, as it was called, He sent two of His disciples. ³⁰"Go into the village ahead of you," He said, "and as you go in, you'll find a colt tied up that nobody ever sat on. Untie it and bring it to Me. ³¹And if anybody asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' say, 'The Lord needs it.'"

³²The men whom He sent went and found it as He had told them. ³³While they were untying

^cOne denarius was a day's pay

¹⁹ 19
¹⁰ 10
¹⁶ 16

the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?"

³⁴"The Lord needs it," they said.

³⁵So they brought it to Jesus, put their garments on the colt, and set Jesus on it. ³⁶As He was riding along, people spread their garments on the road. ³⁷And as He was coming near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully and loudly for all the miracles they had seen. ³⁸They said,

"Blessed is the King who is coming in the Lord's name!

In heaven peace, and glory in the highest heavens."

³⁹Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, urge Your disciples to be quiet."

⁴⁰"I tell you," He answered them, "if these are quiet, the stones will cry out."

⁴¹When He came near and saw the city, He wept loud over it ⁴²and said, "If today you only knew—yes, you—the way to peace! But now it's hidden so that you can't see it. ⁴³The time will come for you when your enemies will put up ramparts against you and surround you and press against you from every side. ⁴⁴They'll *dash* you and *your children* to the *ground* and not leave one stone on another in you, because you didn't know the time your help came to you."

He Cleanses the Temple

⁴⁵Jesus went into the temple and proceeded to drive out the men who were selling things there. ⁴⁶He said to them, "It is written, *My house should be a house of prayer*, but you have made it *a den of robbers*."

⁴⁷Every day He was teaching in the temple. The ruling priests, the Bible

scholars, and the leaders of the people were trying to kill Him, ⁴⁸but they couldn't find a way to do it, because the people were all eager to hear Him.

From Heaven

20 One day, as He was teaching the people in the temple and telling them the good news, the ruling priests, Bible scholars, and elders came to Him. ²¹"Tell us," they asked Him, "by what authority are You doing these things? Or who gives You the right to do them?"

²²Jesus answered them, "I will ask you a question. Tell Me, 'John's baptism—was it from heaven or from men?'"

²³They argued among themselves, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will ask, 'Why didn't you believe him?' ²⁴But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us. They're convinced John was a prophet." ²⁵So they answered they didn't know where it was from.

²⁶Then Jesus told them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I'm doing these things."

God's Vineyard

²⁷Then He told the people this story:

"A man *planted a vineyard*, rented it out to workers, and left to be gone a long time.

²⁸At the right time he sent a servant to the workers to get from them a share of the products of the vineyard. But the workers beat him and sent him back empty-handed. ²⁹He sent another servant; they beat him too, treated him shamefully, and sent him back empty-handed. ³⁰Then he sent a third; they wounded him and threw him out.

³¹Then the owner of the vineyard

³⁸ Ps 118:26
⁴⁴ Ps 137:9
⁴⁶ Is 56:7
Jer 7:11
20
9:11 5:2

Jerusalem, Monday to Tuesday

said, 'What should I do? I'll send my son whom I love. Maybe they'll respect him.'

¹⁴"When the workers saw him, they talked it over among themselves, saying, 'This is the heir. Let's kill him and get the inheritance.' ¹⁵So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

¹⁶"Now, what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁷He will come and kill those workers and give the vineyard to others."

"That must never happen!" said those who heard Him.

¹⁸Jesus looked at them and asked, "What does this mean in your Bible: *The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone?* ¹⁹Everyone who falls on that Stone will be dashed in pieces, and if that Stone falls on anyone, it will scatter him like dust."

²⁰The Bible experts and the ruling priests wanted to grab Him then and there, because they knew He had aimed this story at them, but they were afraid of the people.

Taxes

²¹They watched for an opportunity and sent spies to act holy in order to catch Him in what He would say. They wanted to hand Him over to the governor's control and authority. ²²They had a question for Him. "Teacher," they said, "we know You're right in what You say and teach, and You don't favor any special persons but really teach God's way. ²³Is it right for us to pay a tax to Caesar or not?"

²⁴Seeing through their tricky way, He told them, ²⁵"Show Me a denarius. Whose head is on it and whose inscription?"

"Caesar's," they answered.

²⁶"Well, then, give Caesar what is

Caesar's." He told them, "and God what is God's."

²⁷So they couldn't catch Him before the people in anything He said. His answer surprised them so much they didn't say anything.

The Dead Live

²⁸Some of the Sadducees, who say the dead don't rise, came to Him with this question: ²⁹"Teacher, Moses wrote for us, *If any married man dies and has no children, his brother should marry the widow and have children for his brother.* ³⁰Now, there were seven brothers. The first married and died childless. ³¹Then the second brother married the widow, ³²and so did the third. In the same way all seven died and left no children. ³³Finally the woman died too. ³⁴Now, when they rise from the dead, whose wife will she be? You know, the seven had her as wife."

³⁵"In this world men and women marry," Jesus told them; ³⁶"but those who are considered worthy to rise from the dead and live in the other world don't marry. ³⁷Nor can they die anymore, because they're like the angels. They're God's children and share in the resurrection.

³⁸"That the dead rise, Moses showed in the story about the bush when he called the Lord *the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.* ³⁹He's not the God of the dead but of the living. All who are with Him are alive."

⁴⁰"Teacher," some Bible scholars told Him, "You have told the truth." ⁴¹Nobody dared to ask Him another question.

David's Son

⁴²"How can people say the prom-

*In the temple, Tuesday, April 4,
A.D. 30*

¹⁷ Ps 118:22
²⁶ Gen 38:8
³¹ Dt 25:5-6
³⁷ Ex 3:6

ised Savior is David's Son?" He asked them. ⁴²"David himself says in the book of Psalms: *The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right 'till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'* ⁴³"So David calls Him Lord. Then how can He be his Son?"

Beware!

"While all the people were listening, He said to the disciples: ⁴⁴"Beware of certain teachers of the Law! They like to go around in long robes and love to be greeted in the marketplaces, to sit in the front seats in the synagogs, and to have the places of honor at dinners. ⁴⁷They swallow the widows' houses and then, to cover up, make long prayers. They'll be punished all the more."

A Cent

21 Looking up, He saw rich people dropping their gifts into the contribution boxes. ²And He saw a poor widow drop in two small coins. ³He said, "I tell you, this poor widow certainly put in more than all the others. ⁴All the others took some of what they had left over and dropped it in among the gifts. But she put in what she needed for herself, all she had to live on."

Sorrow Ahead!

⁵Some were saying about the temple, "It is beautifully constructed with fine stones and gifts."

⁶"About these things that you see," He said, "the time will come when not a stone will be left on another here but will be torn down."

⁷"Teacher," they asked Him, "when will this be, and how can we tell when this will happen?"

⁸"Be careful not to let anyone deceive you," Jesus said. "Many will

come using My name and saying, 'I am He!' and, 'The time has come.' Don't follow them.

⁹"When you hear of wars and revolutions, don't get alarmed. These things *must happen* first, but the end won't come right away."

¹⁰Then He told them, "*Nation will fight against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.*" ¹¹There will be great earthquakes and famines and plagues in different places, terrible sights and great signs coming from heaven.

¹²"Before all these things happen, men will arrest you and persecute you, hand you over to church councils, and put you in prisons. They'll bring you before kings and governors on account of My name.

¹³It will be your chance to tell them the truth. ¹⁴So make up your minds not to worry beforehand how you'll defend yourselves. ¹⁵I'll give you such speech and wisdom none of your enemies will be able to oppose it or talk against it.

¹⁶"Even parents, brothers, relatives, and friends will betray you and kill some of you, ¹⁷and everybody will hate you because of My name. ¹⁸But not a hair on your head will be lost. ¹⁹Endure patiently, and you'll win your lives."

Jerusalem Will Be Destroyed

²⁰"When you see Jerusalem surrounded by an army, then know the time has come for her to be destroyed. ²¹Then if you're in Judaea, flee to the hills. If you're in Jerusalem, leave it. If you're in the country, don't go into the city. ²²Those will be *days of vengeance* when everything must happen as it is written.

²³"Woe to the women who in those days are expecting babies or nursing

Mount of Olives, Tuesday, April 4, A.D. 30

42-43 Ps
110:1
21
9 Dn 2:28
10 Is 19:2
2 Ch 19:6
22 Dt 32:35
Hos 9:7

them. There will be great distress in this country, and God will punish this nation. ²⁶The sword will cut them down, they'll be taken away as prisoners among all nations, and *the Gentiles will trample on Jerusalem* till the time for the Gentiles has passed."

Jesus Is Coming

²⁵"There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth *nations* will be in distress, not knowing which way to turn from *the roaring and tossing of the sea*. ²⁶People will faint as they fearfully wait for what will happen to the world. *The powers of the heavens* will be shaken.

²⁷"Then they will see *the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory*.

²⁸"When these things begin to happen, stand ready and look forward cheerfully because you will soon be set free."

²⁹Then He pictured it this way: "Look at a fig tree, or any of the trees. ³⁰As soon as leaves grow on it, you see and know without being told that summer is near. ³¹So also when you see those things happen, you know God's kingdom is near.

³²"I tell you the truth: these people will not pass away till everything happens. ³³Heaven and earth will pass away, but what I say will not pass away.

³⁴"Be careful never to get your hearts burdened with drunkenness and its nausea and with worries about this life, or that day will take you by surprise like *a trap*. ³⁵It will surprise all people wherever they *live on the earth*. ³⁶But always watch and pray to be considered worthy to escape all these things that are going to happen and to stand

before the Son of Man."

³⁷During the day He would teach in the temple, but at night He would go out to the Mount of Olives, as it was called, and stay there for the night. ³⁸All the people used to get up early to go to Him in the temple and hear Him.

The Plot

22 The festival of bread without yeast, called the Passover, was near. ²Then the ruling priests and the Bible scholars were looking for a way to kill Him. They were afraid of the people.

³The devil went into Judas, called the man from Kerioth, one of the twelve. ⁴He went to the high priests and the captains of the temple and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus to them. ⁵They were delighted and agreed to give him some money. ⁶He promised to do it and so was looking for a chance to betray Him when He was away from the crowd.

The Passover

⁷Then came the day of the festival of bread without yeast, when the Passover lamb had to be killed. ⁸Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go, get the Passover ready for us to eat."

⁹"Where do You want us to get it ready?" they asked Him.

¹⁰"Go into the city," He told them, "and you'll meet a man carrying a jar of water. ¹¹Follow him into the house he enters, and tell the owner of the house: 'The Teacher asks you, "Where is the room in which I can eat the Passover with My disciples?"'" ¹²He will show you a large furnished room upstairs. Get things ready there."

¹³They went and found it as He

*Mount of Olives, Jerusalem.
Tuesday*

24 In 62:16;
25 In 123;
26 Ps 65:7;
27 Ex 22:7-8;
28 In 24:4;
29 In 24:4;
30-35 In 24:17

had told them, and they got the Passover ready.

"When the hour had come, He and the apostles lay down for the meal. ¹⁵"I have very much longed to eat this Passover with you before I suffer," He said to them. ¹⁶"I tell you, I will not eat it again till it comes true in God's kingdom." ¹⁷Then He was handed a cup, and He gave thanks. "Take this," He said, "and share it."

The Lord's Supper

¹⁸"I tell you, from now on I will not drink of the product of the vine till God's kingdom comes."

¹⁹Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body, which is given for you. Do this to remember Me."

²⁰He did the same with the cup when the supper was over, saying, "This cup is *the new covenant in My blood*, poured out for you."

²⁰ Ex 24:8
Jer 31:32
Zech 9:11
37 Is 53:12

"Is It I?"

²¹"Look, the hand of him who is betraying Me is with Me on the table. ²²The Son of Man is going as it is decreed, but woe to that man who is betraying Him."

²³They started to discuss with one another which of them was going to do this.

"Who Is the Greatest?"

²⁴Then the disciples started to quarrel among themselves as to which of them was considered the greatest.

²⁵"The kings of the nations lord it over them," He told them, "and their rulers call themselves benefactors. ²⁶With you it's different. The greatest among you should become like the youngest, and one who leads should be like one who serves. ²⁷Who is

greater, the one who lies down to eat or the one who serves? Isn't it the one who lies down to eat? But I am among you as one who serves.

²⁸"You have stood by Me in the troubles that have tested Me. ²⁹As My Father has appointed Me to be King, so I appoint you ³⁰to eat and drink at My table in My kingdom and to sit on thrones and rule the twelve tribes of Israel."

You Will Be Tested

³¹"Simon, Simon," said the Lord, "you know the devil has begged to have all of you to sift you like wheat. ³²But I prayed for you, Simon, that your faith will not die. And when you come back, strengthen your fellow disciples."

³³"Lord," he told Him, "I'm ready to go to prison and to die with You."

³⁴"I tell you, Peter," He said, "the rooster will not crow tonight till you deny three times that you know Me."

³⁵Then He asked them, "When I sent you out without purse, bag, or shoes, you didn't lack anything, did you?"

"Not a thing!" they answered.

³⁶"But now," He told them, "if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag. And if you don't have a sword, sell your garment and buy one. ³⁷It is written: *He will be counted among criminals*, and I tell you, that must happen to Me. Whatever is written about Me must happen!"

³⁸"Lord, look, here are two swords!" they said.

"Enough of that!" He told them.

Gethsemane

³⁹Jesus went out and as usual came to the Mount of Olives. The disciples went with Him. ⁴⁰When He came to the place, He told them,

*Jerusalem, Thursday, April 6, A.D.
30*

"Pray that you may not be tempted."

"He withdrew from them about as far as you'd throw a stone, knelt, and prayed. "Father, if You wish, take this cup away from Me; but let it not be as I want it but as You want it."

"An angel from heaven appeared to Him and gave Him strength. "And as He began to struggle inwardly, He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat became like thick drops of blood falling on the ground."

"After praying, He got up, went to the disciples, and found them sleeping because they were feeling sad. "Why are you sleeping?" He asked them. "Get up and pray that you may not be tempted."

The Arrest

"While He was still talking, the crowd came. The one called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading them, and he came close to Jesus to kiss Him.

"Judas," Jesus asked him, "are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

"The men around Jesus, seeing what was going to happen, asked, "Lord, should we strike with our swords?" "And one of them struck the high priest's slave and cut off his right ear.

"But Jesus said, "Let them do it. No more of this!" And, touching the ear, He healed him.

"Then Jesus said to the ruling priests, captains of the temple, and elders who had come for Him, "You came out for Me with swords and clubs as if I were a robber! "Day after day I was with you in the temple, and you laid no hands on

Me. But this is your time when darkness rules."

"They arrested Him, led Him away, and took Him to the high priest's palace.

Peter Denies Jesus

Peter followed at a distance.

"The men had lit a fire in the middle of the courtyard, and as they sat together, Peter sat among them.

"A maid saw him sitting in the light of the fire, and looking straight at him, she said, "He too was with Him."

"But he denied and said, "I don't know Him, woman."

"A little later someone else looked at him and said, "You're one of them."

"Man, I'm not!" Peter said.

"About an hour later another insisted: "Certainly he was with Him. Why, he's a Galilean!"

"Man, I don't know what you're talking about," Peter said.

Just then, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. "Then the Lord turned and looked at Peter, and Peter remembered the Lord telling him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times." "So he went outside and cried bitterly.

The Jewish Court Condemns Jesus

"The men who were holding Him were making fun of Him as they struck Him. "They covered His face and kept asking Him: "Prophecy! Who hit You?" "And so they went on insulting Him in many other ways.

"In the morning all the elders of the people, ruling priests, and Bible

^{4p} and other old manuscripts lack vv. 43-44

scholars had a meeting. They brought Jesus before their court and asked, ⁶⁷“Are You the promised Savior? Tell us.”

“If I tell you, you won’t believe Me,” He said to them. ⁶⁸“And if I ask you a question, you won’t answer. ⁶⁹But from now on *the Son of Man* will be *sitting at the right of God’s power*.”

⁷⁰“Are You, then, the Son of God?” all of them asked.

He answered them, “As you say: I am He.”

⁷¹“Why do we need any more testimony?” they asked. “We’ve heard Him say it ourselves.”

23 Then the whole crowd of them got up and took Him to Pilate.

Before Pilate

¹Then they started to accuse Him: “We found that He makes our people disloyal, keeps them from paying taxes to the emperor, and says He is Christ, a king.”

²Pilate asked Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

“Yes,” He answered him.

³Pilate told the ruling priests and the crowd, “I don’t find this Man guilty of anything.”

Before Herod

⁴The priests and the crowd kept urging him: “He stirs up the people by teaching all over the country of the Jews, beginning in Galilee and coming here.”

⁵When Pilate heard that, he asked, “Is the Man from Galilee?” ⁶And when he found out Jesus came from

the country governed by Herod, he sent Him to Herod, who also was in Jerusalem at that time.

⁷Herod was very glad to see Jesus. For a long time he wanted to see Him because he was hearing about Him, and he was expecting to see Jesus do some miracle. ⁸He asked Him a lot of questions, but Jesus didn’t answer him. ⁹The ruling priests and the Bible scholars were standing there and accusing Him vehemently.

¹⁰So Herod and his soldiers treated Him with contempt and made fun of Him. They put a splendid garment on Him and then sent Him back to Pilate. ¹¹On that day Herod and Pilate became friends. Before this they had been enemies.

¹²Then Pilate called the ruling priests, the other leaders, and the people together. ¹³“You brought me this Man as one who turns the people against the government,” he told them. “And now look, I’ve examined this Man before you and found Him innocent of the things you accuse Him of. ¹⁴And Herod did too, because he sent Him back to us. You see, He hasn’t done anything to deserve death. ¹⁵So I’m going to teach Him a lesson and let Him go.”^e

Barabbas

¹⁶Then the whole crowd yelled: “Away with Him. Free Barabbas for us.” ¹⁷He had been put in prison for a revolt that had taken place in the city and for murder.

¹⁸But Pilate wanted to let Jesus go, so he called to them again.

^eOur oldest papyrus, P⁷⁵, and our oldest parchment, Codex Vaticanus, lack v. 17 “At every festival he had to set someone free for them.” See Mt. 27:15, Mk 15:6; Jn 18:39.

¹⁸But they kept yelling: "Crucify, crucify Him!"

¹⁹And Pilate spoke to them a third time: "Why, what wrong has He done? I haven't found anything in Him that deserves death. So I will teach Him a lesson and let Him go."

²⁰But they kept pressing him with loud shouts, demanding He be crucified, and their shouts were overpowering Pilate. ²¹Then Pilate decided what they demanded should be done: ²²he let them have Barabbas, who had been put in prison for revolt and murder, but whom they were asking for, and he handed Jesus over to them to do what they wanted.

On the Way

²³As they led Jesus away, they took hold of Simon, a man from Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and they laid the cross on him, to carry it behind Jesus.

²⁴A large crowd of the people followed Him. The women in the crowd were beating their breasts and weeping over Him. ²⁵Turning to them, Jesus said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, don't cry over Me, but cry over yourselves and your children, ²⁶because the time is coming when people will say:

'Happy are—
the women who couldn't have children,
the wombs that didn't bear,
and the breasts that didn't nurse.'

²⁷Then people will say—
to the mountains: 'Fall on us!
and to the hills: 'Cover us!'

²⁸If this is done to the green tree, what will be done to a dry one?"

²⁹Two others, who were criminals,

were also taken away to be killed with Him.

"They Crucified Him"

³⁰When they came to the place called Skull, they crucified Him there with the criminals, one at His right and the other at His left.

³¹Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; they don't know what they are doing."³²

They divided His clothes among them by throwing lots for them.

³³The people stood there watching. The rulers were sneering. "He saved others. He should save Himself if He's the promised Christ whom God has chosen." ³⁴The soldiers also made fun of Him by going up to Him and offering Him sour wine. ³⁵"If You're the King of the Jews," they said, "save Yourself."

³⁶There was a notice placed above Him: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

A Robber Turns to Jesus

³⁷One of the crucified criminals was mocking Him. "Aren't You the Promised Christ? Save Yourself and us!"

³⁸But the other warned him. "Aren't you afraid of God?" he asked him. "You're condemned just as He is. "Our punishment is just. We're getting what we deserve for what we've done. But this One has done nothing wrong."

³⁹Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when You come to Your kingdom."

⁴⁰"I tell you the truth," Jesus said to him, "today you will be with Me in Paradise."

Jesus Dies

⁴¹It was about twelve o'clock when

¹P^s and some other old manuscripts lack this first word from the cross

darkness came over the whole country, because the sun stopped shining, and the darkness lasted till three in the afternoon. ⁴³The curtain in the temple was torn in two.

⁴⁴Then Jesus called out loud, "Father, *into Your hands I entrust My spirit.*" After He said this, He died.

⁴⁵When the captain saw what had happened, he praised God and said, "This Man certainly was righteous." ⁴⁶When all the people who had come there to see this saw what happened, they beat their breasts and turned back. ⁴⁷All His friends were standing at a distance, also the women who had followed Him from Galilee and now were watching these things.

Jesus Is Buried

⁴⁸There was a man by the name of Joseph, a member of the Jewish court, a good and righteous man ^{46 Ps 31:5} ^{49 Ps 38:11} who had not voted for their plan and action. He was from Arimathea, a Jewish town, and was looking forward to God's kingdom.

⁵⁰He went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. ⁵¹He took it down, wrapped it in some linen, and laid it in a grave cut in the rock, in which no one had yet been laid. ⁵²It was the day of preparation, and the day of rest was just starting.

⁵³The women who had come with Him from Galilee, following close behind, saw the grave and how His body was laid. ⁵⁴Then they went back and prepared spices and perfumes. But on Saturday they rested according to the commandment.

Jesus Rises

24 Very early on Sunday morning the women came to the

grave bringing the spices they had prepared. ⁵⁵They found the stone rolled back from the grave, ⁵⁶but when they went in, they didn't find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁵⁷While they were troubled about this, suddenly two men stood beside them in clothes that flashed like lightning. ⁵⁸The women were terrified, and they bowed down to the ground.

"Why do you look among the dead for Him who is alive?" they asked the women. ⁵⁹"He is not here; He has risen! Remember what He told you while He was still in Galilee. ⁶⁰The Son of Man must be handed over to sinful men, be crucified, and rise on the third day."

⁶¹They remembered what He said. ⁶²They left the grave, went back, and reported all this to the eleven and all the others. ⁶³It was Mary from Magdala, Johanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them that told the apostles about it.

⁶⁴The apostles thought it was nonsense and wouldn't believe them.

⁶⁵But Peter started out and ran to the grave. He bent down and saw only the linen cloths. Then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

On the Way to Emmaus

⁶⁶On the same day, two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. ⁶⁷They were talking about everything that had happened.

⁶⁸While they were talking and discussing, Jesus Himself joined them and walked with them. ⁶⁹They saw Him but were kept from knowing who He was.

⁷⁰"What are you discussing as

*Good Friday to Easter Sunday,
April 7—9*

you're walking along?" He asked them.

They stood still and looked gloomy. ¹⁸"Are you the only stranger living in Jerusalem," the one by the name of Cleopas asked Him, "who doesn't know what happened there these days?"

¹⁹"What do you mean?" He asked.

"All about Jesus from Nazareth," they told Him, "who was a prophet, mighty in what He did and said before God and all the people, ²⁰and how our high priests and rulers handed Him over to be condemned to death and crucified Him. ²¹But we were hoping He would be the One to free Israel. What is more, this is now the third day since it happened. ²²And then some of our women startled us. They went to the grave early this morning ²³and didn't find His body. They came and told us they had even seen a vision of angels who said He is alive. ²⁴Some of our men went to the grave and found it as the women had said; and they didn't see Him."

²⁵"How foolish you are," He told them, "and how slow to believe everything the prophets said! ²⁶Didn't the promised Christ have to suffer this and so go to His glory?" ²⁷Then He explained to them, starting with Moses and all the prophets, what they said about Him in all their writings.

²⁸And so they came near the village where they were going, and He acted as if He were going farther. ²⁹"Stay with us," they urged Him. "It's getting late, and the day is almost gone." So He went in to stay with them.

³⁰While He was at the table with them, He took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹Then their eyes were opened, and

they knew who He was. But He vanished from them.

³²"Didn't our hearts glow," they said to each other, "as He was talking to us on the way and explaining the Bible to us?"

³³That same hour they started out, went back to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them all together. ³⁴These said, "The Lord really did rise, and Simon saw Him."

³⁵Then the two men told what had happened on the way and how they had recognized Him while He was breaking the bread.

Behind Locked Doors

³⁶While they were talking about what had happened, Jesus stood among them. "Peace to you!" He said to them. ³⁷They were startled and terrified and thought they were seeing a ghost.

³⁸"Why are you troubled?" He asked them. "And why do doubts come into your minds? ³⁹Look at My hands and My feet: it is I Myself. Feel Me and see. A ghost doesn't have flesh and bones as you see Me have." ⁴⁰As He said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

"They were so happy—they thought it was too good to be true—and they were surprised. "Do you have anything here to eat?" He asked them. ⁴²They gave Him a piece of broiled fish. ⁴³He took it and ate it while they watched Him.

⁴⁴"While I was still with you," He said to them, "I told you that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must come true." ⁴⁵Then He opened their minds to understand the Bible. ⁴⁶"This," He told them, "is what is written: The

April 9, A.D. 30

promised Christ will suffer, rise from the dead on the third day, "and in His name you will preach to all people, beginning at Jerusalem, that they repent of their sins so that they will be forgiven. "You will testify of these things."

Jesus Goes Up to Heaven

"I am sending you Him whom My Father promised. Wait here in the city till you are armed with power from above."

³⁰He took them out to a place where Bethany lay ahead of them. Then He raised His hands and blessed them. ³¹While He was blessing them, He parted from them and was taken up to heaven.

³²They knelt and worshiped Jesus. And then they went back to Jerusalem very happy. ³³And they were always in the temple praising God.

JOHN

1 IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God.

³Everything was made by Him, and not one thing that was made was made without Him.

⁴In Him was life, and the Life was the Light of men. ⁵The Light is shining in the dark, and the darkness has not put it out.

⁶A man came—God sent him—his name was John. ⁷He came to tell the truth about the Light to help everyone believe. ⁸He was not the Light but came to tell the truth about the Light.

⁹The true Light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and He made the world, and the world didn't know Him. ¹¹He came to His own, and His own people didn't welcome Him. ¹²But to all who welcomed Him, who believe in His name, He gave the power to become God's children. ¹³They have been born, not of the blood of parents or of a sexual desire or of a man's desire but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us for a time and we saw His glory, the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵John told the truth about Him when he called: "This is the One of whom I said, He who is coming after me is ahead of me because He was before me."

¹⁶All of us have taken from all that is in Him—gift after gift of His

love. ¹⁷The Law was given through Moses, but Jesus Christ brought grace and truth. ¹⁸Nobody has ever seen God. The only-begotten God who is close to the Father's heart has told us about Him.

The Lamb of God

¹⁹When the Jews in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to John to ask him, "Who are you?" this was John's testimony. ²⁰He confessed and didn't deny. He confessed: "I'm not the promised Savior."

²¹"What are you then?" they asked him. "Are you Elijah?"

"I am not," he said.

"Are you the Prophet?"

"No," he answered.

²²Then they asked him, "Who are you? We want to bring an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

²³He said: "I am a voice calling in the wilderness: 'Make straight the way for the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said."

²⁴Some who had been sent belonged to the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, "Why, then, do you baptize if you're not the promised Savior or Elijah or the Prophet?"

²⁶"I baptize with water," John answered them. "There is standing among you Someone you don't know, ²⁷the One who is coming after me. I'm not good enough to untie His shoe strap."

²⁸This happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

²⁹The next day John sees Jesus

*At the Jordan River, February,
A.D. 27*

coming toward him. And he says, "Look at the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. "He is the One I meant when I said, 'A Man is coming after me but is ahead of me, because He was before me.' "Even I didn't know who He was, but I came and baptized with water to show Him to Israel."

"John testified: 'I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and stay on Him. "I didn't know who He was, but He who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'When you see the Spirit come down on Someone and stay on Him, He is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' "I saw it and testified, 'This is the Son of God.'"

The First Disciples

"The next day, while John was again standing with two of his disciples, ^{51 Gen 28 12} "he saw Jesus passing by. "Look at the Lamb of God!" he said. "When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus.

"Jesus turned around and saw them following. "What are you looking for?" He asked them.

"Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are You staying?" they asked Him.

"Come and you'll see," He told them. So they came and saw where He was staying, and they stayed with Him that day. It was about ten in the forenoon.

"One of the two who heard John and then followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. "He first found his own brother Simon and told him, "We have found the Messiah." (The Greek word for Him

is Christ.) "He brought him to Jesus.

Looking at him, Jesus said, "You are Simon, John's son. Your name will be Cephas" (which means Peter^a).

"The next day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee. He found Philip. "Follow Me!" Jesus told him. "Philip was from Bethsaida, the home town of Andrew and Peter.

"Philip found Nathanael and told him, "The One Moses wrote about in the Law, and the prophets too—we've found Him, Jesus, Joseph's Son from Nazareth."

"Nazareth—can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked him.

"Come and see!" Philip told him.

"Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him. "Here's a real Israelite in whom there is no deceit," He said of him.

"Where did You get to know me?" Nathanael asked Him.

"Before Philip called you," Jesus answered him, "when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."

"Master," Nathanael answered Him, "You are God's Son! You are Israel's King!"

"You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree," Jesus answered him. "You will see greater things than that." And He said to him, "I tell you people the truth, you will see *heaven opened and God's angels going up and coming down* on the Son of Man."

Jesus Changes Water to Wine

2 Two days later there was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and Jesus' mother was there. "Jesus and

^a *Cephas* in Aramaic and *Peter* in Greek both mean "rock."

His disciples had also been invited to the wedding.

"When the people were out of wine, Jesus' mother said to Him, "They don't have any wine."

"Will you leave that to Me, woman?" Jesus asked her. "It isn't the right time yet."

"His mother told the waiters, "Do anything He tells you."

"Six stone water jars were standing there for the religious washings of the Jews. Each jar held eighteen to twenty-seven gallons.

"Fill the jars with water," Jesus told them. And they filled them to the top. "Now take some of it," He told them, "and take it to the manager of the dinner." So they took it to him.

"When the manager tasted the water that had been changed to wine, he didn't know where it was from; only the waiters who had dipped the water knew. So the manager called the groom. "Everybody serves his good wine first," he told him, "and when people have drunk much, then the poorer wine. You've kept the good wine till now."

"Jesus did this, the first of His miracles, in Cana in Galilee. He showed His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

"After this He, His mother, His brothers, and His disciples went down to Capernaum and stayed there a few days.

Jesus Cleans the Temple

"The Jewish Passover was near, so Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

"In the temple He found men selling cattle, sheep, and pigeons, and the money changers were sitting there. "So He made a whip of small ropes and with their sheep

and cattle drove them all out of the temple. He scattered the coins of the money changers and upset their tables.

"Take these away!" He told those who sold pigeons. "Don't make My Father's house a place for business."

"His disciples had to think of what the Bible said: *The zeal for Your house will consume Me.*

"Then the Jews came back at Him by asking, "By what miracle can You prove to us You may do this?"

"Tear down this temple," Jesus answered them, "and I will raise it in three days."

"It took forty-six years to build this temple," said the Jews, "and You'll raise it in three days?"

"But the temple He spoke of was His own body. "After He rose from the dead, His disciples remembered He had said this, and they believed the Bible and what Jesus had said.

Nicodemus

"Now, while He was in the crowd at the Passover in Jerusalem, many believed in His name when they saw the miracles He was doing. "Jesus, however, wouldn't trust them, because He knew everybody. "He didn't need to be told about anyone, because He knew what was in him.

3 Now, there was a Pharisee by the name of Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish court. He came to Jesus one night. "Master," he said to Him, "we know You're a teacher who has come from God. Nobody can do these miracles You do unless God is with him."

"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered him, "if anyone isn't born from above, he can't see God's kingdom."

"How can anyone be born when

Jerusalem, April 11—17

he's old?" Nicodemus asked Him. "He can't go back into his mother's womb and be born again, can he?"

"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered him. "if anyone isn't born of water and the Spirit, he can't get into God's kingdom. 'Anything born of the flesh is flesh, but anything born of the Spirit is spirit. 'Don't be surprised when I tell you you must all be born from above. "The wind blows where it pleases and you hear the sound of it, but you don't know where it's coming from or where it's going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

"How can that be?" Nicodemus asked Him.

¹⁰"You are the teacher in Israel," Jesus said to him, "and don't know this? "I assure you, We tell what We know, and We testify to what We have seen. But you people don't accept Our testimony. ¹¹If you don't believe the earthly things I told you, how will you believe Me if I tell you heavenly things? ¹²No one has gone up to heaven except the One who came down from heaven—the Son of Man.

¹³"As Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up ¹⁴so that everyone who believes in Him has everlasting life. "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him might not perish but have everlasting life. "You see, God didn't send His Son into the world to condemn the world but to save the world through Him. "If you believe in Him, you're not condemned. But if you don't believe, you're already condemned because you don't believe in the name of God's only-begotten Son. ¹⁵This is why people are condemned:

The Light came into the world, but people have loved darkness instead of the Light because they have been doing wrong. ²⁰Everyone who does wrong hates the Light and will not come to the Light—he doesn't want his works to be seen in the light. ²¹But anyone who lives in the truth comes to the Light so that his works may be seen to have been done in God."

John Is Happy in Jesus

²²After this, Jesus and His disciples went into the country of Judea, and there He spent some time with them and baptized.

²³John too was baptizing in Aenon, near Salim, because there was much water there. So people came and were baptized. ²⁴John had not yet been put in prison.

²⁵John's disciples started a discussion with a Jew about religious cleansing, ²⁶and they came to John. "Teacher," they told him, "He who was with you on the other side of the Jordan and to whom you gave your testimony—He's here. He's baptizing, and everybody's going to Him."

²⁷"A man can get only what Heaven has given him," John answered. ²⁸"You yourselves are witnesses that I said I'm not the promised Savior but am sent ahead of Him.

²⁹"The One who has the bride is the Bridegroom. The Bridegroom's friend stands and listens to Him. And when the Bridegroom speaks, He makes His friend very happy. Now, this is my happiness, and it's complete. ³⁰He must grow while I must become less. ³¹The One who comes from above is above all others.

"Anyone who comes from the earth is earthly and talks about

Jerusalem, April 11—17, A.D. 27

earthly things. The One who comes from heaven is above all others. ²He tells the truth of what He has seen and heard, and nobody accepts the truth He tells. ³But anyone who has accepted the truth He tells has stamped with his seal of approval that God tells the truth. ⁴The One whom God has sent says what God says because God gives Him His Spirit without limit. ⁵The Father loves the Son and has put everything in His hands. ⁶Anyone who believes in the Son has everlasting life. But anyone who will not listen to the Son will not see life, but God's wrath rests on him."

The Samaritan Woman

4 The Lord found out that the Pharisees had heard, "Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John," although it wasn't really Jesus but His disciples who baptized. ²Then He left Judea and started back on the way to Galilee, and He had to go through Samaria. ³He came to a town in Samaria by the name of Sychar, near the piece of land Jacob gave his son Joseph. ⁴Jacob's Well was there. So Jesus, tired as He was from traveling, sat down by the well. It was about six in the evening.

⁷A woman of Samaria came to draw water. "Give Me a drink," Jesus said to her. "His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.

⁸The Samaritan woman asked Him: "How can You, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" Jews, you see, don't drink from the same jar with Samaritans.

¹⁰"If you knew what God is giving," Jesus answered her, "and who it is that says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him,

and He would have given you living water."

¹¹"Sir, You have nothing to draw water with," she told Him. "and the well is deep. Where can you get living water from a spring? ¹²Are You greater than Jacob, our ancestor, who gave us the well? He himself drank from it, and also his sons and his animals."

¹³"Everyone who drinks this water," Jesus answered her, "will get thirsty again. ¹⁴Anyone who drinks the water I'll give him will never get thirsty again. But the water I'll give him will be in him a spring of water bubbling up to everlasting life."

¹⁵"Sir, give me this water," the woman told Him. "Then I won't get thirsty or have to come out here to draw water."

¹⁶"Go, call your husband," Jesus told her, "and come back here."

¹⁷"I don't have any husband," the woman answered Him.

"You're right when you say, 'I don't have any husband,'" Jesus told her. ¹⁸"You've had five husbands, and the man you have now isn't your husband. You've told the truth!"

¹⁹"Sir," the woman said to Him, "I see You're a prophet! ²⁰Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say, 'The place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.'"

²¹"Believe Me, woman," Jesus told her, "the time is coming when you will not be worshiping the Father on this mountain or in Jerusalem. ²²You don't know what you're worshiping. We know what we're worshiping, because salvation comes from the Jews. ²³But the time is coming, and it is here now, when real worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. You

Judea, spring, 27

see, the Father is looking for such people to worship Him. ²⁴“God is a spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

²⁵The woman said to Him, “I know that the Messiah” (who is called Christ) “is coming. When He comes, He’ll tell us everything.”

²⁶“I am He—I who am talking to you,” Jesus told her.

²⁷Just then His disciples came and were surprised to find Him talking to a woman. But none of them asked, “What do You want?” or, “Why are You talking to her?”

²⁸Then the woman left her water jar and went back into the town. ²⁹“Come,” she told the people, “see a Man who told me everything I’ve done. Could He be the promised Savior?” ³⁰They left the town and were coming to Him.

Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, “Master, eat.”

³¹He told them, “I have food to eat which you don’t know about.”

³²“Could anyone have brought Him something to eat?” the disciples asked one another.

³³“My food is to do what He wants who sent Me,” Jesus told them “and to finish His work.

³⁴“Don’t you say, ‘Four more months and we’ll cut the grain’? I tell you, look and see how the fields are white and ready to be cut. ³⁵Already the reaper is getting paid and is gathering grain for everlasting life, so that the sower is happy with the reaper. ³⁶Here the saying is true, ‘One man sows, and another cuts the grain.’ ³⁷I sent you to cut grain where you had not worked before. Others have done the hard work, and you have succeeded them in their work.”

³⁸Many Samaritans in that town believed in Him because the woman

had declared, “He told me everything I’ve done.” ³⁹When the Samaritans came to Him, they asked Him to stay with them. And He stayed there two days. ⁴⁰Then many more believed because of what He said. ⁴¹“We no longer believe on account of what you said,” they told the woman. “Now we heard Him ourselves and know He certainly is the Savior of the world.”

⁴²After two days He left and went to Galilee.

An Officer's Son

⁴³Jesus Himself declared a prophet is not honored in his own country. ⁴⁴Now, when He came to Galilee, the people in Galilee welcomed Him. They had seen all He did at the festival in Jerusalem, since they too had gone to the festival.

⁴⁵Then Jesus went again to Cana in Galilee, where He had changed water to wine.

One of the king’s officers lived at Capernaum. Now, his son was sick. ⁴⁶When he heard Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to Him and asked Him to come down and heal his son, who was dying.

⁴⁷“If you don’t see wonderful proofs and miracles,” Jesus told him, “you won’t believe.”

⁴⁸“Lord, come down,” the officer asked Him, “before my little boy dies.”

⁴⁹“Go,” Jesus told him, “your boy is well.” The man believed what Jesus told him and left.

⁵⁰On his way back his slaves met him and told him his boy was well. ⁵¹So he asked them what time he got better. They told him, “Yesterday at seven in the evening the fever left him.” ⁵²Then the father knew it was the same hour

Samaria, early summer, 27

when Jesus had told him, "Your boy is well." And he and everybody at his house believed.

³This was the second miracle Jesus did after He had come from Judea to Galilee.

Sick for 38 Years

5 After this there was a Jewish festival, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

²Near the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem there's a pool that the Jews call Bethesda. It has five porches. ³In them there used to lie a crowd of people who were sick, blind, lame, and paralyzed.^b ⁴One man who was there had been sick thirty-eight years. ⁵Jesus saw him lying there and found out he had been sick a long time. "Would you like to get well?" He asked him.

"Lord," the sick man answered Him, "I don't have anybody to put me into the pool when the water is stirred. And while I'm trying to get there, somebody else steps in ahead of me."

"Get up," Jesus told him, "pick up your bed, and walk."

⁷Immediately the man got well, picked up his bed, and walked.

That day was a Sabbath.

¹⁰"Today is the day of rest," the Jews told the man who had been healed. "It's wrong for you to carry your bed."

"He answered them, "The One who made me well told me, 'Pick up your bed and walk.'"

¹²They asked him, "Who is the man that told you, 'Pick it up and

walk'?" ¹³But the man who had been healed didn't know who He was, because Jesus had disappeared in the crowd that was there.

¹⁴Later Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "Look, you're well now. Don't sin any more, or something worse may happen to you."

¹⁵The man went back and told the Jews it was Jesus who made him well.

Cod's Son

¹⁶Because Jesus was doing such things on a Sabbath, the Jews started to persecute Him. ¹⁷But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and so I am working."

¹⁸Then the Jews were all the more eager to kill Him, because He wasn't only abolishing the Sabbath but even calling God His own Father, making Himself equal to God.

¹⁹"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered them, "the Son can do nothing by Himself but only what He sees the Father doing. You see, the Son does exactly what the Father does. ²⁰The Father loves the Son and shows Him everything He is doing. And He will show Him even greater works than these so that you'll be surprised. ²¹As the Father wakes up the dead and makes them live, so the Son makes alive whom He wants to make alive.

²²"The Father doesn't judge anyone but has entrusted the judgment entirely to the Son ²³so that all should honor the Son as they honor the Father. Anyone who doesn't

^b*Our oldest manuscripts, including P⁷⁵ and P⁶⁶, lack vv. 3b-4: "waiting for the water to be stirred. At a certain time the Lord's angel would come down into the pool and stir the water. After the stirring of the water, the first to step in got well, whatever disease he was suffering from."*

Galilee, summer, 27 Jerusalem, April, 28

honor the Son doesn't honor the Father who sent Him. ²⁴I tell you the truth, if you listen to what I say and believe Him who sent Me, you have everlasting life, and you will not be judged, but you have come from death to life.

²⁵"Let me assure you, the hour is coming and is here now when the dead will hear God's Son calling them, and those who hear Him will live. ²⁶As the Father has life in Himself, so He has given the Son the power of having life in Himself.

²⁷"He has also given Him power to judge because He is the Son of Man. ²⁸This should not surprise you, because the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear Him calling ²⁹and will come out. Those who have done good will rise to live; those who have done evil will rise to be condemned. ³⁰I can do nothing by Myself. I judge only as I'm told to do, and so My judgment is just, because I'm not trying to do what I want but what He wants who sent Me.

³¹"If I alone testify about Myself, My testimony isn't dependable. ³²There's Someone else testifying about Me, and I know what He testifies about Me is true. ³³You sent to John, and he testified to the Truth. ³⁴Not that I get My testimony from a man, but I say this to save you. ³⁵John was a lighted lamp that shone, and for a while you wanted to enjoy his light. ³⁶But I have a greater testimony than John had. The works the Father gave Me to finish, these works that I do testify the Father sent Me. ³⁷The Father who sent Me—He testified about Me. You never heard His voice or saw His form. ³⁸You don't keep His

^cA denarius was a day's pay.

Word within you, because you don't believe Him whom He sent. ³⁹You search the Scriptures since you think you have everlasting life in them; and still they testify about Me! ⁴⁰But you don't want to come to Me to have life.

⁴¹"I don't get glory from men. ⁴²But I know in your hearts you don't love God. ⁴³I have come in My Father's name, and you don't accept Me. If someone else comes in his own name, you'll accept him. ⁴⁴How can you believe while you accept honor from one another but are not eager to have the honor that comes from the only God?

⁴⁵"Don't think that I will accuse you before the Father. There is already one who accuses you—Moses, whom you trust. ⁴⁶If you really believe Moses, you would believe Me, because he wrote about Me. ⁴⁷But if you don't believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?"

Jesus Feeds Five Thousand

6 Some time later Jesus crossed over to the other side of the Lake of Galilee, which is the Lake of Tiberias. ²A large crowd was following Him because they saw the miracles He did on the sick. ³Jesus went up the hill and sat down there with His disciples. ⁴The Jewish festival of the Passover was near.

⁵As Jesus looked up, He saw a large crowd coming to Him. He turned to Philip: "Where should we buy bread for these people to eat?" ⁶He asked this only to test him, since He knew what He was going to do.

⁷"Two hundred denarii,"^c Philip answered, "wouldn't buy enough

Jerusalem, April, 28
Bethsaida-Julias, April, 29

bread for each of them to get just a little."

"One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, told Him, "There's a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what is that among so many?"

"Have the people sit down," Jesus said. There was much grass at the place. So they sat down. There were about five thousand men.

"Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed them to the people who were sitting down, and in the same way as much of the fish as they wanted.

"When they had enough, He told His disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left so that nothing will be wasted." They gathered them and filled twelve baskets with pieces of the five barley loaves left by those who had eaten.

"Seeing the miracle He did, the people said, "This certainly is the Prophet who is coming into the world."

Jesus Walks on Water

"When Jesus learned that the people meant to come and take Him by force and make Him king, He went back again to the hill by Himself. Meanwhile, as it got late, His disciples went down to the lake, stepped into a boat, and were on their way across the lake to Capernaum. By this time it was dark, and Jesus hadn't come to them yet. A strong wind started to blow and stir up the lake.

"After they had rowed three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the lake and coming near the boat, and they were terrified.

"It is I," He told them. "Don't be afraid."

"They wanted to take Him into the

boat. And in a moment the boat came to the shore where they were going.

Bread from Heaven

"The next day the people were still lingering on the other side of the lake. They had noticed only one boat was there and Jesus had not stepped into that boat with His disciples but they had gone away without Him.

"Other boats came from Tiberias near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord gave thanks. "When the people saw that neither Jesus nor His disciples were there, they stepped into these boats and came to Capernaum, looking for Jesus. They found Him on the other side of the lake and asked Him, "Master, when did You get here?"

"Surely, I tell you," Jesus answered them, "you're not looking for Me because you've seen miracles but because you've eaten some of the bread and been well fed. "Don't work for the food that spoils but for the food that keeps for everlasting life; which the Son of Man will give you because God the Father has sealed in Him the power to give it."

"What are the works God wants us to do?" they asked Him.

"What God wants you to do," Jesus answered them, "is to believe in Him whom He sent."

"What miracle can You do?" they asked Him. "Let us see it, and we'll believe You. What can You do? "Our fathers ate the manna in the desert, as it is written: *He gave them bread from heaven to eat.*"

"I tell you the truth," Jesus said to them, "Moses didn't give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the real bread from heaven. "God's bread is coming

Galilee, spring, 29

down from heaven and giving life to the world."

"Lord," they said to Him, "always give us this bread."

³⁵"I am the Bread of Life," Jesus told them. "Come to Me, and you will never be hungry. Believe in Me, and you will never be thirsty. ³⁶But I have told you, 'You have seen Me, and you don't believe!' ³⁷Everything the Father gives Me will come to Me, and anyone who comes to Me I will never turn away, ³⁸because I came down from heaven, not to do what I want but what He wants who sent Me; ³⁹and He who sent Me doesn't want Me to lose any of those He gave Me but to raise them on the last day. ⁴⁰Yes, My Father wants everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him to have everlasting life, and He wants Me to raise him on the last day."

⁴¹Then the Jews grumbled because He said, "I am the Bread that came down from heaven." ⁴²"Isn't this Jesus, Joseph's son," they asked, "whose father and mother we know? Then how can He say, 'I came down from heaven'?"

⁴³"Don't grumble among yourselves," Jesus answered them. ⁴⁴"A person can come to Me only if the Father who sent Me draws him. Then I will raise him on the last day. ⁴⁵The prophets wrote: *God will teach everyone.* Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from Him comes to Me. ⁴⁶Not that anyone has seen the Father; ⁴⁷only He who comes from God has seen the Father. I tell you the truth, anyone who believes has everlasting life.

⁴⁸"I am the Bread of Life. ⁴⁹Your fathers ate the manna in the desert, and they died. ⁵⁰But this is the Bread coming down from heaven so that anyone may eat it and not

die. ⁵¹I am the living Bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats this Bread, he will live forever. The bread I'll give to bring life to the world is My flesh."

⁵²Then the Jews argued with one another: "How can He give us His flesh to eat?"

⁵³"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered them, "unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you don't have any life in you. ⁵⁴If you eat My flesh and drink My blood, you have everlasting life, and I will raise you on the last day. ⁵⁵My flesh is a real food, and My blood is a real drink. ⁵⁶If you eat My flesh and drink My blood, you stay in Me and I in you. ⁵⁷As the living Father sent Me and I live because of the Father, so if you eat Me, you will live because of Me. ⁵⁸This is the Bread that came down from heaven. It isn't like the bread the fathers ate. They died. Eat this Bread, and you will live forever."

⁵⁹He said this while He was teaching in a synagog in Capernaum. ⁶⁰When they heard it, many of His disciples said, "This is hard to take. Who can listen to Him?"

⁶¹Inwardly aware that His disciples were complaining about this, Jesus asked them, "Does this upset you? ⁶²What if you see the Son of Man go up where He was before? ⁶³The Spirit makes alive; the flesh doesn't help. The words I spoke to you are Spirit, and they are life. ⁶⁴But some of you don't believe." Jesus knew from the beginning who wouldn't believe and who would betray Him. ⁶⁵So He added, "That is why I told you a person can come to Me only if the Father gives him the power."

Galilee, spring to summer, 29

“As a result many of His disciples went back to their old life and wouldn’t go with Him anymore. “Then Jesus asked the twelve, “Do you want to leave Me too?”

“Lord, to whom should we go?” Simon Peter answered Him, “You have words of everlasting life. “And we have come to believe and know You are God’s Holy One.”

“Didn’t I choose the twelve of you,” Jesus asked, “and one of you is a devil?” “He meant Judas, the son of Simon, the man from Kerioth. He was going to betray Him—one of the twelve.

To Jerusalem

7 Later Jesus went around in Galilee. He didn’t want to travel in Judea because the Jews were trying to kill Him.

The Jewish festival of Booths was near. “So His brothers told Jesus, “Leave this place, go to Judea, and there let Your disciples see the works You’re doing. “Nobody goes on doing things secretly when he wants to be known publicly. If You do these things, let the world see You.” “Not even His brothers believed in Him.

“It isn’t the right time for Me yet,” Jesus told them, “but any time is right for you. “The world can’t hate you, but it hates Me because I tell the truth about it that it is doing wrong. “You go up to the festival. I’m not going up to this festival right now, because it isn’t the right time for Me yet.”

“After telling them this, He did stay in Galilee. “But after His brothers had gone up to the festival, He went up too, not publicly but without being seen.

At the Festival of Booths

“So the Jews were looking for Jesus in the crowd at the festival. “Where is He?” they kept asking. “And there was much whispering about Him in the crowds. “He’s a good man,” some said; but others, “No, He deceives the people.” “Yet nobody would talk about Him in public because everybody was afraid of the Jews.

“But when the festival was already half over, Jesus went up to the temple and started to teach. “The Jews were surprised. “How can He know so much,” they asked. “when He hasn’t been in the schools?”

“What I teach doesn’t come from Me,” Jesus answered them, “but from Him who sent Me. “If anyone wants to do His will, he’ll know whether My teaching is from God or I speak My own thoughts. “Anyone who speaks his own thoughts tries to glorify himself. But He who wants to glorify the One who sent Him tells the truth, and there’s nothing wrong in Him. “Didn’t Moses give you the Law? Yet none of you does what the Law tells you. Why do you want to kill Me?”

“There’s a devil in You,” the crowd answered. “Who wants to kill You?”

“I did one thing,” Jesus answered them, “and you’re all surprised about it. “Moses gave you circumcision (not that it came from Moses but from our ancestors), and you circumcise a person on a Sabbath. “If a child is circumcised on a day of rest to keep the Law of Moses, do you feel bitter toward Me because I made all of a man well on a Sabbath? “Don’t judge by what

*Galilee to Jerusalem, October,
A.D. 29*

you see, but be fair when you judge."

"Then some of the men from Jerusalem said, "Isn't He the man they want to kill? ²⁶But here He speaks in public, and they don't say a thing to Him! Surely the rulers haven't found out He's the promised Christ, have they? ²⁷Now, we know where this One comes from. But when the promised Christ comes, nobody knows where He's from."

²⁸"You know Me," Jesus called aloud as He was teaching in the temple, "and you know where I come from. I didn't by Myself decide to come, but there's One who is real who sent Me. You don't know Him, ²⁹but I know Him because I come from Him and He sent Me."

"Then they tried to arrest Him, but nobody laid a hand on Him, because the right time hadn't come yet for Him.

³¹But many in the crowd believed in Him. "When the promised Christ comes," they asked, "will He do more miracles than this One has done?"

"The Pharisees heard the people muttering such things about Him. So the ruling priests as well as the Pharisees sent their men to arrest Him.

³³"I'll be with you just a little longer," said Jesus; "then I go to Him who sent Me. ³⁴You'll be looking for Me and won't find Me; and where I am, you can't come."

³⁵The Jews asked one another, "Where's He intending to go, saying we won't find Him? He doesn't intend to go to our people scattered among the non-Jews and teach the non-Jews, does He? ³⁶What does He mean by saying, 'You'll be looking for Me and won't find Me,' and, 'Where I am, you can't come?'"

³⁷On the last day, the great day of the festival, as Jesus was standing there, He called out loud, "If you're thirsty, come to Me and drink. ³⁸If you believe in Me, streams of living water will flow from you, as the Bible has said." ³⁹By this He meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive. The Spirit hadn't come yet, because Jesus hadn't been glorified yet.

⁴⁰After they heard Him say this, some of the people said, "This is certainly the Prophet." ⁴¹Others said, "This is the promised Christ." Still others asked, "What! Does the promised Christ come from Galilee? ⁴²Doesn't the Bible say: 'The promised Christ will come from the descendants of David and from the little town of Bethlehem, where David lived?'" ⁴³So the people were divided over Him. ⁴⁴Some of them wanted to arrest Him, but nobody laid hands on Him.

⁴⁵When the men who had been sent went back to the ruling priests and Pharisees, these asked them, "Why didn't you bring Him?"

⁴⁶"Nobody ever spoke like this Man," the men answered.

⁴⁷"You haven't been deceived too, have you?" the Pharisees asked them. ⁴⁸"No ruler or Pharisee has believed in Him, has he? ⁴⁹But this crowd, which doesn't know the Bible, is cursed."

⁵⁰One of them, Nicodemus, who had once come to Jesus, asked them, ⁵¹"Does our Law condemn anyone without first hearing what he has to say and finding out what he's doing?"

⁵²"Are you from Galilee too?" they asked him. "Search and see; the

42 2 Sm 7 12
Mt 5 2

Prophet doesn't come from Galilee."^d

The Adulteress

8 ⁸Then everyone went home. ⁹But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ¹⁰Early in the morning He came back into the temple. All the people came to Him, and He sat down and taught them.

¹¹The Bible scholars and the Pharisees brought to Him a woman who had been caught in adultery and had her stand in the middle. ¹²"Teacher," they told Him, "this woman was caught in the act of adultery. ¹³In the Law, Moses ordered us to stone such women. Now, what do You say?" ¹⁴They asked this to test Him. They wanted to find something to accuse Him of.

Jesus bent down and with His finger wrote on the ground. ¹⁵But when they kept on asking Him, He got up. ¹⁶"Anyone that's without sin among you," He said, "should be the first to throw a stone at her." ¹⁷Then He bent down again and wrote on the ground.

¹⁸Convicted by their conscience as they heard Him, they went out one by one, beginning with the older men, till all had gone and Jesus was left alone with the woman in the middle of the place. ¹⁹Jesus got up. ²⁰"Woman, where are they?" He asked her. ²¹"Didn't anyone condemn you?"

²²"No one, Lord," she said.

²³"I don't condemn you either," Jesus said. ²⁴"Go, from now on don't sin anymore."

Jesus Argues with the Jews

²⁵Jesus spoke to them again. ²⁶"I am the Light of the world. Follow Me,

and you will never wander in the dark but will have the Light of Life."

²⁷"You testify about Yourself," the Pharisees said to Him. ²⁸"We can't depend on Your testimony."

²⁹"Even if I testify about Myself," Jesus answered them, "you can depend on My testimony, because I know where I came from and where I'm going; but you don't know where I came from or where I'm going. ³⁰You judge in a human way, a way in which I don't judge anybody. ³¹But whenever I judge, you can depend on My judgment because I am not alone, but I'm with the Father who sent Me. ³²In your own Law it is written the testimony of two men is valid. ³³I testify about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me."

³⁴"Where is Your Father?" they asked Him.

"You don't know Me or My Father," Jesus answered. ³⁵"If you knew Me, you would know My Father."

³⁶He said this in the room of the treasury while He was teaching in the temple; nobody arrested Him, because the right time hadn't come yet for Him.

³⁷"I'm going away," He said to them again, "and you'll be looking for Me, but you will die in your sin. Where I'm going, you can't come."

³⁸"Is He going to kill Himself?" the Jews asked. ³⁹"Is that what He means when He says, 'Where I'm going, you can't come'?"

⁴⁰"You're from below," He told them. ⁴¹"I'm from above. Your home is in this world. My home is not in this world. ⁴²That's why I told you,

^dOur best manuscripts, including the two oldest papyri (P⁶⁶ and P⁷⁵, dated about A.D. 200) lack 7:53—8:11, the story of the adulteress. It is most likely a true story in the life of Jesus but not a part of the Gospel that John wrote.

The temple, October, 29

'You will die in your sins'; if you don't believe I'm the One, you will die in your sins."

⁴³"Who are You?" they asked Him.

⁴⁴"What should I tell you first?" Jesus asked them. ⁴⁵"I have much to say about you and to condemn. But I tell the world only what I heard from Him who sent Me, and He tells the truth." ⁴⁷They didn't understand He was talking to them about the Father.

⁴⁸So Jesus told them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, you will know I am the One and I do nothing by Myself, but I speak as My Father taught Me. ⁴⁹And He who sent Me is with Me and has not left Me alone, because I always do what pleases Him."

⁵⁰As He was saying this, many believed in Him. ⁵¹Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed in Him, "If you live in My Word, you are really My disciples, ⁵²and you will know the truth, and the truth will free you."

⁵³"We are Abraham's descendants," they answered Him, "and have never been anybody's slaves. How can You say, 'You'll be freed'?"

⁵⁴"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered them, "everyone who lives in sin is a slave to sin. ⁵⁵A slave doesn't stay in the home forever. A son stays forever. ⁵⁶If, then, the Son frees you, you will really be free. ⁵⁷I know you're Abraham's descendants. But you want to kill Me because My Word is not working in you. ⁵⁸I'm telling what I've seen, being with My Father, and you do what you've heard from your father."

⁵⁹"Abraham is our father," they answered Him.

"If you were Abraham's children," Jesus told them, "you would

do what Abraham did. ⁶⁰But now you want to kill Me, a Man who told you the truth, which I heard from God. Abraham didn't do that. ⁶¹You're doing what your father does."

"We weren't born outside of marriage," they said. "God alone is our Father."

⁶²"If God were your Father," Jesus told them, "you would love Me because I came from God, and as such I am here. I did not by Myself decide to come, but He sent Me. ⁶³Why don't you understand what I say? Because you can't listen to what I tell you. ⁶⁴Your father is the devil, and you want to do what your father wants. From the beginning he has been murdering people and hasn't stood in the truth, because there's no truth in him. When he tells a lie, he's telling it from his heart, because he's a liar and the father of lies. ⁶⁵Now, because I tell the truth, you don't believe Me. ⁶⁶Which of you can prove Me guilty of a sin? If I tell the truth, why don't you believe Me? ⁶⁷A child of God listens to what God says. You don't listen to Him because you're not God's children."

⁶⁸"Aren't we right," the Jews answered Him, "when we say You're a Samaritan and there's a devil in You?"

⁶⁹"There's no devil in Me," Jesus answered. "No, I honor My Father, but you dishonor Me. ⁷⁰I'm not trying to get glory for Myself. There's One who wants Me to have it, and He's the Judge. ⁷¹Let me assure you, if you keep My Word, you will never see death."

⁷²"Now we know there's a devil in You," the Jews told Him. "Abraham died, and so did the prophets, but You say, 'If you keep My Word, you

The temple, October, A.D. 29

will never taste death.' ⁵³Are You greater than our father Abraham? He died, and the prophets died. Who do You think You are?"

⁵⁴"If I glorify Myself," Jesus said, "My glory is nothing. It is My Father who glorifies Me, He of whom you say, 'He's our God.' ⁵⁵You don't know Him, but I know Him. And if I would say I don't know Him, I'd be a liar like you. But I do know Him, and I obey His Word. ⁵⁶Your father Abraham was delighted to know of My day; he saw it and was glad."

⁵⁷"You're not fifty years old yet," the Jews said to Him, "and Abraham has seen You?"

⁵⁸"I tell you the truth," Jesus told them, "before Abraham ever was born, I am."

⁵⁹Then they picked up stones to throw at Him. But Jesus hid Himself and left the temple.

A Blind Man Sees

9 As Jesus was passing by, He saw a man who had been blind from his birth. ²"Master," His disciples asked Him, "why was he born blind? Did he sin or his parents?"

³"Neither he nor his parents," Jesus answered. "He is blind to show what God can do with him. ⁴We must do the works of Him who sent Me while it is day. The night is coming when nobody can work. ⁵As long as I'm in the world, I'm the Light of the world."

⁶After He said this, He spit on the ground and with the spit made some mud and put the mud on the man's eyes. ⁷"Go," He told him, "wash in the pool of Siloam" (the name means "sent"). He went and washed. And as he walked away, he could see.

⁸Now, his neighbors and others who used to see him as a beggar

asked, "Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?"

⁹"It is he," some said. Others said, "No, but he looks like him." But he himself said, "I'm the one."

¹⁰Then they asked him, "How did you get your sight?"

¹¹"The man they call Jesus made some mud," he answered, "and put it on my eyes and told me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and then I could see."

¹²"Where is He?" they asked him.

¹³"I don't know," he answered.

¹⁴They brought him who had been blind to the Pharisees. ¹⁵Now, it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the mud and gave him his sight. ¹⁶So the Pharisees also asked him how he got his sight.

"He put mud on my eyes," the man told them, "and I washed them, and now I can see."

¹⁷"This Man is not from God," said some of the Pharisees, "because He doesn't rest on a Sabbath." Others asked, "How can a sinful man do such miracles?" So they disagreed.

¹⁸Then they asked the blind man again, "What do you say about Him, since He gave you your sight?"

¹⁹"He's a prophet," he answered.

²⁰The Jews didn't believe the man had been blind and got his sight till they called the parents of the man who could see now. ²¹"Is this your son who you say was born blind?" they asked them. "How does it happen he can see now?"

²²"We know he's our son," his parents answered, "and was born blind. ²³But we don't know how it is he can see now or who gave him his sight. Ask him; he's of age. He'll tell you about himself." ²⁴His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews. The Jews had already agreed to put out of the

Jerusalem, October, 29

synagog anyone who confessed Jesus was the promised Christ. ²³That is why his parents said, "He's of age; ask him."

²⁴So once again they called the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God," they told him. "We know this Man is a sinner."

²⁵"I don't know if He's a sinner," he answered. "I know only one thing—I used to be blind, and now I can see."

²⁶"What did He do to you?" they asked him. "How did He give you your sight?"

²⁷"I've already told you," he answered them, "and you heard it. Why do you want to hear it again? You don't want to be His disciples too, do you?"

²⁸"You're His disciple," they answered him scornfully, "but we're Moses' disciples. ²⁹We know God spoke to Moses, but this Fellow—we don't know where He's from."

³⁰"Well, that's strange!" the man answered them. "You don't know where He's from, and yet He gave me my sight. ³¹We know that God doesn't hear sinners but hears anyone who worships God and does what He wants. ³²Nobody has ever heard of anyone giving sight to a man born blind. ³³If this One were not from God, He couldn't do anything."

³⁴"You were altogether born in sins," they answered him, "and are you trying to teach us?" Then they put him out of the synagog.

"Jesus heard they had put him out. Finding him, He asked him, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

³⁶"Who is He, sir?" he asked. "I want to believe in Him."

³⁷"You've seen Him," Jesus told him. "It is He who is now talking to you."

³⁸"I do believe, Lord," he said and bowed down to worship Him.

³⁹Then Jesus said, "I've come into this world to judge men, so that those who don't see may see and those who see may turn blind."

⁴⁰Some Pharisees who were near Him heard this. "We aren't blind, are we?" they asked Him.

⁴¹"If you were blind," Jesus told them, "you wouldn't be sinning. But now you say, 'We see,' and you go on sinning."

The Good Shepherd

10 "I tell you the truth, the man who doesn't come into the sheepfold through the door but climbs over somewhere else, is a thief and a robber. ²But the one who comes in through the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³The doorkeeper opens the door for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by their names and leads them out. ⁴When he has brought out all his own sheep, he walks ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵They will not follow a stranger but will run away from him because they don't know the voice of strangers."

"This was the illustration Jesus used in talking to them, but they didn't know what He meant. ⁷So Jesus spoke again: "I tell you the truth, I am the Door for the sheep. ⁸All who came before Me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep didn't listen to them.

"I am the Door. If anyone comes in through Me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

¹⁰"A thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came so that they will have life and have it overflowing in them. ¹¹I am the Good

Shepherd. The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep. ¹²When a hired man, who isn't a shepherd and doesn't own the sheep, sees a wolf coming, he leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf carries them off and scatters them—¹³because he works for money and doesn't care about the sheep. ¹⁴I am the Good Shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, ¹⁵as the Father knows Me and I know the Father. And I give My life for the sheep. ¹⁶I have other sheep too, that are not in this fold. I must lead those too, and they will listen to My voice, and so they will become one flock with *one Shepherd*. ¹⁷The Father loves Me because I give My life in order to take it back again. ¹⁸Nobody takes it from Me. No, of My own free will I am giving it. I have the power to give it, and I have the power to take it back again. This is what My Father ordered Me to do.”

¹⁹These words again caused a split among the Jews. ²⁰Many of them said, “There's a devil in Him and He's crazy. Why do you listen to Him?” ²¹Others said, “Nobody talks like this when there's a devil in him. Can a devil give sight to the blind?”

“I and the Father Are One”

²²Then came the festival of Dedication in Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³and Jesus was walking in Solomon's porch in the temple. ²⁴There the Jews surrounded Him. “How long will You keep us in suspense?” they asked Him. “If You're the promised Savior, tell us frankly.”

²⁵“I did tell you,” Jesus answered them, “but you don't believe it. The works I do in My Father's name tell the truth about Me. ²⁶But you don't believe, because you're not My

sheep. ²⁷My sheep listen to My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me, ²⁸and I give them everlasting life. They will never be lost, and nobody will tear them out of My hand. ²⁹My Father, who gave them to Me, is greater than all others, and nobody can tear them out of My Father's hand. ³⁰I and the Father are one.”

³¹Again the Jews picked up stones to stone Him. ³²Jesus answered them, “I have shown you many good works that come from the Father. For which of these works are you trying to stone Me?”

³³“We're stoning You,” the Jews answered Him, “not for a good work but for blasphemy because You, a man, claim to be God.”

³⁴Jesus said to them, “Isn't it written in your Bible: *I said, 'You are gods'?* ³⁵If it called them gods to whom God's Word came—and the Bible can't be set aside—³⁶do you say to Me, whom the Father appointed for His holy purpose and sent into the world, ‘You're blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I'm God's Son’? ³⁷If I'm not doing My Father's works, don't trust Me. ³⁸But if I do them, even if you don't trust Me, trust My works so as to learn and understand the Father is in Me and I am in the Father.”

³⁹Again they tried to arrest Him, but He escaped from their hands. ⁴⁰He went back across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing earlier, and He stayed there.

⁴¹Many came to Him. “John did no miracle,” they said, “but everything John said about this One is true.” ⁴²And many believed in Him there.

Jerusalem, October to December, 29'

¹⁰
¹⁶ Ez: 34:23
³⁴ Ps. 82:6

Jesus Raises Lazarus

11 Then Lazarus was sick. He was in Bethany, the village where Mary and her sister Martha were living. ⁴Mary was the one who poured perfume on the Lord and wiped His feet with her hair. It was her brother Lazarus who was sick.

⁵So the sisters sent someone to tell Jesus. "Lord, the one You love is sick."

⁶When Jesus heard it, He said, "The purpose of this sickness isn't death but to show God's glory; it is to glorify God's Son."

⁷Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁸Now, when He heard Lazarus was sick, He stayed two days where He was. ⁹After that He said to His disciples, "Let us go back to Judea."

¹⁰"Master," the disciples said to Him, "the Jews have just been wanting to stone You, and You're going back there?"

¹¹"Aren't there twelve hours in a day?" Jesus answered. "If you walk during the day, you don't stumble, because you see the light of this world— ¹²But if you walk at night, you stumble, because you have no light."

¹³After He said this, He told them, "Our friend Lazarus has gone to sleep, but I'm going there to wake him up."

¹⁴"Lord, if he has gone to sleep," His disciples said to Him, "he'll get well."

¹⁵Jesus meant he was dead, but they thought He meant he was only sleeping. ¹⁶Then Jesus told them in plain words, "Lazarus died. ¹⁷And I'm glad I wasn't there; it will help you believe. But let us go to him."

¹⁸Then Thomas, who was called

Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us go too and die with Him."

¹⁹When Jesus got there, He found that Lazarus had been in the grave four days already.

²⁰Bethany was near Jerusalem, not quite two miles away. ²¹and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother.

²²Now, when Martha heard, "Jesus is coming," she went to meet Him, while Mary stayed at home. ²³"Lord, if You had been here," Martha told Jesus, "my brother wouldn't have died. ²⁴But even now I know God will give You anything You ask Him."

²⁵"Your brother will rise again," Jesus told her.

²⁶"I know he'll rise again," Martha answered Him, "in the resurrection on the last day."

²⁷"I am the Resurrection and the Life," Jesus said to her. "Anyone who believes in Me will live even if he dies. ²⁸Yes, anyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe that?"

²⁹"Yes, Lord," she told Him. "I believe You are the Christ, God's Son, who is coming into the world."

³⁰After she said this, she went to call her sister Mary. "The Teacher is here," she whispered, "and is calling for you."

³¹When Mary heard it, she got up quickly to go to Him. ³²Jesus hadn't come to the village yet but was still where Martha had met Him. ³³Now, the Jews who were in the house with Mary to comfort her saw her get up quickly and leave. So they followed her, thinking she was going to the grave to weep there. ³⁴When Mary came where Jesus was and saw Him, she bowed down at His feet and said, "Lord, if You had been

Bethany, February, 30

here, my brother wouldn't have died."

"When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews weeping who came with her, He groaned deeply and was troubled.

"Where did you lay him?" He asked.

"Lord, come and see," they answered Him.

Jesus burst into tears. "See how He loved him," the Jews said. "But some of them asked, 'He gave sight to the blind man—couldn't He have kept this man from dying?'"

Groaning deeply again, Jesus went to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone was laid against it. "Move the stone away," said Jesus.

Martha, the dead man's sister, told Him, "Lord, he smells already. He's been dead four days."

Jesus said to her, "Didn't I tell you, 'If you believe, you will see God's glory?'" "So they moved the stone away.

Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank You for hearing Me. 'I knew You always hear Me. But I spoke so that the people standing around Me will believe You sent Me.'" "After He had said this, He called out loud, "Lazarus, come out!"

"The dead man came out, his feet and hands wrapped in bandages and his face wrapped in a cloth. "Unwrap him," Jesus told them, "and let him go."

"Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary and had seen what He did believed in Him. "But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. "Then the ruling priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the council. "What are we doing?" they asked.

"This Man is doing many miracles. "If we let Him go on like this, everybody will believe in Him, and then the Romans will come and take away our place and our nation."

"But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, told them, "You don't know anything, "and you don't consider it is better for you that one man dies instead of the people and the whole nation doesn't perish." "He didn't think of this himself, but being high priest that year, he prophesied Jesus was going to die for the nation, "and not only for this nation but also to bring God's scattered children together and make them one.

"From that day on they planned to kill Him. "So Jesus no longer walked in public among the Jews but left and went into the country near the wilderness, to a town called Ephraim and stayed there with His disciples.

Mary Anoints Jesus

"The Jewish Passover was near, and many came from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves. "They were looking for Jesus and asking one another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think? He isn't coming to the festival, is He?" "The ruling priests and the Pharisees had given orders if anyone found out where He was he should report it so that they might arrest Him.

12 Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. "There a dinner was prepared for Him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those eating with Him.

Bethany, February, A.D. 30

¹²Then Mary took a pound of perfume, real nard and very expensive, and poured it on Jesus' feet and dried His feet with her hair. The fragrance of the perfume filled the house.

¹³Judas (the man from Kerioth, one of His disciples, who was going to betray Him) asked, "Why wasn't this perfume sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?" ¹⁴He didn't say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief and used to steal what was put in the money box he carried.

¹⁵"Let her do it for the day of My burial," Jesus said. ¹⁶"The poor you always have with you, but you don't always have Me."

¹⁷A large crowd of the Jews found out He was there, and they came, not only on account of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. ¹⁸But the ruling priests decided to kill Lazarus too, ¹⁹because he was the reason many Jews were going over to Jesus and believing in Him.

The King Comes to Jerusalem

²⁰The next day the large crowd that had come to the festival and heard, "Jesus is coming to Jerusalem," ²¹took branches from the palm trees and went out to meet Him, shouting: *"Our Savior!*

Blessed is He who is coming in the Lord's name,
the King of Israel!"

²²Jesus found a donkey and sat on it, as it is written:

*"Don't be afraid, daughter of Zion!
Look! Your King is coming, riding on a donkey's colt!"*

²³At that time His disciples didn't know what it meant, but after Jesus was glorified, they remembered this

was written about Him and was done to Him.

²⁴The people who had been with Him when He called Lazarus out of the grave and raised him from the dead were telling what they had seen. ²⁵Because the crowd heard He had done this miracle, it came to meet Him.

²⁶Then the Pharisees said to one another, "You see, you're not getting anywhere. Look! The world is running after Him."

Death and Glory

²⁷Among those who came up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. ²⁸They went to Philip (who was from Bethsaida in Galilee) and told him, "Sir, we want to see Jesus." ²⁹Philip went and told Andrew. Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus.

³⁰Jesus answered them, "The time has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ³¹Surely, I tell you, if a kernel of wheat doesn't fall into the ground and die, it will be just one kernel. But if it dies, it produces much grain. ³²Love your life and lose it, but hate your life in this world, and you will keep it for an everlasting life. ³³If you serve Me, follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be. If you serve Me, the Father will honor you.

³⁴"I am deeply troubled now. But what should I say? Father, save Me from what is going to happen? No! I came to suffer this now. ³⁵Father, glorify Your name."

Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified My name and will glorify it again."

³⁶The crowd, which stood there and heard it, said it had thundered. Others said, "An angel talked to Him." ³⁷Jesus explained: "That

In the temple, Tuesday, April 4

12
13 Ps 118
25-26
15 15 40 9
62 11
2Ch 9 9
27 Ps 63

voice did not come for My benefit but for yours.

³¹“Now this world is being judged; now the ruler of this world will be thrown out. ³²And once I have been lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to Me.” ³³He said this to indicate how He was going to die.

³⁴Then the crowd answered Him, “We’ve heard from the Bible the promised Christ lives forever. How, then, can You say the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?”

³⁵“The Light will be with you just a little longer,” Jesus answered them. “Walk while you have the Light, or darkness will overtake you. If you walk in the dark, you don’t know where you’re going. ³⁶While you have the Light, believe in the Light in order to become enlightened people.”

After Jesus had said this, He went away and hid from them. ³⁷Although they had seen Him do so many miracles, they wouldn’t believe in Him—³⁸what the prophet Isaiah said had to come true:

Lord, who has believed what we preach?

And to whom has the Lord’s arm been uncovered?

³⁹And so they couldn’t believe, because Isaiah also said:

⁴⁰He blinded their eyes and dulled their minds, so that their eyes don’t see, their minds don’t understand, and they don’t turn and let Me heal them.

⁴¹Isaiah said this because he saw His glory and spoke of Him. ⁴²And yet even many of the rulers believed in Him but wouldn’t say so publicly, because the Pharisees would have put them out of the synagogue. ⁴³Yes,

they loved to be praised by men more than by God.

⁴⁴Then Jesus called out, “If you believe in Me, you don’t believe only in Me but in Him who sent Me. ⁴⁵And if you see Me, you see Him who sent Me. ⁴⁶I have come as a light into the world so that anyone who believes in Me will not have to stay in the dark. ⁴⁷If anyone hears what I say but doesn’t keep it, I don’t condemn him, because I didn’t come to condemn the world but to save the world. ⁴⁸If anyone rejects Me and doesn’t take to heart what I say, he has one that is condemning him: The Word that I spoke will condemn him on the last day. ⁴⁹because what I said didn’t come from Me, but the Father who sent Me ordered Me to say and tell it. ⁵⁰I know what He orders is everlasting life. And so, whatever I say, I say it just as the Father told Me.”

Jesus Washes the Disciples’ Feet

13 Before the Passover festival Jesus knew the time had come for Him to leave this world and go to the Father. He had loved His own who were in the world, and now He loved them to the end.

²It was during the supper. The devil had already put the idea of betraying Jesus into the mind of Judas, the son of Simon from Kerioth.

³Jesus knew the Father put everything in His hands and He had come from God and was going back to God.

⁴So Jesus rose from supper, laid aside His outer garment, took a towel, and tied it around Him. ⁵Then He poured water into a basin and started to wash the disciples’ feet:

38 15 52 1
40 15 6 10

and to dry them with the towel that was tied around Him.

⁶And so He came to Simon Peter. "Lord," Peter asked Him, "are You going to wash my feet?"

⁷"You don't know now what I'm doing," Jesus answered him. "But later you will understand."

⁸"No!" Peter told Him. "You'll never wash my feet."

"If I don't wash you," Jesus answered him, "you have no share in Me."

⁹"Lord," Simon Peter told Him, "not only my feet but also my hands and my head."

¹⁰"Anyone who has bathed needs only to have his feet washed," Jesus told him. "He's clean all over. You're clean, but not all of you." ¹¹He knew who was betraying Him. That's why He said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹²After He had washed their feet and put on His garment, He lay down again. "Do you know what I've done to you?" He asked them. ¹³"You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you're right because I am that. ¹⁴Now if I, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you too should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵I've given you an example so that you will do as I did to you. ¹⁶Surely, I tell you, a slave is no greater than his Master, and if you're sent, you're no greater than He who sent you. ¹⁷If you know this, you're happy if you do it.

¹⁸"I'm not talking about all of you. I know whom I've chosen. But what the Bible says has to come true: *He who eats My bread kicks Me.* ¹⁹From now on I'm telling you these things before they happen so that when they happen you believe I am the One.

²⁰"Let Me assure you, if you

receive anyone I send, you receive Me, and if you receive Me, you receive Him who sent Me."

"Is It I?"

²¹After saying this, Jesus was deeply troubled. "I tell you the truth," He declared, "one of you is going to betray Me!"

²²The disciples started to look at one another, wondering whom He meant.

²³One of His disciples, the one Jesus loved, was lying close to Jesus' bosom. ²⁴Simon Peter motioned to him to ask whom He meant.

²⁵Leaning back, where he was, against Jesus' breast, he asked Him, "Lord, who is it?"

²⁶"I'll dip this piece of bread and give it to him," Jesus answered. "He's the one." Then he dipped it and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon from Kerioth.

^{18 Ps 41:9}

²⁷After Judas took the piece of bread, the devil went into him. So Jesus told him, "What you're doing, do quickly." ²⁸What He meant by telling him this, nobody at the table knew. ²⁹Some thought, since Judas had the money box Jesus was telling him, "Buy what we need for the festival," or that he should give something to the poor.

³⁰Right after taking the piece of bread Judas went outside. And it was night.

³¹When Judas had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified, and in Him God is glorified. ³²God will also glorify Him in Himself; yes, He will glorify Him now."

Jesus Warns Peter

³³"Children," Jesus said, "I'm with you just a little longer. You will look for Me, but as I told the Jews, so I tell

Jerusalem, Tuesday, Thursday

you now: Where I'm going, you can't come.

³⁴"I'm giving you a new commandment: Love one another! Love one another as I have loved you. ³⁵By your loving one another everybody will know you're My disciples."

³⁶"Lord, where are You going?" Simon Peter asked Him.

"Where I'm going you can't follow Me now," Jesus answered him; "but you will follow Me later."

³⁷"Lord, why can't I follow You now?" Peter asked Him. "I'll give my life for You."

³⁸"You'll give your life for Me?" Jesus asked. "I tell you the truth, the rooster will not crow till you've denied Me three times."

"I Am Going Away"

14 "Don't feel troubled. Believe in God, and believe in Me. ²In My Father's house there are many rooms. If it were not so, I would have told you, because I go to prepare a place for you. ³And when I have gone and prepared a place for you, I'll come again and take you home with Me so you'll be where I am. 'You know the way to the place where I'm going.'

⁴"Lord, we don't know where You're going," Thomas said to Him. "So how can we know the way?"

⁵"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life," Jesus answered him. "No one comes to the Father except by Me. ⁷If you have learned to know Me, you'll know My Father too. From now on you know Him and have seen Him."

⁸Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father; that's enough for us."

⁹"I've been with all of you so long," Jesus answered him, "and you don't know Me, Philip? If you have seen Me, you have seen the

Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰"Don't you believe I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? What I tell you doesn't come from Me, but the Father, who lives in Me, is doing His works. ¹¹"Believe Me, I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me. Or else believe Me on account of My works.

¹²"I tell you the truth, if you believe in Me, you'll do the works I'm doing, and you'll do greater works than these, because I'm going to the Father, ¹³and I will do anything you ask in My name in order that the Son may glorify the Father. ¹⁴If you ask Me for anything in My name, I'll do it.

¹⁵"If you love Me, you will do what I order. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter to be with you forever. ¹⁷He is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it doesn't see or know Him. You know Him, because He lives with you and will be in you.

¹⁸"I will not leave you orphans; I'm coming back to you. ¹⁹Only a little while and the world won't see Me any more. But you will see Me, because I live, you too will live. ²⁰On that day you will know I'm in My Father and you in Me and I in you. ²¹If you have My commandments and obey them, you love Me. And if you love Me, My Father will love you, and I will love you and show Myself to you."

²²Judas (not the man from Kerioth) asked Him, "Lord, what has happened that You're going to show Yourself to us and not to the world?"

²³Jesus answered him, "If you love Me, you'll do what I say, and My Father will love you, and We will come to you and live with you.

*Jerusalem, Thursday, April 6,
A.D. 30*

²⁴Anyone who doesn't love Me doesn't do what I say. And you are hearing, not what I say but what the Father says who sent Me.

²⁵I've told you this while I'm still with you. ²⁶But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you everything and remind you of everything I told you.

²⁷"I leave peace with you, I give you My peace. I don't give it to you as the world gives it. Don't feel troubled or afraid. ²⁸You heard Me tell you, 'I'm going away, but I'm coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you'd be glad I'm going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I.

²⁹"I've told you this now before it happens, so that when it happens, you believe. ³⁰I won't say much to you any more, because the ruler of the world is coming. He has no claim on Me. ³¹But I want the world to know I love the Father and am doing just what the Father ordered Me to do.

"Come, let us go away."

The Vine and the Branch

15 "I am the real Vine, and My Father takes care of the vineyard. ²He cuts away any branch of Mine that bears no fruit, and He trims any branch that bears fruit to make it bear more fruit.

³"What I have said to you has already made you clean. ⁴Stay in Me, and I will stay in you. A branch can't bear any fruit by itself—if it doesn't stay in the vine. Neither can you if you don't stay in Me. ⁵I am the Vine, you are the branches. If you stay in Me and I in you, you can bear much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone doesn't stay in Me, he's thrown away like a

branch and dries up. Such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷If you stay in Me and what I say stays in you, ask for anything you want, and it will be done for you. ⁸You glorify My Father when you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples. ⁹As the Father has loved Me, so I have loved you. Stay in My love. ¹⁰If you obey My commandments, you'll stay in My love, as I have obeyed My Father's commandments and stay in His love. ¹¹I told you this so that My joy will be in you and you will be very happy. ¹²This is what I order you to do: Love one another as I have loved you. ¹³No one has a greater love than he who gives his life for his friends. ¹⁴You're My friends if you do what I order you to do. ¹⁵I don't call you servants any more, because a servant doesn't know what his master is doing. But I've called you friends because I've told you everything I heard from My Father. ¹⁶You didn't choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that doesn't pass away and to have the Father give you anything you ask Him in My name. ¹⁷This is what I order you to do: Love one another.

¹⁸"If the world hates you, you know it hated Me first. ¹⁹If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own. But you don't belong to the world; I took you away from the world; that's why the world hates you. ²⁰Remember what I told you: a slave is no greater than his Master. If they persecuted Me, they'll persecute you. If they did what I said, they'll do what you say. ²¹Now they will do all this to you on account of Me, because they don't know Him who sent Me. ²²If I hadn't come and spoken to them,

they wouldn't be sinning, but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²²Anyone who hates Me hates My Father. ²³If I hadn't done among them the works no one else has done, they wouldn't be sinning. But now they have seen and hated Me and My Father. ²⁴What is written in their Bible has to come true: *They will hate Me without any reason.*

²⁵"When the Comforter comes, whom I'll send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He'll tell the truth about Me. ²⁷And you, too, tell the truth, because you've been with Me from the beginning."

Sorrow Will Turn to Joy

16 "I told you this so that nothing will upset your faith. ¹You will be put out of the synagog. Yes, the time will come when anyone who murders you will think he's serving God. ²Men will do these things because they didn't get to know the Father or Me. ³But I told you this so that when it happens you'll remember I told you about it. I didn't tell you this at first, because I was with you.

⁴"Now I'm going to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' ⁵But because I told you this, you feel very sad. ⁶But I tell you the truth, it's good for you that I go away. If I don't go away, the Comforter will not come to you. But if I go, I'll send Him to you. ⁷He will come and convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment: ⁸of sin because they don't believe in Me; ⁹of righteousness because I'm going to the Father and you won't see Me any more; ¹⁰of judgment because the ruler of this world is judged.

¹¹"I have much more to tell you,

but it would be too much for you now. ¹²When the Spirit of truth comes, He will lead you into the whole truth. What He will say will not come from Himself, but He'll speak what He hears and tell you what is coming. ¹³He will glorify Me, because He'll take from what is Mine and tell it to you. ¹⁴Everything the Father has is Mine. That is why I said, 'He takes from what is Mine and will tell it to you.'

¹⁵"A little while and you'll not see Me any more; and again a little while and you'll see Me."

¹⁶Then some of His disciples asked one another, "What does He mean when He tells us, 'Just a little while and you'll not see Me; and again only a little while and you'll see Me,' and 'I'm going to the Father?'" ¹⁷So they were asking, "What does He mean when He says, 'A little while'? We don't know what He means."

¹⁸Jesus knew they wanted to ask Him something. "Are you trying to find out from one another," He asked them, "what I meant by saying, 'A little while and you'll not see Me; and again a little while and you'll see Me?'" ¹⁹I tell you the truth, you will cry and mourn, but the world will be glad. You will have sorrow, but your sorrow will turn to joy. ²⁰When a woman is going to have a child, she has pains because her time has come. But after the child is born, she's so happy a child was brought into the world she doesn't remember her pains any more. ²¹You, too, are sad now; but I'll see you again, *and then you'll be glad*, and nobody will take your joy away from you. ²²Then you won't ask Me any questions. I tell you the truth, if you ask the Father for anything, He will give it to you in

¹⁵
²⁵ ²⁶ ²⁵ ¹⁹
¹⁶
²² ¹¹ ¹⁶ ¹⁴

Jerusalem, Thursday, April 6,
A.D. 30

My name. ²⁴So far you haven't asked for anything in My name. Ask and you will receive and be very happy.

²⁵"I used veiled speech in telling you these things. The time is coming when I won't use veiled speech any more in talking to you, but I'll tell you about the Father in plain words. ²⁶Then you will ask in My name, and I don't tell you I'll ask the Father for you. ²⁷The Father Himself loves you because you have loved Me and believe that I came from the Father. ²⁸I left the Father and came into the world; and now I'm leaving the world again and going to the Father."

²⁹"Yes, now You're talking in plain words," His disciples said, "and using no veiled speech. ³⁰Now we know You know everything and don't need to have anyone ask You anything. That's why we believe You've come from God."

³¹"Now you believe," Jesus answered them. ³²"The hour is coming, in fact, it's here now, when you'll be scattered, everyone to his home, and you'll leave Me alone. But I'm not alone, because the Father is with Me. ³³I told you this so you will have peace in Me. In the world you have trouble. But have courage; I've conquered the world."

Jesus Prays

17 After saying this, Jesus looked up to heaven and said:

"Father, the time has come. Glorify Your Son so that Your Son will glorify You, ²since You have given Him power over all men, to give everlasting life to all whom You gave Him. ³This is everlasting life—to know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You

sent. ⁴I have glorified You on earth by finishing the work You gave Me to do. ⁵And now, Father, glorify Me at Your side with the glory I had with You before the world began.

⁶"I made Your name known to the people You gave Me out of the world. They were Yours, and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your Word. ⁷Now they know everything You gave Me comes from You, ⁸because I gave them the message You gave Me. And they have accepted it and learned the truth that I came from You, and have believed You sent Me.

⁹"I pray for them. I don't pray for the world but for those You gave Me, because they are Yours. ¹⁰All that is Mine is Yours, and what is Yours is Mine. And I am glorified in them. ¹¹I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, which You gave Me, so that they will be one as We are one. ¹²While I was with them, I kept them safe in Your name, which You gave Me. I watched over them, and none of them was lost except that lost one—what the Bible says had to come true.

¹³"But now I am coming to You, and I say this while I am in the world so that they will feel all My joy in their hearts. ¹⁴I gave them Your Word. But the world has hated them because they don't belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. ¹⁵I'm not asking You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶They don't belong to the world any more than I belong to the world.

¹⁷"Make them holy by the truth; Your Word is truth. ¹⁸As You sent Me into the world, I sent them into the world. ¹⁹In this holy way I give

*Jerusalem, Thursday, April 6,
A.D. 30*

Myself for them to make them holy, too, by the truth. ²⁰I'm not asking for them only but also for those who through their word believe in Me ²¹that they all be one. As You, Father, are in Me and I in You, let them be in Us so that the world may believe You sent Me. ²²I gave them the glory You gave Me to make them one as We are one. ²³I am in them, and You are in Me to make them perfectly one that the world may know You sent Me and loved them as You loved Me.

²⁴"Father, I want those You gave Me to be with Me where I am and to see My glory that You gave Me because You loved Me before the world was made. ²⁵Righteous Father, the world didn't know You, but I knew You, and these have learned to know You sent Me. ²⁶I told them and I am going to tell them Your name, so that the love You have for Me will be in them and I will be in them."

The Arrest

18 After Jesus said this, He took His disciples to the other side of the Kidron valley where there was a garden. He and His disciples went into it.

²Judas, who was betraying Him, also knew the place because Jesus and His disciples often got together there. ³So Judas took the troop of soldiers and servants from the ruling priests and Pharisees and came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.

⁴Then Jesus went out, knowing exactly what was going to happen to Him. "Whom are you looking for?" He asked them.

⁵"Jesus from Nazareth," answered Him.

"I am He," Jesus told Judas, ready to be standing with them, told them, "I am going backward and fell to the ground."

⁶He asked them again, "You are looking for whom?"

"Jesus from Nazareth,"

⁷"I told you I am He," answered. "So if I want, let these others go so that I may not make good will of those who are lost none of those."

⁸Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, and struck the slave's ear, and cut off the ear. The slave's name was Malchus.

⁹"Put your sword away," Jesus told Peter, "for whoever uses a sword will destroy his body. Do you think I am a Father of the body?"

¹⁰So the troop of soldiers, the tribune, and the other Jews arrested Jesus and took Him away because he was the Caiaphas, who was the high priest that year. ¹¹It was Caiaphas who said, "It is better for one man to die instead of the whole nation."

Peter Denies Jesus

¹²Now, Simon Peter, who was a disciple, followed Jesus and the other disciple who was high priest and went with him. Peter was standing close to the other disciple who knew, went out to the girl watching and brought Peter in.

¹³This doorkeeper

¹John 6:39; 17:12

"You aren't one of this Man's disciples too, are you?"

"I'm not," he answered.

"The slaves and the attendants were standing around and had made a heap of burning coals because it was cold. As they warmed themselves, Peter was standing with them warming himself.

Before Annas

¹⁹Then the high priest asked Jesus about His disciples and His teaching.

²⁰"I have spoken publicly to the world," Jesus answered him. "I have always taught in a synagog or in the temple, where all the Jews gather, and I haven't said anything in secret. ²¹Why do you ask Me? Ask those who heard Me what I said to them; they know what I said."

²²When He said this, one of the attendants standing near Jesus slapped His face. "Is that how You answer the high priest?" he asked.

²³"If I said anything wrong," Jesus answered him, "tell us what was wrong. But if I told the truth, why do you hit Me?"

²⁴Then Annas sent Him, still bound, to Caiaphas, the high priest.

Peter Denies Agair

²⁵Simon Peter continued to stand and warm himself. So the men asked him, "You aren't one of His disciples too, are you?"

He denied, saying, "I'm not!"

²⁶One of the high priest's slaves, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Didn't I see you with Him in the garden?"

²⁷Again, Peter denied, and just then a rooster crowed.

Before Pilate

²⁸The Jews took Jesus from Caia-

phas to the governor's palace. It was early in the morning.

To keep from getting unclean (they wanted to celebrate the Passover), the Jews themselves didn't go into the governor's palace. ²⁹So Pilate came out to them. "What accusation are you bringing against this Man?" he asked.

³⁰"If He weren't a criminal," they answered him, "we wouldn't have handed Him over to you."

³¹"Take Him yourselves," Pilate therefore told them, "and judge Him according to your law."

"We're not allowed to kill anyone," the Jews answered him. ³²And so what Jesus said when He predicted how He would die was to come true.

³³Pilate went back into the palace and called for Jesus. "Are You the King of the Jews?" he asked Him.

³⁴"Did you think of that yourself," Jesus asked, "or did others tell you about Me?"

³⁵"Am I a Jew?" Pilate asked. "Your own people and the ruling priests handed You over to me. What did You do?"

³⁶"My kingdom is not of this world," Jesus answered. "If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight to keep Me from being handed over to the Jews. But now My kingdom is not of this world."

³⁷"Then You are a king?" Pilate asked Him.

"Yes, I am a king!" Jesus answered. "I was born and came into the world to testify to the truth. Everyone who lives in the truth listens to Me."

³⁸Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" After saying this, he went out to the Jews again and told them,

Good Friday, April 7, A.D. 30

"I don't find this Man guilty of anything.

²⁸"You have a custom that I set someone free for you at the Passover. So would you like me to set the King of the Jews free for you?"

²⁹"Then they yelled: "Not this One but Barabbas!" Now, Barabbas was a robber.

"Look at the Man!"

19 Then Pilate took Jesus and had Him scourged. ²The soldiers twisted some thorns into a crown and placed it on His head and put a purple garment on Him. ³They went up to Him and said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and slapped His face.

⁴Pilate went outside again. "I'm bringing Him out to you," he told them, "to let you know I don't find Him guilty of anything." ⁵Jesus came outside wearing the crown of thorns and the purple cloak. "Look at the Man!" Pilate said to them.

⁶When the ruling priests and the servants saw Him, they shouted, "Crucify, crucify Him!"

⁷"Take Him yourselves," Pilate told them, "and crucify Him. I don't find Him guilty of anything."

⁸"We have a law," the Jews answered him, "and according to the law He must die. He has claimed to be God's Son."

⁹When Pilate heard them say that, he was frightened more than ever. ¹⁰He went into the palace again. "Where are You from?" he asked Jesus. But Jesus didn't answer him.

¹¹"Don't You speak to me?" Pilate then asked Him. "Don't You know I have the power to free You or to crucify You?"

¹²"You wouldn't have any power over Me," Jesus answered him, "if it hadn't been given to you from above.

That is why the man who handed Me over to you is guilty of a greater sin."

¹³This made Pilate anxious to let Him go, but the Jews shouted, "If you let Him go, you're no friend of Caesar. Anyone who makes himself a king is against Caesar."

¹⁴When Pilate heard this, he took Jesus outside and sat in the judge's seat at a place called Stone Pavement, or Gabbatha in the Jewish language. ¹⁵It was the Friday of the Passover and about six o'clock.

"Look at your King!" he said to the Jews.

¹⁶Then they shouted, "Away with Him! Kill Him! Crucify Him!"

"Should I crucify your King?" Pilate asked them.

"We don't have any king but Caesar," the ruling priests answered.

¹⁷Then Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be crucified.

"They Crucified Him"

So they took Jesus, ²and He, carrying His cross, went out to what was called Skull Place, which the Jews call Golgotha. ³There they crucified Him with two others, one on each side and Jesus in the middle.

⁴Pilate also wrote a notice and put it on the cross. It read: JESUS FROM NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. ⁵Many Jews read this notice, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, Latin, and Greek.

⁶Then the high priests of the Jews told Pilate, "Don't write: 'The King of the Jews,' but: 'He said, "I am the King of the Jews."'"

⁷Pilate answered, "What I've written I've written."

⁸When the soldiers had crucified

Jesus, they took His clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier, and the tunic was left over. The tunic was without a seam, woven in one piece from top to bottom. ²⁴"Let's not tear it," they said to one another, "but let's throw lots and see who gets it"—what the Bible said had to come true: *They divided My clothes among them, and for My garment they threw lots.* So that's what the soldiers did.

Mary

²⁵Now, His mother and her sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary from Magdala were standing near Jesus' cross.

²⁶Jesus saw His mother and the disciple He loved standing near. "Woman," He said to His mother, "there is your son!" ²⁷Then He said to the disciple, "There is your mother!"

The disciple took her and from that time on had her in his home.

Jesus Dies

²⁸After this, knowing everything had now been done, and to have the words of the Bible come true, Jesus said, "*I am thirsty.*"

²⁹A jar full of *sour wine* was standing there. So they put a sponge soaked in the wine on a hyssop stem and held it to His mouth.

³⁰When Jesus had taken the wine, He said, "*It is finished.*"

Then He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

No Bone Broken

³¹Since it was Friday and the Jews didn't want the bodies to stay on the crosses on Saturday, because that Sabbath was an important day, they asked Pilate to have the legs of the men broken and the bodies taken

away. ³²So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man and then of the other who had been crucified with Him.

³³But when they came to Jesus and saw He was dead already, they didn't break His legs, ³⁴but one of the soldiers stuck a spear into His side, and immediately blood and water came out. ³⁵He who saw it has testified about it, and his testimony is true, and he knows he is telling the truth so that you too will believe.

³⁶In this way what the Bible said had to come true: *None of His bones will be broken.* ³⁷And it says in another place: *They will look at Him whom they pierced.*

Jesus Is Buried

³⁸Later Joseph from Arimathea—who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly because he was afraid of the Jews—asked Pilate to let him take Jesus' body away. Pilate let him have it. So he came and took His body away. ³⁹Then came also Nicodemus, who had first come to Jesus at night. He brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-two pounds.

⁴⁰They took Jesus' body and wrapped it with the spices in linen according to the Jewish custom of burying the dead.

⁴¹There was a garden at the place where Jesus was crucified, and in the garden was a new grave, in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴²Here, then—because it was Friday (when the Jews got ready for the Sabbath) and the grave was near—they laid Jesus.

Peter and John

20 Early on Sunday morning while it was still dark Mary

*Outside Jerusalem, Good Friday,
April 7, A.D. 30*

¹⁹
²⁴ Ps 22:18
²⁸⁻²⁹ Ps
68:21
³⁰ Ps 22:31
³⁶ Ex 12:46;
Nim 9:12;
Ps 34:20
³⁷ Zch 12:10

from Magdala went to the grave and saw the stone had been taken away from the grave. ²So she ran and came to Simon Peter and the other disciple, whom Jesus loved. "They've taken the Lord out of the grave," she told them, "and we don't know where they laid Him."

³So Peter and the other disciple started out for the grave. "The two were running side by side, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and got to the grave first. ⁴He looked in and saw the linen wrappings lying there but didn't go in.

⁵When Simon Peter got there after him, he went into the grave. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁶also the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁷Then the other disciple, who got to the grave first, also went in, saw it, and believed. ⁸They didn't know yet what the Bible meant when it said He had to rise from the dead.

⁹So the disciples went home again.

"Mary!"

"Mary stood outside, facing the grave and crying. As she cried, she looked into the grave ²and saw two angels in white clothes sitting where Jesus' body had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ³"Woman, why are you crying?" they asked her.

"They've taken my Lord away," she told them, "and I don't know where they laid Him."

"After she said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there but didn't know it was Jesus. ²"Woman, why are you crying?"

Jesus asked her. "Whom are you looking for?"

"Sir," she said to Him, thinking He was the gardener, "if you carried Him away, tell me where you laid Him, and I will take Him away."

³Jesus said to her, "Mary!"

She turned. "Rabboni!" she said to Him in the Jewish language. (The word means "Teacher.")

⁴"Don't hold on to Me," Jesus told her. "I didn't go up to the Father yet. But go to My brothers and tell them, 'I am going up to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.'"

⁵Mary from Magdala went and told the disciples, "I saw the Lord," and that He said this to her.

Behind Locked Doors

¹That Sunday evening the doors were locked where the disciples were, because they were afraid of the Jews. Then Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace to you!" ²When He said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were delighted to see the Lord.

³"Peace to you!" Jesus said to them again. "As the Father sent Me, so I send you." ⁴When He had said this, He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ⁵If you forgive sins, they are forgiven; if you don't forgive them, they're not forgiven."

Thomas Sees Jesus

¹But Thomas, one of the twelve, who was called Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. ²So the other disciples told him, "We saw the Lord."

"Unless I see the marks of the nails in His hands," he told them,

*Easter Sunday and a week later,
April 9, 16, A.D. 30*

"and put my finger in the marks of the nails and put my hand in His side, I won't believe it."

²⁶"A week later His disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were locked, but Jesus came and stood among them. "Peace to you!" He said. ²⁷Then He told Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at My hands—and take your hand and put it in My side. And don't doubt but believe."

²⁸"My Lord and my God!" Thomas answered Him.

²⁹"Do you believe because you've seen Me?" Jesus asked him. "Blessed are those who didn't see Me and still believed."

Much More

³⁰His disciples saw Jesus do many other miracles that are not written in this book. ³¹But these things are written so that you believe Jesus is the promised Savior, God's Son, and by believing have life in His name.

Breakfast with Jesus

21 After this, Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Lake of Galilee. This is how He showed Himself.

¹Simon Peter, Thomas (called Twin), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, Zebedee's sons, and two other disciples of Jesus were together. ²Simon Peter said to the others, "I'm going fishing."

"We're going with you," they told him.

They went out and got into the boat. But that night they caught nothing. "When morning came, Jesus stood on the shore. But the disciples didn't know it was Jesus.

³"Boys, you don't have any fish, do you?" Jesus asked them.

They answered Him, "No."

⁴"Drop the net on the right side of the boat," He told them, "and you will find some." So they dropped it. And now they couldn't pull it in, there were so many fish.

⁵The disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." When Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he put on the coat he had taken off, fastened it with his belt, and jumped into the lake. ⁶But the other disciples, who were not far from the shore, only about a hundred yards, came in the small boat, dragging the net full of fish.

⁷As they stepped out on the shore, they saw burning coals there with fish lying on them, and bread.

⁸"Bring some of the fish you just caught," Jesus told them. "Simon Peter got into the small boat and pulled the net on the shore. It was filled with a hundred and fifty-three big fish. Although there were so many, the net wasn't torn.

⁹"Come, have breakfast," Jesus told them. None of the disciples dared to ask Him, "Who are You?" They knew it was the Lord. ¹⁰Jesus came, took the bread, and gave it to them, and also the fish.

"This was the third time Jesus showed Himself to the disciples after He rose from the dead.

"Do You Love Me?"

¹¹When they had eaten breakfast, Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these do?"

"Yes, Lord," he answered Him, "You know I love You."

"Feed My lambs," Jesus told him.

¹²"Simon, son of John," He asked him a second time, "do you love Me?"

"Yes, Lord," he answered Him, "You know I love You."

"Be a shepherd of My sheep," Jesus told him.

¹⁷"Simon, son of John," He asked him a third time, "do you love Me?"

Peter felt sad because He asked him a third time, "Do you love Me?" "Lord, You know everything," he answered Him, "You know I love You."

"Feed My sheep," Jesus told him. ¹⁸"I tell you the truth, when you were younger, you used to fasten your belt and go where you wanted to. But when you're old, you'll stretch out your hands, and someone else will tie you and take you where you don't want to go." ¹⁹He said this to show by what kind of death Peter would glorify God. After saying this, He told him, "Follow Me."

²⁰Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them.

He was the one who at the supper leaned against Jesus' breast and asked, "Lord, who is going to betray You?" ²¹When Peter saw him, he asked Jesus, "Lord, what about him?"

²²"If I want him to stay till I come," Jesus asked him, "what is that to you? You follow Me." ²³And so it was said among the Christians, "That disciple will not die." But Jesus didn't say, "He will not die," but, "If I want him to stay till I come, what is that to you?"

²⁴This is the disciple who testified about these things and wrote this. And we know what he testifies is true.

Much More

²⁵Jesus also did many other things. If every one of these were written, I suppose the world would not have room for the books that would be written.

*Lake of Galilee, about May 1.
A.D. 30*

LUKE
WRITES THE
ACTS

1 IN MY FIRST BOOK, Theophilus, I wrote about everything Jesus did and taught 'till the day He was taken up to heaven after giving orders by the Holy Spirit to the apostles He had chosen.

Jesus Goes Up to Heaven

¹After His suffering Jesus proved to the apostles in many convincing ways that He was alive as He showed Himself to them for forty days and talked about God's kingdom.

"When He met with them, He ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for what the Father had promised: "You heard Me tell about Him: ²⁰John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

"When they came together, they asked Him, "Lord, are You now going to make Israel an independent kingdom again?"

"It isn't for you to know," He told them, "what times or periods the Father has set by His own authority. ²¹But when the Holy Spirit comes on you, you will receive power and will testify of Me in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the farthest parts of the world."

"When He had said this and while they were watching Him, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him away so they couldn't see Him anymore.

²²As He was going and they were gazing up into the sky, two men in white clothes were standing right beside them. ²³"Men of Galilee," they asked, "why are you standing

here looking up to heaven? This Jesus, who was taken away from you to heaven, will come back the same way you saw Him go to heaven."

²⁴Then they went back to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, as it was called (it's near Jerusalem, only half a mile away).

There Must Be Twelve

²⁵When they came into the city, they went to the second-floor room where they were staying—Peter, John, James, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James, the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas, the son of James.

²⁶With one mind these all kept praying together. With them were the women, including Jesus' mother Mary, and His brothers.

²⁷In those days Peter got up among the disciples (a crowd of them was there, about a hundred and twenty), and he said, ²⁸"Brothers, long ago the Holy Spirit spoke through David about Judas, who led the men that arrested Jesus. And what He wrote had to come true. ²⁹Judas was one of us twelve and was given a share in the work we're doing. ³⁰With the money he got for his crime he bought a piece of land; and falling on his face, he burst in the middle, and all his intestines poured out. ³¹Everybody living in Jerusalem heard about it. And so that piece of land is called Akeldama" in their language; the word means Place of Blood. ³²It is written in the book of Psalms: *His home should be desert-*

Mount of Olives, May 18, A.D. 30

ed, and nobody should live there. And somebody else should take over his office. Then someone should be added to our number as a witness of His resurrection. ²¹He should be one of these men who went with us all the time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, ²²from John's baptism to the day He was taken up from us."

²³The disciples named two: Joseph (called Barsabbas; he was also called Justus) and Matthias. ²⁴Then they prayed, "Lord, You know the hearts of all. Show us which of these two You have chosen ²⁵to serve in this office of apostle, which Judas left to go where he belonged."

²⁶They provided lots for them, and so Matthias was chosen and added to the eleven apostles.

The Holy Spirit Comes

2 The day of Pentecost^a came, and they were all together in one place. ²Suddenly a sound like a violent blast of wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³They saw tongues like flames that separated, and one rested on each of them. ⁴They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and started to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave them the ability to speak.

⁵Jews who feared God had come from every nation under heaven to live in Jerusalem. ⁶When that sound came, the crowd gathered and was dumfounded because each one heard the disciples speak his own language. ⁷Amazed and wondering, they asked, "Don't all these who are speaking come from Galilee? ⁸And how does every one of us hear his own language he was born

in— ⁹Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and people living in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and the province of Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphilia, Egypt and the country near Cyrene in Libya, the visitors from Rome, Jews and those who have accepted the Jewish religion, ¹¹people from Crete and Arabia? In our own languages we hear them tell about God's wonderful things." ¹²They were all amazed and puzzled. "What can this mean?" they asked one another. ¹³Others sneered: "They're full of new wine."

Peter's Pentecost Sermon

¹⁴Then Peter got up with the eleven, raised his voice, and addressed them:

"Jews and all you who live in Jerusalem, understand this, and listen to what I say. ¹⁵These men are not drunk, as you suppose. Why, it's only nine in the morning. ¹⁶No, this is what the prophet Joel spoke about: ¹⁷'In the last days,' *God says, 'I will pour out My Spirit on all people. Then your sons and your daughters will speak God's Word, your young men will have visions, and your old men will have dreams. ¹⁸In those days I will pour out My Spirit on My servants, both men and women, and they will speak God's Word. ¹⁹I will give you startling wonders in the sky above and marvelous signs on the earth below: blood and fire and a cloud of smoke; ²⁰the sun will turn dark and the moon to blood before the coming of the Lord's great and splendid day. ²¹Then everyone who calls on the Lord's name will be saved.'*

²²"Men of Israel, listen to what I have to say: Jesus from Nazareth—

^aA festival on the 50th day after the Passover.

Jerusalem, May 18—27

God showed you who the Man is by doing miracles, startling wonders, and signs through Him among you, as you know. ²³God definitely planned and intended to have Him betrayed, and so you had wicked men nail Him to a cross, and you killed Him. ²⁴But God set aside the pains of death and raised Him—death could not hold Him.

²⁵“David says of Him: *‘I always see the Lord before Me. He is at My right side so that I will not be shaken. ²⁶And so My heart is glad, and My tongue rejoices, yes, even My body will rest hopefully, ²⁷because You will not leave Me in the grave or let Your Loved One experience decay. ²⁸You show Me ways of life. You will fill Me with joy by being with Me.’*

²⁹“Fellow Jews, I can tell you frankly our ancestor David died and was buried, and his grave is here to this day. ³⁰He was a prophet and knew: *‘God had sworn to him to put one of his descendants on his throne. ³¹David saw what was ahead and said the promised Christ would rise again: *‘He was not deserted when He was dead, and His body did not experience decay. ³²God has raised this Jesus—we’re all witnesses of that. ³³Lifted up to God’s right side and receiving from the Father the promised Holy Spirit, He has poured out what you see and hear. ³⁴David didn’t go up to heaven, but he says: *‘The Lord says to my Lord, ³⁵‘Sit at My right ³⁶till I make Your enemies Your footstool.’***

³⁷“Then all the people of Israel should know it’s true that God made Him Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.”

³⁸When the people heard this, they felt crushed. They asked Peter and

the other apostles, “Fellow Jews, what should we do?”

³⁹Peter answered them, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins will be forgiven, and you will be given the Holy Spirit. ⁴⁰What is promised belongs to you, to your children, and to all *who are far away, all whom the Lord our God will call.*”

⁴¹He said much more to warn them. “Let yourselves be saved from these crooked people,” he urged them. “Those who accepted what he said were baptized. And that day about three thousand persons were added.

How Christians Lived

⁴²They were loyal to what the apostles taught in their fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in praying. ⁴³Awe came on everybody—the apostles were doing many wonders and miracles. ⁴⁴All who believed were together and shared everything with one another. ⁴⁵They would sell their lands and other property and distribute the money to anyone as he needed it. ⁴⁶All were one at heart as they went to the temple regularly every day. They had their meals in their homes and ate their food with glad and simple hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

The Cripple

3 Peter and John were going up to the temple for the hour of prayer at three in the afternoon. ²Now there was a man who had been a cripple from his birth. Men would carry him and lay him every day at the temple gate called Beautiful so

*Jerusalem, Pentecost Sunday,
May 28*

25-28 Ps 16
8-11
30 Ps 89:3-4
132:11
31 Ps 16:10
34-35 Ps
110:1
39-45 57:19
Joel 2:32

he could beg the people for gifts as they went into the temple. ³When he saw Peter and John were going into the temple, he asked them for a gift.

⁴Peter and John looked at him. "Look at us!" Peter said. ⁵He looked at them, expecting to get something from them. ⁶"I don't have any silver or gold," Peter said, "but I'll give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ from Nazareth, walk!" ⁷He took hold of his right hand and raised him up. Immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. ⁸He jumped up, stood, and started to walk. And he went with them into the temple, walking, jumping, and praising God.

⁹When all the people saw him walking and praising God, ¹⁰they knew he was the man who used to sit and beg at the Beautiful gate of the temple, and they were very much surprised and amazed to see what had happened to him. ¹¹As he clung to Peter and John, all the people came running together to them in Solomon's Porch, as it was called. They were dumfounded.

¹²When Peter saw the people, he said to them, "Men of Israel, why are you wondering about this, or why are you staring at us as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk? ¹³*The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, the God of our fathers, has glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered and denied before Pilate when he had decided to let Him go. ¹⁴You denied the holy and righteous One and asked to have a murderer given to you. ¹⁵You killed the Author of life. But God raised Him from the dead—we're witnesses of that. ¹⁶His name, because we believe in it,

made this man strong whom you see and know. The faith that Jesus works has given him this perfect health right in front of all of you.

¹⁷"And now, fellow Jews, I know that like your rulers you didn't know what you were doing, ¹⁸but in this way God did what He predicted by all the prophets—His Christ had to suffer. ¹⁹Repent then, and turn, to have your sins wiped out that a time may come when the Lord refreshes you ²⁰and sends Jesus, whom He appointed to be your Savior ²¹and whom heaven had to receive until the time when everything will be restored, as God said long ago by His holy prophets.

²²"Moses said: *The Lord our God will raise one of your people to be a Prophet to you like me. Listen to everything He tells you.* ²³*And destroy anyone among the people who will not listen to that Prophet.* ²⁴Samuel and all the other prophets after him, as many as have spoken, told about these days. ²⁵You are the heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with our fathers when He said to Abraham: *And in your Descendant all the people on earth will be blessed.* ²⁶Now that God has given His Servant, He sent Him first to you to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways."

In Court

4 While they were talking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees stepped up to them, ²much annoyed because they were teaching the people and preaching that in Jesus the dead rise. ³They arrested them, and since it was already evening, they put them in prison till the next day.

Jerusalem, A.D. 30—31

3
13 Ex 3:6
16 52:12
22 Dt 18:15
18:19
23 Lv 23:29
Dt 18:19
25 Gen 12:3
18:18
22:18
26:4
28:14

"But many of those who had heard the Word believed, and the number of the men grew to about five thousand.

The next day their rulers, elders, and Bible scholars met in Jerusalem with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and all the others of the high priest's family. And they had the two men stand before them. "By what power or name did you do this?" they asked.

"Then Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit. "Rulers of the people and elders," he said to them. "If we're questioned today about helping a cripple, how he was made well, "all of you and all the people of Israel should know this man stands healthy before you by the name of Jesus Christ from Nazareth, whom you crucified but God raised from the dead. "He is the Stone rejected by you builders and has become the Cornerstone. "No one else can save us, because in all the world there is only one name given us by which we must be saved."

"When they found out Peter and John had no education or training, they were surprised to see how boldly they spoke. Then they realized these men had been with Jesus. "And seeing the healed man standing with them, they couldn't say anything against them. "So they ordered them to leave the court and talked the matter over among themselves: "What should we do with these men? They've done a miracle; everybody living in Jerusalem can see it clearly, and we can't deny it. "But to keep this from spreading any more among the people, let's warn them never again to speak to anyone in this name."

"They called Peter and John and ordered them not to say or teach

anything in the name of Jesus.

"Peter and John answered them, "Does God consider it right to listen to you and not to God? Judge for yourselves. "We can't stop telling what we've seen and heard."

"Once more they threatened them and then let them go. They couldn't find any way to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened; "the man who had been healed by this miracle was over forty years old.

The Church Prays

"When Peter and John were free again, they went to their friends and told them everything the high priests and elders had said. "When they heard it they all raised their voices together to God and said, "Lord, You made heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them. "You said by the Holy Spirit through our ancestor, Your servant David:

Why do the nations rage

And the people plan in vain?

"The kings of the earth stand ready,

And the rulers get together

Against the Lord and His Anointed.

"Herod and Pontius Pilate certainly got together with non-Jews and the people of Israel in this city against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, "to do everything You by Your will and power long ago decided should be done.

"And now, Lord, see how they're threatening, and grant that Your servants speak Your Word very boldly "as You stretch out Your hand to heal and do miracles and wonders by the name of Your holy Servant Jesus."

"When they had prayed, the place where they were meeting was

Jerusalem, A.D. 30-31

4
11 Ps 118:22
24 Ex 20:11
Ps 145:5
Neh 9:6
25-27 Pt 2:1,2

shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and boldly spoke God's Word.

Sharing

¹²The whole group of believers was one in heart and soul. And nobody called anything he had his own, but they shared everything.

¹³With great power the apostles told the truth that the Lord Jesus had risen, and much good will rested on all of them.

¹⁴None of them was in need, because all who had land or houses would sell them and bring the money they got for them ¹⁵and lay it at the apostles' feet. Then it was distributed to each one as he needed it. ¹⁶There was Joseph, for example, a descendant of Levi, born on Cyprus. The apostles called him Barnabas, which means "a man of comfort." ¹⁷He had some land and sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

Ananias and Sapphira

5 But a man by the name of Ananias and his wife Sapphira sold some property; ²he kept some of the money for himself—and his wife knew about it—and some of it he brought and laid at the apostles' feet.

³"Ananias," Peter asked, "why did Satan fill your heart so that you should lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back some of the money you got for the land? ⁴While you had the land, wasn't it your own? And after it was sold, couldn't you have done as you pleased with the money? How could you think of doing such a thing? You didn't lie to men but to God!"

When Ananias heard him say this, he fell down and died. And all who

heard of it were terrified. ⁵The young men got up, wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him.

⁶About three hours later his wife came in. She didn't know what had happened. ⁷"Tell me," Peter asked her, "did you sell the land for that price?"

"Yes, that was the price," she answered.

"Why did you two agree to put the Lord's Spirit to a test?" Peter asked her. "There at the door are the feet of those who buried your husband, and they'll carry you out."

⁸Immediately she fell down at his feet and died. When the young men came in, they found her dead and carried her out and buried her beside her husband. ⁹The whole church and all others who heard about it were terrified.

Many Miracles

¹⁰Many miracles and startling wonders were done among the people by the apostles' hands. And they were all together in Solomon's Porch. ¹¹None of the others dared to come too near them. But the people thought very highly of them, ¹²and still more believers, a large number of men and women, were added to the Lord. ¹³As a result people carried their sick out into the streets and laid them down on cots and mats, to have at least Peter's shadow fall on someone of them when he went by. ¹⁴Even from the towns around Jerusalem crowds would gather, bringing their sick and those who were troubled by unclean spirits, and they were all made well.

In Court

¹⁵The high priest and all who were with him, that is, the party of the

Jerusalem, A.D. 31

Sadducees, got very jealous. They went "and arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison.

"But at night the Lord's angel opened the prison doors and brought them out. ²⁰"Go," he said, "stand in the temple, and keep on telling the people everything about this life." ²¹"After they had heard him, they went into the temple early in the morning and started to teach.

The high priest and those who were with him came and called the council and all the elders of Israel together and sent men to the prison to get the apostles. ²²"But when the men got there, they didn't find them in prison. They came back and reported, ²³"We found the prison very securely locked and the guards standing at the doors, but when we opened them, we found nobody inside." ²⁴"When the captain of the temple and the high priests heard this, they were puzzled as to what could have happened to them.

²⁵"Then somebody came and told them, "The men you put in prison are standing in the temple teaching the people."

²⁶"Then the captain and his men went and got them, but without using force, because they were afraid the people would stone them. ²⁷"They brought them and had them stand before the council.

The high priest questioned them and said, ²⁸"We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, and here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching. And you want to get us punished for killing this Man."

²⁹Peter and the other apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men. ³⁰*You hanged Jesus on a cross and murdered Him. But the God of our fathers raised*

Him ³¹and took Him up to His right side as Leader and Savior in order to have the people of Israel repent and to forgive their sins. ³²"We are witnesses of these things—we and the Holy Spirit, whom God has given those who obey Him."

"When they heard this, they got furious and wanted to kill them. ³³"But a Pharisee in the court by the name of Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law, highly respected by all the people, got up and ordered the men taken outside a little while.

³⁴"Men of Israel," he said to them, "consider carefully what you're going to do with these men. ³⁵"Sometime ago Theudas appeared, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men joined him. He was killed, and all who followed him were scattered, and they disappeared.

³⁶"After him, at the time of the census, came Judas from Galilee and got people to follow him in a revolt. He perished too, and all who followed him were scattered.

³⁷"And now I tell you, keep away from these men and let them alone. If it's only men planning or doing this, it will break down, ³⁸but if it's God, you won't be able to stop them. You may even be fighting against God."

³⁹"They took his advice. They called the apostles, beat them, ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴⁰"The apostles left the court, happy to have been thought worthy to suffer shame for Jesus. ⁴¹"And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and telling the good news: Jesus is the promised Savior.

Seven Helpers

6 In those days, as the number of the disciples grew larger and larger, a complaint was brought against those who spoke Aramaic by those who spoke Greek that every day, when the food was handed out, their widows were being neglected.

⁷The twelve called the whole group of disciples together and said, "Nobody likes it if we give up teaching God's Word and serve at tables. ⁸Now, fellow disciples, appoint seven men among you whom people speak well of, who are full of the Spirit and wisdom, and we'll put them in charge of this work. ⁹Then we'll devote ourselves to praying and to serving by speaking the Word."

¹⁰The whole group liked the idea. So they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus (who had become a Jew in Antioch). ¹¹They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

¹²God's Word kept on spreading, and the number of disciples in Jerusalem was getting very large. Even a large crowd of the priests came to believe and obey the Word.

Stephen Is Arrested

¹³Stephen, full of God's gifts and power, was doing great wonders and miracles among the people. ¹⁴Some men of the Synagog of the Freedmen, as it was called, and of men from Cyrene and Alexandria, and men from Cilicia and Asia got up to argue with Stephen. ¹⁵But they couldn't resist the wisdom and the Spirit by whom he spoke.

¹⁶Then they secretly got some men

to say, "We heard him slander Moses and God." ¹⁷They stirred up the people, the elders, and the men of the Law, and rushing at him, took him by force and brought him before the court. ¹⁸There they had witnesses stand up and lie, "This man won't stop talking against the holy place and the Law." ¹⁹We heard him say, 'This Jesus from Nazareth will tear this place down and change the customs Moses gave us.'

²⁰All who sat in the court stared at him and saw his face—it was like an angel's face.

Stephen Defends Himself

7 Then the high priest asked, "Is this so?"

¹He answered, "Fellow Jews and fathers, listen. *The God of glory* appeared to our father Abraham while he was in Mesopotamia before he lived in Haran. ²'Leave your country and your relatives,' *God told him, 'and come to the country I will show you.'*

³"Then Abraham left the country of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran. After his father died, God had him move from there to this country where you live now. ⁴'He gave him nothing to call his own, *not even enough to set his foot on, but promised to give it to him as his own and to his descendants after him, although he had no child. 'This is what God said: His descendants would be strangers in a foreign country, and its people would make slaves of them and mistreat them 400 years. 'But I will punish the people whom they will serve,' God said, 'and after that they will leave and worship Me in this place.'* ⁵He gave him a covenant of circumcision. And so, when his son Isaac was born, he circumcised him on the

7
2 Ps 29:1
3 Gn 12:1
5 Dt 2:5
Gn 12:7
13:15 17:8
48:4
6-7 Gn 15
13:14
Ez 2:22
12:40
Ez 3:12
8 Gn 17:10
21:4

Jerusalem, A.D. 31

eighth day. Isaac did the same to his son Jacob, and Jacob to his twelve sons, the ancestors of our tribes.

⁹“These ancestors were jealous of Joseph and sold him into Egypt, but God was with him. ¹⁰He rescued him from all his troubles and gave him the goodwill of Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and wisdom as he stood before him—Pharaoh made him ruler of Egypt and of his whole palace. ¹¹But a famine with much misery came over all Egypt and Canaan, and our ancestors couldn't find any food. ¹²When Jacob heard there was grain in Egypt, he sent our ancestors on their first trip. ¹³On the second, Joseph told his brothers who he was, and Pharaoh learned about the family from which Joseph came. ¹⁴Joseph sent and had his father Jacob come to him, and all his relatives—seventy-five persons. ¹⁵And so Jacob went down to Egypt. Then he and our ancestors died ¹⁶and were brought to Shechem and laid in the tomb Abraham bought for a sum of money from Hamor's sons at Shechem.

¹⁷“When the time that God set in His promise to Abraham had almost come, the people had grown and their number had become very large in Egypt. ¹⁸And now a different king who knew nothing of Joseph became ruler of Egypt. ¹⁹He was shrewd in scheming against our people, and he mistreated our fathers. He wanted to put away their babies so they wouldn't live.

²⁰“At that time Moses was born, and he was a beautiful child before God. For three months he was cared for in his father's home. ²¹When he was set out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up and raised him as her son. ²²Moses was educated in all

the wisdom of the Egyptians and became a great man in what he said and did. ²³When he was forty years old, he thought he would visit his own people, the Israelites. ²⁴There he saw a man wronged and defended him. He avenged the man who was mistreated, by striking down the Egyptian. ²⁵He thought his own people would understand he was the one by whom God was freeing them, but they didn't understand. ²⁶The next day he came to them as they were fighting, and he tried to make peace between them. ‘Men, you are brothers,’ he said. ‘Why are you doing wrong to one another?’

²⁷“But the man who was doing wrong to his neighbor pushed Moses away. ‘Who made you ruler and judge over us?’ he asked. ²⁸‘Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?’ ²⁹When he said that, Moses fled and became a stranger in the land of Midian. There he had two sons.

³⁰“And so forty years passed. Then an Angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai in the flames of a burning thornbush. ³¹Moses was surprised to see this. As he went closer to examine it, the Lord said, ³²‘I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.’ Moses started to tremble and didn't dare to look. ³³The Lord told him, ‘Take your shoes off; the place where you're standing is holy ground. ³⁴I have seen how my people are mistreated in Egypt. I have heard their groaning and have come down to rescue them. And now come, I will send you to Egypt.’

³⁵“This Moses whom they rejected by saying, ‘Who made you ruler and judge?’ this one God sent to rule and free them with the help of the Angel

9 Gn 37 11
28 45 4
Gn 39
2 3 21
10 Gn 39 21
41 46
Gn 41 40
41 43
Ps 105 21
11 Gn 41 54
42 5
12 Gn 42 2
13 Gn 45 1
14 15 Gn 46
6 27
Ex 1 5
Dt 10 22
16 Gn 50 13
30 5 24 32
17 19 Ex 1 7
8 10 11
20 Ex 2 2
21 Ex 2 5 10
23 28 Ex 2
11 12
27 29 Ex 2
13 15 22
18 3
30 34 Ex 2 24
31 8 10
4 19
35 Ex 2 14

he saw in the thornbush. ¹⁶He led them out, doing *startling wonders and miracles in Egypt*, at the Red Sea, and for *forty years in the desert*. ¹⁷It was this Moses who told the Israelites: *God will raise one of your people to be a Prophet to you like me*. ¹⁸Moses was in the congregation in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai and with our fathers. He received living truths to give you, ¹⁹but our fathers refused to obey him. Yes, they rejected him, and their hearts *turned away to Egypt*. ²⁰*'Make gods for us who will lead us,' they told Aaron. 'This Moses who took us out of Egypt—we don't know what happened to him.'* ²¹That was the time *they made a calf, brought a sacrifice to the idol, and delighted* in what their hands had made.

²²*'So God perverted and abandoned them to worship the sun, the moon, and the stars, as it is written in the book of the prophets: People of Israel, you didn't offer Me slaughtered animals and sacrifices during the forty years in the desert, did you? ²³You even took along the tent of Moloch, the star of the god Rompho, and the images you made in order to worship them. And so I will send you away to live on the other side of Babylon.*

²⁴*'In the desert our fathers had the tabernacle in which God spoke to His people. It was built like the model Moses had seen, just as He who spoke to Moses had ordered him to make it. ²⁵From him our Fathers received it, and they brought it here under Joshua when they took the country from the nations God drove out before our fathers, and here it was till the time of David. ²⁶He found God was kind to*

him and asked that *he might find a home for the God of Jacob*. ²⁷*And Solomon built Him a temple.*

²⁸*'But the Most High God doesn't live in anything made by human hands, as the prophet says: ²⁹'Heaven is My throne, and the earth My footstool. What kind of temple will you build Me, the Lord asks, or what place is there where I can rest? ³⁰Didn't My hand make all this?'*

³¹*'How stubborn you are and pagan at heart and deaf to the truth! You're always opposing the Holy Spirit. Your fathers did it, and so do you! ³²Was there ever a prophet your fathers didn't persecute? They killed those who announced, 'The Righteous One will come!' and now you betrayed and murdered Him. ³³Angels were ordered to give you the Law, but you didn't keep it!'*

Stoning Stephen

³⁴*'While they were listening, the men of the court got furious and ground their teeth at him. ³⁵But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed up to heaven and saw God's glory and Jesus standing at God's right side. ³⁶'Look!' he said, 'I see heaven opened and the Son of Man standing at God's right side.'*

³⁷*'But they yelled at the top of their voices, held their ears shut, and all together rushed at him. ³⁸They threw him out of the city and started to stone him. The witnesses had laid their outer clothes at the feet of a young man—his name was Saul.*

³⁹*'While they were stoning Stephen, he called, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." ⁴⁰Then, kneeling, he called out loud, "Lord, don't hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.*

Samaria, A.D. 32

36 Ex 7 3
Nm 16 33
37 Dt 10 15
18
39 Nm 14 3-4
40-41 Ex 32 1
23 4 6
42 Jer 7 18
19 13
42 43 Amos 5
25 27
44 Ex 27 21
Ex 25 9 40
46 Ps 132 5
47 1 K 6 1
48 50 15 66
1-2
51 Ex 33 3 5
Lv 26 41
Jer 9 26
6 10
Nm 27 14
15 63 10

8 And Saul also approved of their killing him.

That day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered over the open country of Judea and Samaria.

God-fearing men buried Stephen and mourned loud for him.

The Samaritans Believe

Saul was trying to destroy the church. Going into one house after another and dragging off men and women, he put them in prison.

So the people who were scattered went from place to place telling the good news. Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to the people. When they heard him, all listened eagerly to what Philip had to say, especially when they saw the miracles he did. There were those who were plagued by unclean spirits; many came screaming out of them. And many who were paralyzed and lame were made well. So there was great joy in that city.

There was in the city a man by the name of Simon who was practicing witchcraft and amazing the people of Samaria, claiming to be a great man. Everybody from the least to the greatest listened eagerly to him, saying, "He's God's power; people call it great." They were so interested in him because he had for a long time amazed them by his witchcraft. But when Philip told the good news of God's kingdom and of the name of Jesus Christ, men and women believed him and were baptized. Even Simon believed, and when he was baptized, he stayed with Philip. He was amazed to see the miracles and wonderful works that were done.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard Samaria had accepted God's Word, they sent Peter and John to them. These two went down and prayed that the people would receive the Holy Spirit. He had not come on any of them yet; but they had only been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Simon saw the Spirit was given when the apostles laid their hands on anyone. So he offered them money. "Give me this power," he said, "that anyone I lay my hands on receives the Holy Spirit."

Your money perish with you," Peter told him, "because you meant to buy God's gift with money. You have no part or share in this because your heart isn't right with God. Now repent of this wickedness of yours, and ask the Lord if He will perhaps forgive you for thinking such a thing. I see you're turning to bitter poison and being chained by wickedness."

You ask the Lord for me," Simon answered, "that none of the things you said may happen to me." After they had testified and spoken the Lord's Word, they also brought the good news to many Samaritan villages on their way back to Jerusalem.

The Treasurer from Ethiopia

The Lord's angel said to Philip, "Get up and go south to the road going from Jerusalem down to Gaza." It is a deserted road.

He got up and went. Here there was a man from Ethiopia, a eunuch and high official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of all her treasures. He had come to Jerusalem

⁹ 78:37
²¹ Ps 91
²² Dt 10:18
²³ 15:58, 6

to worship ²⁸and was on his way home, sitting in his chariot and reading the prophet Isaiah.

²⁹The Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to that chariot and keep close to it."

³⁰Philip ran up to it and there heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. "Do you really understand what you're reading?" he asked.

³¹"Why, how can I without somebody to guide me?" he asked, and he urged Philip to come up and sit with him.

³²This was the part of the Bible he was reading:

*He will be led away like a sheep to be slaughtered,
and as a lamb is dumb before the man who cut off her wool,
so He will not open His mouth.*

³³When He humbles Himself,

His condemnation will be taken away.

Who will describe the people of His time?

His life will be cut off from the earth.

³⁴"I ask you," the eunuch said to Philip, "about whom is the prophet talking—himself or somebody else?"

³⁵Then Philip spoke. Starting with this statement of the Bible, he told him the good news of Jesus. ³⁶As they were going along the road, they came to some water. "Here is water," the eunuch said. "What keeps me from being baptized?"^b

³⁷He ordered the chariot to stop, and both Philip and the eunuch stepped down into the water, and Philip baptized him. ³⁸When they had stepped out of the water, the Lord's Spirit suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch, happily

going his way, didn't see him again.

³⁹But Philip found himself in Ashdod. He went through all the towns, bringing them the good news.

Jesus Changes Paul

9 And Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the Lord's disciples, went to the high priest ²and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, in order to bring any of Jesus' followers he might find there, men or women, back to Jerusalem in chains.

³On his way, as he was coming near Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting Me?"

⁵"Who are You, Lord?" he asked.

"I am Jesus," He said, "whom you are persecuting. ⁶But get up, go into the city, and you will be told what you should do."

⁷Meanwhile the men traveling with him were standing speechless. They heard the voice but didn't see anyone.

⁸Saul got up from the ground. When he opened his eyes, he couldn't see anything. So they took him by the hand and led him into Damascus. ⁹For three days he couldn't see and didn't eat or drink.

Ananias Comes to Saul

¹⁰In Damascus there was a disciple by the name of Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision: "Ananias!"

"Yes, Lord," he answered.

¹¹"Get up," the Lord told him, "go to the street called Straight, and in the home of Judas look for a man

^bOur oldest manuscripts lack v. 37: " 'If you believe with all your heart,' Philip said, 'you may.' He answered, 'I believe Jesus Christ is God's Son.' "

Jerusalem to Damascus, A.D. 32

from Tarsus by the name of Saul. You see, he's praying. ¹²And in a vision he has seen a man by the name of Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he will see again."

¹³"Lord," Ananias answered, "I've heard many tell how much wrong this man has done to Your holy people in Jerusalem, ¹⁴and he's here with authority from the high priests to put in chains all who call on Your name."

¹⁵"Go," the Lord told him, "he's an instrument I have chosen to bring My name before the Gentiles, before kings, and the people of Israel. ¹⁶I will show him how much he has to suffer for Me."

¹⁷Ananias went. When he came into the house, he laid his hands on Saul. "Brother Saul," he said, "the Lord sent me—Jesus, whom you saw on your way here—so that you will see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

¹⁸Immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he saw again. He got up and was baptized. ¹⁹Then he had something to eat and was strengthened.

Paul Preaches Jesus

While Saul was with the disciples in Damascus several days, ²⁰he immediately started to preach in the synagogues: "Jesus is God's Son." "All who heard him were amazed. "Isn't this the man," they asked, "who in Jerusalem destroyed those who call on this name, and didn't he come here to bring them in chains to the high priests?"

²²But Saul grew more and more powerful and bewildered the Jews living in Damascus by proving "He is the promised Christ." ²³After some time the Jews plotted to murder him, ²⁴but Saul was told

about their plot. When they were even watching the gates day and night to murder him, ²⁵his disciples took him one night and let him down through an opening in the wall by lowering him in a basket.

²⁶He went to Jerusalem and there tried to join the disciples. But they were all afraid of him because they wouldn't believe he was a disciple.

²⁷Then Barnabas took him, brought him to the apostles, and told them how Saul saw the Lord on the road and the Lord spoke to him and how in Damascus Saul boldly preached in Jesus' name. ²⁸Then he went in and out among them in Jerusalem, ²⁹preaching boldly in the Lord's name.

He was talking and arguing with the Greek-speaking Jews. But they were trying to kill him. ³⁰As soon as the other disciples found out about it, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

³¹So the church all over Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was built up. Living in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it grew larger and larger.

Aeneas—Tabitha

³²Now when Peter was going around among all the disciples, he also came down to the holy people living in Lydda. ³³There he found a man by the name of Aeneas who was paralyzed and had been lying on a mat for eight years.

³⁴"Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ makes you well. Get up and make your bed." And immediately he got up.

³⁵All who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

³⁶In Joppa there was a disciple by

Damascus, Judea, 32—35

the name of Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas.^c She was always doing good works and giving things to the poor. ⁷Just at that time she got sick and died; so she was washed and laid in a room upstairs.

⁸Lydda is near Joppa. When the disciples heard Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him: "Come to us without delay!"

⁹Peter went with them. When he came there, they took him upstairs. There all the widows stood around him; they were crying and showing all the inner and outer garments Dorcas made while she was still with them.

¹⁰But Peter made them all leave the room.

He knelt and prayed. Then, turning toward the body, he said, "Tabitha, get up!"

She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. ¹¹He gave her his hand and helped her stand up. Then he called the holy people, and especially the widows, and gave her back to them alive.

¹²The news spread all over Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

Cornelius Sees a Vision

¹Peter stayed for some time with Simon, a tanner, in Joppa.

10 Now, there was a man in Caesarea by the name of Cornelius, a captain in the troop called Italian. ²He was a religious man, who with all those in his home feared God. He gave much to the poor among the people and was always praying to God.

³One day about three in the afternoon he had a vision in which he clearly saw God's angel come to him and say to him, "Cornelius!"

^c*Both names mean "gazelle."*

⁴He stared at the angel and was terrified. "What is it, Lord?" he asked him.

⁵"Your prayers and your gifts to the poor," the angel answered him, "have come up before God as an offering He remembers. ⁶And now send men to Joppa, and get Simon, who is also called Peter. He is a guest of Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea."

⁷When the angel who was speaking to him had left, he called two of his slaves and a God-fearing soldier, one of those who served him regularly. ⁸After telling them everything he sent them to Joppa.

Peter Sees a Vision

¹The next day about noon, while they were on their way and getting near the town, Peter went up on the roof to pray. ²But he got hungry and wanted to eat. While the food was being prepared, he fell into a trance. ³He saw heaven opened and something like a large linen sheet coming down, being let down by its four corners to the ground. ⁴In it were all kinds of animals, four-footed ones and those that creep on the ground, and birds of the air.

⁵"Get up, Peter," a voice told him, "kill and eat."

⁶"Oh, no, Lord!" Peter answered, "I've never eaten anything common or unclean."

⁷A voice spoke to him a second time: "Don't make unclean what God has made clean."

⁸This happened three times, then the sheet was quickly taken up to the sky.

⁹While Peter was still puzzling over the meaning of the vision he had seen, the men sent by Cornelius:

asked for Simon's house and came to the gate. ¹⁶They called and asked, "Is Simon, who is called Peter, staying here?" ¹⁷Peter was still thinking about the vision when the Spirit said, "There are three men looking for you. ²⁰Now come, go down, and go with them. Don't treat them as different people, because I sent them."

²¹So Peter went down to the men. "I'm the man you're looking for," he said. "What brings you here?"

²²They answered, "Cornelius is a captain, a righteous man who fears God, and all the Jewish people speak well of him. A holy angel told him to bring you to his home and hear what you have to say."

²³Peter asked them to come in, and they were his guests.

Peter and Cornelius

The next day he left with them, and some fellow disciples from Joppa went along. ²⁴The following day he came to Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called his relatives and close friends together.

²⁵When Peter was about to go in, Cornelius met him, bowed down at his feet, and worshiped him. ²⁶But Peter made him stand up. "Get up," he said. "I'm only a man."

²⁷Talking with him, he went in and found many people had gathered. ²⁸"You understand," he said to them, "how wrong it is for a Jew to live with or visit anyone who's not a Jew. But God has taught me not to call anyone common or unclean. ²⁹That's why I didn't object to coming here when you sent for me. Now I want to know: Why did you send for me?"

³⁰"Three days ago," Cornelius answered, "I was at home praying

till this hour, at three in the afternoon, when a man in shining clothes stood in front of me. ³¹"Cornelius," he said, "God has heard your prayer and remembers your gifts to the poor. ³²Now send to Joppa and ask Simon, who is called Peter, to come to you. He's a guest in the home of Simon, a tanner, by the sea." ³³So I sent to you immediately, and it was good of you to come. We're all here before God now, ready to hear everything the Lord has ordered you to say."

³⁴Then Peter spoke: "Now I really understand that *God doesn't prefer one person to another*. ³⁵It doesn't matter what people you belong to; if you fear Him and do what's right, He accepts you. ³⁶*He sent His Word to the people of Israel to bring the news of peace in Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all!* ³⁷You know what happened in the whole country of the Jews, how after the baptism that John preached, ³⁸*God anointed Jesus from Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and Jesus, beginning in Galilee, went around doing good and healing all who were under the tyranny of the devil, because God was with Him. ³⁹We have seen everything He did in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, and we can tell about it. Men *hanged Him on a cross and killed Him. ⁴⁰But God raised Him on the third day and showed Him to us— ⁴¹not to all our people but to us whom God has chosen to be witnesses and who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead. ⁴²He ordered us to preach to the people and warn them that God has appointed Him to judge the living and the dead. ⁴³All the prophets declare that through His name everyone who believes in Him has his sins forgiven."**

Caesarea, about 35

10
34 Dt 10 17
36 Ps 107 20
147 18
75 52 7
Mar 1 15
28 15 51 1
39 Dt 21 22-23

"While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit came down on all who heard the Word. "All the Jewish believers who had come with Peter were surprised the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out also on people who were not Jews. "They heard them speaking in other languages and praising God.

"Then Peter asked, "Can anyone keep the water from baptizing these people? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we did." "And he ordered them baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Then they asked him to stay several days.

Peter Defends Himself

11 The apostles and other disciples in all Judea heard: "The non-Jewish people too have accepted God's Word." "But when Peter went up to Jerusalem, those who still believed in circumcision disagreed with him. "You went to visit uncircumcised men," they said, "and you ate with them."

"Then Peter explained to them point by point what had happened. "I was in the town of Joppa praying," he said, "when in a trance I saw a vision: Something like a large linen sheet was coming down. It was lowered by its four corners from the sky, and came down to me. "Looking in, I examined it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild animals, reptiles, and birds of the air. "I also heard a voice telling me, 'Get up, Peter, kill and eat.'

"But I answered, 'Oh, no, Lord. Nothing common or unclean has ever come into my mouth.'

"A voice spoke from heaven a second time, 'Don't make unclean what God has made clean.' "This happened three times. Then all of it

was pulled up to the sky again.

"At that moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, came to the house we were in. "The Spirit told me to go with them and not treat them as different people. These six fellow disciples went with me, and we came into the man's home.

"He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his home and saying, 'Send to Joppa and get Simon, who is called Peter. "What he will tell you will save you and everybody in your home.'

"While I was speaking, the Holy Spirit came down on these people as He originally came on us, "and I had to think of what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' "Now if God gave them the same gift he gave us when we began to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I—could I stop God?"

"When the others heard this, they kept quiet. And they praised God, saying, "Then God has given repentance also to the non-Jewish people, so that they will live."

The New Church in Antioch

"The people scattered by the persecution that broke out over Stephen went as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, and they spoke the Word only to the Jews. "But among them were some men from Cyprus and Cyrene who came to Antioch and started talking also to the non-Jews, telling them the good news of the Lord Jesus. "The Lord's hand was with them, and a large number believed and turned to the Lord.

"The church in Jerusalem heard the news about them, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. "When he came there, he was delighted to see

Jerusalem

what God's love had done, and he urged them all with a hearty determination to be faithful to the Lord. ²⁴He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith. And a large crowd was brought to the Lord.

²⁵Then Barnabas left for Tarsus to look for Saul. ²⁶He found him and brought him to Antioch. And they were guests of the church for a whole year and taught a large crowd.—It was in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.

²⁷At that time some prophets came from Jerusalem down to Antioch.

²⁸One of them by the name of Agabus got up and by the Spirit predicted there would be a big famine all over the world (it came while Claudius was emperor). ²⁹Every one of the disciples decided, as he was able, to send relief to the fellow Christians living in Judea. ³⁰They did this by sending Barnabas and Saul to bring it to the elders.

An Angel Frees Peter

12 At that time King Herod arrested some members of the church in order to mistreat them. ²He killed John's brother James with a sword. ³When he saw how the Jews liked that, he arrested Peter too. It happened during the Passover days of bread without yeast. ⁴When he arrested Peter, he put him in prison and had sixteen soldiers in squads of four guard him. He wanted to bring him before the people after the Passover. ⁵So Peter was kept in prison.

But the church was earnestly praying to God for him. ⁶The night before Herod was going to bring him before the people, Peter, bound with two chains, was sleeping between two soldiers, and guards in front of

the door were watching the prison.

⁷Suddenly the Lord's angel stood near him, and a light shone in his cell. He struck Peter on his side, woke him, and said, "Get up! Quick!" Peter's chains dropped from his wrists.

"Fasten your belt," the angel told him, "and tie on your sandals!" He did this. "Put on your garment," the angel told him, "and follow me."

⁹Peter followed him outside, not realizing the angel was actually doing this. He thought he was seeing a vision. ¹⁰They passed through the first guards and the second guards and came to the iron gate leading into the city. It opened by itself before them, and they went outside and up the street. There the angel suddenly left him.

¹¹"Now I'm sure the Lord sent His angel," Peter said when he was himself again, "and He rescued me from Herod and from everything the Jewish people were expecting."

Peter Comes to His Friends

²When he realized what had happened, He went to the home of Mary (the mother of John—the one called Mark), where many had gathered and were praying. ³He knocked at the entrance gate, and a maid by the name of Rhoda came to answer. ⁴Recognizing Peter's voice, she was so happy she didn't open the gate but ran in and announced, "Peter is standing at the gate!"

⁵"You're crazy!" they told her. But she insisted it was so. "It's his angel," they said.

⁶But Peter kept on knocking. When they opened the gate, they were surprised to see him. ⁷He waved his hand to quiet them down and told them how the Lord had

Antioch, 32—46
Jerusalem, 44

taken him out of the prison. "Tell James and the other Christians about this," he said. Then he left and went to another place.

¹⁸In the morning the soldiers were very much upset as they asked, "What happened to Peter?"
¹⁹Herod searched for him but didn't find him. So he examined the guards and ordered them executed.

Herod Dies

Then Herod left Judea, went down to Caesarea, and stayed there awhile.

²⁰He had a violent quarrel with the people of Tyre and Sidon. So they came to him in a body. After they had won over Blastus, who took care of the king's bedroom, they asked for peace because the king's country provided food for their country.

²¹On a day that was set, Herod put on his royal robe, sat on the platform, and made a speech to them. ²²The people shouted, "It's a god speaking, not a man!"

²³Immediately the Lord's angel struck him because he didn't give glory to God. He was eaten by worms, and he died.

²⁴But God's Word continued to spread and win many followers.

On Cyprus

²⁵After Barnabas and Saul delivered the offering for relief, they came back from Jerusalem, bringing with them John, also called Mark.

13 The following were prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch: Barnabas, Symeon, called Black, Lucius from Cyrene, Manaen, who had been raised with Herod the governor, and Saul.

²While the Christians were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the

Mark

Holy Spirit said, "Set Barnabas and Saul apart for Me to do the work I called them for."

³Then they fasted and prayed, laid their hands on them, and let them go. ⁴And so they, sent by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and from there sailed to Cyprus. ⁵They came to Salamis and there started to preach God's Word in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John to help them. ⁶They went through the whole island as far as Paphos. There they found a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet by the name of Barjesus, ⁷who was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. He sent for Barnabas and Saul and wanted to hear God's Word. ⁸But Elymas, the sorcerer (that was what his name meant), opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul away from the faith.

⁹But Saul (who was Paul), filled with the Holy Spirit, looked steadily at him ¹⁰and said, "O you who are full of every treachery and villainy, you son of the devil, enemy of all that is right! Won't you stop twisting *the Lord's right ways*? ¹¹And now the Lord's hand is on you: You'll be blind and not see the sun for a while."

At that moment a mist and a darkness came over him, and he went around looking for people to take his hand and lead him. ¹²When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed. The Lord's teaching amazed him.

At Antioch near Pisidia

¹³Paul and his men took a ship from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. There John left them and went back to Jerusalem. ¹⁴But they went on from Perga and came to Antioch near Pisidia. On Saturday

First journey, starting in spring, 47

they went into the synagog and sat down.

¹⁵After the reading of the Law and the prophets, the synagog leaders had a man go and tell them, "Fellow Jews, if you have anything to say to encourage the people, speak."

¹⁶Paul got up and motioned with his hand. "Men of Israel," he said, "and you others who fear God, listen to me. ¹⁷The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made them a great people while they lived as strangers in Egypt, and *with an uplifted arm He led them out of it.* ¹⁸About forty years *He put up with them in the Desert.* ¹⁹Then *He destroyed seven nations in Canaan and gave their country to His people as an inheritance.* ²⁰He did all this in about 450 years. After that He gave them judges till the time of the prophet Samuel.

²¹Then the people demanded a king, and God gave them Saul for forty years. He was a son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin. ²²But God took the throne away from him again and made David their king. In regard to him he declared: *'I found David, Jesse's son, to be a man after My own heart, who will do everything I want him to do.'*

²³As He had promised, God had a Savior—Jesus—come from David's descendants to Israel. ²⁴When He came into the world, John went ahead of Him as herald to tell all the people of Israel to repent and be baptized. ²⁵As John was finishing his work, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I'm not the One. No, there's Someone coming after me, and I don't deserve to untie the shoes on His feet.'

²⁶Fellow Jews, Abraham's descendants, and you others who fear God, *the message of this salvation*

was sent to us. ²⁷Not knowing who Jesus was or what the prophets meant that are read every Saturday, the people in Jerusalem and their rulers by condemning Jesus did what their prophets predicted. ²⁸Although they found no good reason to kill Him, they asked Pilate to have Him killed. ²⁹When they had done everything that was written about Him, they took Him down from the cross and laid Him in a grave. ³⁰But God raised Him from the dead, ³¹and for many days He was seen by those who had come with Him from Galilee up to Jerusalem. They are now telling the people the truth about Him. ³²And we are bringing you the good news: ³³What God promised the fathers He did for our children by raising Jesus, as it is written in the second Psalm: *You are My Son, today I have begotten You.*

³⁴He raised Him from the dead, never to suffer *decay*, as He said: 'I will give you *what I gave David—mercies You can trust.*' ³⁵Another Psalm says: *'You will not let Your Loved One experience decay.'* ³⁶When *David* had served the people of his time, he by God's will *went to his rest* and was laid away *with his fathers*. His body decayed, ³⁷but the body of Him whom God raised did not decay.

³⁸And so you should know, my fellowmen—we are announcing to you this Jesus forgives your sins ³⁹and makes everyone who believes righteous and free from everything from which Moses' Law couldn't free you.

⁴⁰Now be careful, or what the prophets said will happen to you: ⁴¹*Look, you scorners, then wonder and perish, because I'm doing something in your days that you*

¹⁷ Ex 6:1-6
14:8
¹⁸ Dt 1:31
¹⁹ Dt 7:1
John 14:1
²² 1 S 13:14
Ps 89:20
Is 44:28
²⁶ Ps 107:20
³² Ps 2:7
³⁴ Is 55:3
³⁵ Ps 16:10
³⁶ 1 K 2:10
⁴¹ Hab 1:5

First journey, 47

would never believe if anyone told you."

⁴²As Paul and Barnabas were going out, the people urged them to tell them the same things the next Saturday. ⁴³When the meeting of the synagog broke up, many Jews and others who had come to fear God followed Paul and Barnabas, who talked to them and urged them to stay in God's grace.

⁴⁴The next Saturday almost the whole town was there to hear God's Word. ⁴⁵When the Jews saw the crowds, they got very jealous. They contradicted what Paul said and abused him.

⁴⁶Paul and Barnabas boldly declared: "We had to speak God's Word to you first, but since you reject it and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, we are now turning to the non-Jews. ⁴⁷That is what the Lord has ordered us to do: *'I have made you a light for the non-Jews, to save people all over the earth.'*"

⁴⁸The non-Jews were delighted to hear what the Lord had said and praised Him for it, and all who had been appointed for everlasting life believed. ⁴⁹The Lord's Word spread all over the country. ⁵⁰But the Jews stirred up the noble women who worshiped with them, and the leaders of the town. These started a persecution against Paul and Barnabas and drove them out of their territory.

⁵¹In protest against them Paul and Barnabas shook the dust off their feet and went to Iconium. ⁵²Meanwhile the disciples continued to be full of joy and of the Holy Spirit.

In Iconium

14 The same thing happened in Iconium. Paul and Barnabas

went into the synagog of the Jews and spoke in such a way that a big crowd of Jews and non-Jews believed. ⁴⁸But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the non-Jews and poisoned their minds against the Christians. ⁴⁹For a long time Paul and Barnabas continued to speak boldly, trusting in the Lord, who gave His approval to the words of His love by letting their hands do miracles and wonders. ⁵⁰But the people of the town were divided—some were with the Jews, others with the apostles.

⁵¹But when non-Jews and Jews with their rulers planned to mistreat and stone them, ⁵²they found out about it and escaped to Lystra and Derbe, towns of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding territory. ⁵³There they kept on telling the good news.

⁴⁷ 15:49,6
¹⁴
¹⁰ Et 2:1,2

In Lystra

¹In Lystra there was a man sitting who couldn't use his feet. He had been lame from his birth and had never walked. ²He was listening to Paul as he spoke. Paul watched him, and when he saw the man believed he would be made well. ³He called out loud, "*Stand up straight on your feet.*" The man jumped up and walked around.

⁴The people who saw what Paul had done shouted in the language of Lycaonia, "The gods have become like men and have come down to us." ⁵And they called Barnabas Zeus, and Paul Hermes, because he was the main speaker. ⁶The priest of the temple of Zeus in front of the town brought bulls and garlands to the gates. He and the crowd wanted to sacrifice.

⁷When the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the

crowd. ¹⁵"You men, why are you doing this?" they shouted. "We're just human beings too, with experiences like yours and are telling you the good news to turn from these empty things to the living God, *who made heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them.*" ¹⁶In the ages that have gone by He let all people go their own ways; ¹⁷yet He didn't fail to give evidence of Himself by doing good, giving you rains from heaven and crops in their seasons, filling you with food, and making you happy."

¹⁸Even by saying this they could hardly keep the crowd from sacrificing to them. ¹⁹But then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the people over. So they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the town, thinking he was dead. ²⁰But when the disciples came and stood around him, he got up and went into the town.

Derbe and Back Home

The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe. ²¹As they were telling the good news in that town, they won many disciples. Then they went back to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, ²²strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to be loyal to the faith, saying, "We must suffer much to go into God's kingdom." ²³They appointed elders for them in each church. And with prayer and fasting they entrusted them to the Lord in whom they believed.

²⁴When they had gone through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. ²⁵They spoke the Word in Perga and went down to Attalia. ²⁶From there

they took a boat to Antioch, where they had been entrusted to God's love for the work they now had finished. ²⁷When they arrived, they called the church together and told them everything God had done with them and how He had opened the door for the people who were not Jews so that they, too, might believe. ²⁸Then they spent a long time with the disciples.^e

Must Non-Jews Be Circumcised?

15 Some men came down from Judea and started to teach the Christians: "If you're not circumcised according to the custom taught by Moses, you can't be saved." ²When Paul and Barnabas had no little conflict and argument with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem and see the apostles and elders about this question.

³The church sent them on their way. As they were going through Phoenicia and Samaria, they told the whole story how the non-Jews were turning to God, and they made all the Christians very happy.

⁴When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church, the apostles, and the elders and told everything God had done with them. ⁵But some believers of the party of the Pharisees got up and said, "We must circumcise people and order them to keep the Law of Moses."

⁶The apostles and elders met to look into this matter. ⁷After much discussion Peter got up. "Fellow Christians," he said to the others, "you know in the early days God

^eAt this time, late in A.D. 48, Paul wrote his letter to the Galatians. They were the people he had been with on his first journey.

chose me to be the one among you to tell the good news to the non-Jews so that they would hear it and believe. ⁸And God, who knows our hearts, showed them He approved by giving them the Holy Spirit as He gave Him to us. ⁹And by cleansing their hearts by faith He has declared we are not different from them. ¹⁰Now then, why do you test God by putting on the disciples' neck a yoke neither our fathers nor we could bear? ¹¹No, by the grace of the Lord Jesus we believe in order to be saved; and so do they."

¹²The whole crowd was silent. Then they heard Barnabas and Paul tell about all the miracles and wonders God had done among the non-Jews through them.

¹³After they finished speaking, James said, "Fellow Christians, listen to me. ¹⁴Simon has explained how God first came to the non-Jews to get a people for Himself. ¹⁵This agrees with what the prophets said. It is written: ¹⁶*Afterwards I will come back and build again David's tent that has fallen down. And its ruins I will build and set up again,* ¹⁷*so that the rest of the people, yes, all the nations who are called by My name, may search for the Lord.* ¹⁸*The Lord says this and does this which was known long ago.* ¹⁹So it is my judgment that we should not trouble these non-Jews who are turning to God ²⁰but write them to keep away from the unclean things of idols and from sexual sin and not eat anything strangled or any blood. ²¹Ever since the earliest days there are in each town those who preach Moses when he is read in the synagogues every Saturday."

²⁴Then the apostles, the elders, and the whole church decided to choose some of their men and send them with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch: Judas, called Barsabas, and Silas—leaders among the Christians. ²³And they wrote this letter for them to deliver:

"The apostles and elders, Christians, send greetings to their non-Jewish fellow Christians in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia.

²⁴"Since we heard that some men, coming from us without instructions from us, have said things to trouble you, and they continue to upset you, ²⁵we have unanimously decided to choose men and send them to you with our dear Barnabas and Paul, ²⁶who are living only for our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁷So we are sending Judas and Silas to talk to you and tell you the same things.

²⁸"The Holy Spirit and we have decided not to burden you more than is necessary: ²⁹Keep away from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals, and from sexual sin. Be careful to avoid these and you will be doing right. Farewell!"

³⁰So they were sent on their way and came to Antioch, where they got the church together and delivered the letter. ³¹The people read it and were delighted with the encouragement it brought them. ³²And Judas and Silas, who also were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the Christians.

³³After they had stayed for some time, the Christians let Judas and Silas go back with a friendly greeting to those who had sent them.^f ³⁴But Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch

15
16 Jer 12 15
15-18 Amos
9 11-12
16 45 21

^fOur two oldest manuscripts lack v. 34: "But Silas decided to stay there, and Judas left alone."

and with the help of many others taught and told the Lord's good news.

Paul Takes Silas with Him

⁸After a while Paul said to Barnabas, "Let's go back and visit our fellow Christians in every town where we told them the Lord's Word, and let's see how they are."

⁹Barnabas wanted to take along John, who was called Mark. ¹⁰But Paul thought it best not to take the man who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them into the work. ¹¹They disagreed so sharply they separated, and Barnabas, taking Mark along, sailed away to Cyprus. ¹²But Paul chose Silas and started out, his fellow Christians entrusting him to the Lord's love.

Timothy Joins Paul in Lystra

¹³He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

16 He came down to Derbe, then to Lystra. Here there was a disciple by the name of Timothy. His mother was a Jewish Christian, but his father was a Greek. ²The Christians in Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. ³Paul wanted him to go with him, so he took him and circumcised him on account of the Jews who were in those places, because everybody knew his father was a Greek.

⁴As they went through the towns, they delivered the decisions the apostles and elders in Jerusalem had made and the people were to keep. ⁵So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew in number more and more every day.

The Call to Europe

⁶They went through the region of

Phrygia and Galatia because the Holy Spirit kept them from speaking the Word in the province of Asia. ⁷They came as far as Mysia and tried to get into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not let them. ⁸So they passed through Mysia and went down to Troas.

⁹One night Paul saw a vision—a man from Macedonia was standing there and urging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us!"

¹⁰As soon as he had seen the vision, we looked for a way to get to Macedonia since we concluded God had called us to tell them the good news.

At Philippi

¹¹Sailing from Troas, we went straight to Samothrace, the next day to Neapolis, ¹²and from there to Philippi, a leading city in that part of Macedonia and a colony of Rome. We stayed in that city for some days.

¹³On Saturday we went out of the gate and along the river, where we thought there was a place for prayer. We sat down and started to talk to the women gathered there. ¹⁴There was a woman by the name of Lydia, a dealer in purple goods, who came from the town of Thyatira. She worshiped God. As she listened, the Lord opened her heart to be interested in what Paul said. ¹⁵When she and her family were baptized, she urged us, "If you're convinced I believe in the Lord, come and stay at my home." And she made us come.

¹⁶One day when we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave girl with a spirit of fortune-telling in her; she made much money for her owners by telling the unknown. ¹⁷She would follow Paul and us and shout, "These men are servants of

Second journey, starting in 49

the Most High God and are telling you how to be saved." ¹⁸She kept on doing this for many days until Paul, very much annoyed, turned to the spirit and said, "In the name of Jesus Christ I order you to go out of her!"

Then and there the spirit went out of her, ¹⁹and with it, as her owners realized, went their chance of making money. So they grabbed Paul and Silas, dragged them before the officers in the marketplace, ²⁰and brought them before the highest Roman officials. "These men are stirring up a lot of trouble in our city," they said. "They're Jews, ²¹and they're teaching religious ways that we as Romans aren't allowed to adopt or practice."

²²The crowd also joined in attacking them. Then the officials tore the clothes off Paul and Silas and ordered them beaten with rods. ²³After striking them many times, the men put them in prison and ordered the jailer to watch them and not let them escape. ²⁴He did as he was ordered and put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

²⁵About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶Suddenly the earth quaked so violently the foundations of the prison were shaken, all the doors flew open, and everybody's chains were unfastened.

²⁷The jailer woke up and saw the prison doors open. Thinking the prisoners had escaped, he drew his sword and was going to kill himself. ²⁸But Paul called out loudly, "Don't harm yourself! We're all here!"

²⁹The jailer asked for lights, rushed in, and fell down trembling before

Paul and Silas. ³⁰Then he took them outside and asked, "Sirs, what do I have to do to be saved?"

"Believe in the Lord Jesus," they answered, "and you and your family will be saved." ³²They spoke the Lord's Word to him and everyone in his home.

³³At that hour of the night he took them with him and washed their wounds. And he and all who were with him were baptized immediately. ³⁴He took them up into his home and gave them a meal. He and everyone in his home were very happy to have found faith in God.

³⁵In the morning the officials sent attendants and said, "Let those men go."

³⁶The jailer reported the message to Paul. "The officials sent word to let you go," he said. "Come out now, and go in peace."

³⁷But Paul told them, "They have beaten us publicly without trying and condemning us, although we're Roman citizens, and have put us in prison. And now they're trying to put us out secretly? I should say not! They should come themselves and take us out."

³⁸The attendants reported to the officials what Paul said. Hearing that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were frightened. ³⁹So they came and pleaded with them, took them out, and asked them to leave the city.

⁴⁰Leaving the prison, they went to Lydia, saw and encouraged the Christians there, and then left.

In Thessalonica

17 Paul and Silas traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia and came to Thessalonica. Here the Jews had a synagog.

Second journey, 49

Paul went in as usual and on three Saturdays had Bible discussions with them. He explained and showed them: "The promised Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead, and this Christ is the Jesus I'm telling you about."

He convinced some of the Jews, and they joined Paul and Silas, and also a large crowd of the Greeks who worshiped God, and many of the wives of the leaders.

Then the Jews got jealous, took some wicked men in the marketplace, formed a mob, and started a riot in the city. They attacked Jason's home and searched for Paul and Silas to bring them out to the people. "When they didn't find them, they dragged Jason and some other Christians before the city officials, shouting, "Those men who have made trouble all over the world are here now and are Jason's guests. They're all going against the emperor's decrees by saying there's another king—Jesus!"

Hearing this, the crowd and the officials were upset. "But after they had taken security from Jason and the others, they let them go.

That same night the Christians sent Paul and Silas away to Berea.

At Berea

When they came there, they went into the synagog of the Jews. "These people were nobler than those at Thessalonica—they were very eager to get the Word and every day studied the Bible to see if those things were so. "And many of them believed, also many noble Greeks, women as well as men.

But when the Jews at Thessalonica found out Paul had now preached God's Word also in Berea, they came there to stir up trouble among the

people. "Immediately the Christians sent Paul away to the sea, but Silas and Timothy stayed there.

In Athens

Those who escorted Paul took him all the way to Athens. When they left, they took instructions to Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible.

While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was inwardly stirred up when he saw how many idols there were in the city. "Then he had discussions in the synagog with Jews and others who feared God, and every day in the marketplace with those who happened to be there. "Some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also debated with him, but some asked, "What is this fellow with his scraps of learning trying to say?" Others said, "He seems to be telling about foreign gods"—because he was telling the good news of Jesus and the resurrection.

Then they took him and brought him before the court of Mars' Hill and asked, "Could we know, what is this new thing you teach? "You bring some things that sound strange to us, and we want to know what they mean."

Now everybody in Athens, also the visitors staying there, used their time only to tell or hear the latest news.

Paul stood before the court of Mars' Hill and said, "Men of Athens, I see how very religious you are in every way. "As I went through your city and saw the things you worship, I found an altar with the inscription TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now I'm telling you about what you don't know and yet worship. "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven

and earth and doesn't live in temples made by human hands, "and He isn't served by human hands as if He needed anything. He Himself gives everyone life and breath and everything. "From one man He made every nation to have the people live all over the earth, setting the times allotted to them and the boundaries they live in, "that they should look for God and perhaps feel their way to Him and find Him. He is never far from any one of us, "because we live and move and are in Him; as some of your poets^g have said, 'You see, we are His children.' "Now, if we're God's children, we shouldn't think God is like gold, silver, or stone, carved by man's art and imagination.

"While God overlooked the times when people were ignorant, He now tells all of them everywhere to be sorry for their sins, "because He has set a day when *He is going to have a Man judge the world with justice*. He has appointed Him for this. And by raising Him from the dead has given everyone a good reason to believe."

"When they heard about a resurrection of the dead, some started to mock, while others said, "We'll hear you again about this."

"And so Paul left the meeting. "Some men joined him and believed. Among them were Dionysius, a member of the court, and a woman by the name of Damaris, and some others with them.

In Corinth

18 After that he left Athens and came to Corinth. "There he

found a Jew by the name of Aquila, born in Pontus, and his wife Priscilla. They had recently come from Italy because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to them, "and because he made tents for a living just as he did, he stayed with them, and they worked together.

"Every Saturday he would argue in the synagogue and try to win Jews and Greeks. "But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself entirely to teaching the Word as he solemnly assured the Jews, "Jesus is the promised Savior!" "But they opposed him and abused him. In protest he shook the dust from his clothes and told them, "Your blood be on your own heads. I am innocent. From now on I'll go to the non-Jews."

"Then he left the place and went to the home of a man by the name of Titius Justus, who worshiped God. His house was right beside the synagogue. "Now Crispus, the synagogue leader, and all who were in his home believed in the Lord. And many other people in Corinth who heard Paul believed and were baptized.

"One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision, "*Don't be afraid! But speak, and don't be silent—I am with you, and nobody will attack you so as to harm you, because I have many people in this city.*"

"He stayed there a year and six months and taught God's Word among them.^h

"But when Gallio was proconsul of Greece, the Jews united in an attack on Paul and brought him

11 Ps 98
96:1
98:9
18
9-10 Ex 3:12
Josh 1:5
15:41-10
43:5
Jer 1:8

^gAratus and Cleanthes wrote this about 270 B.C.

^hIn A.D. 50 Paul wrote the two letters to the Thessalonians.

before Gallio as judge. "This man," they said, "is persuading people to worship God in ways that are against the Law."

"Just as Paul was going to answer, Gallio said to the Jews, "If this were a crime or vicious wrong, it would be only fair that I listen to you Jews. "But since we have questions here about words, names, and your own Law, see to it yourselves. I don't want to be a judge of those things." "And he drove them away from his platform.

"Then all of them took Sosthenes, the synagog leader, and beat him in front of the judge's platform. But Gallio paid no attention to it.

Home

"After staying there quite a while longer, Paul said good-by to the Christians. Priscilla and Aquila went with him. At Cenchrea he had his hair cut, since he had been under a vow. They took a boat for Syria "and came to Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila. There he went into the synagog and had a discussion with the Jews. "They asked him to stay longer, but he refused. "As he said good-by to them, he told them, "I will come back to you if God wants me to."

He sailed from Ephesus "and landed at Caesarea. He went up, greeted the church, and then went down to Antioch.

Apollos

"After staying there for some time, Paul left and went from place to place through the Galatian country and through Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

"A Jew by the name of Apollos, who was born in Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man

and mighty in the Bible. "After he had been instructed in the Lord's way, he spoke with a glowing enthusiasm, and taught correctly about Jesus but knew only John's baptism. "He started to speak boldly in the synagog. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him with them and explained God's way to him more accurately.

"As he wanted to cross over to Greece, the Christians wrote to the disciples there urging them to welcome him. When he got there, he gave much help to those who by God's grace were now believers. "Publicly and vigorously he proved the Jews were wrong as he showed from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

Paul in Ephesus

19 While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled over the hills to get to Ephesus. Meeting some disciples there, "he asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?"

"No," they answered him, "we haven't even heard there is a Holy Spirit."

"Into what then were you baptized?" he asked them.

"Into John's baptism," they answered.

"Paul said, "John baptized those who were sorry for their sins and told the people to believe in the One coming after him, that is, Jesus."

"When they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. "And as Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they started to talk in other languages and to speak God's Word. "There were about twelve men in the group.

"He went into the synagog and

*Third journey, starting in 52
Ephesus, 51—55*

spoke there boldly for three months, discussing and trying to convince people about God's kingdom. ⁹When some got stubborn, refused to believe, and slandered the Christian religion before the crowd, he left them, took his disciples away from them, and had daily discussions in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰This went on for two years so that all who lived in the province of Asia, Jews and Greeks, heard the Lord's Word.

¹¹God did extraordinary miracles by Paul's hands. ¹²When handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched his skin were taken to the sick, their sicknesses left them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

¹³Some Jews who made it their business to go around and drive out evil spirits tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus over those having the evil spirits. "I order you by that Jesus whom Paul preaches," they said. "Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish ruling priest, were doing this.

¹⁴But the evil spirit answered them, "I know Jesus, and I know Paul, but who are you?" ¹⁵Then the man with the evil spirit jumped on them, got the better of them, and overpowered them all so that they ran naked and bruised out of that house.

¹⁷All the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus heard about it. They were all frightened and started to think very highly of the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁸Many believers came to confess and tell about their magic spells. ¹⁹Many of those who had practiced magic gathered their books and burned them in front of

everybody. They added up the cost of these books and found they were worth fifty thousand denarii.ⁱ ²⁰In that way the Lord's Word grew mightily and triumphed.^j

²¹After all these things had happened, Paul decided to go through Macedonia and Greece and then to Jerusalem. "When I get there," he said, "I must also see Rome." ²²But he sent two of his helpers, Timothy, and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he himself stayed in the province of Asia a while longer.

The Riot

²³During that time there was a big disturbance over the Christian religion.

²⁴A silversmith by the name of Demetrius provided a big income for the skilled workers by making silver shrines of Artemis. ²⁵He called a meeting of these and others who did similar work. "Men," he said, "you know we're getting a fine income from this business, ²⁶and you see and hear how this Paul has won and taken away a large crowd not only in Ephesus but almost all over the province of Asia by telling them; 'Gods made by human hands are no gods.' ²⁷There is a danger people will not only reject our line of business but will also think nothing of the temple of the great goddess Artemis, and then she whom all Asia and the world worship will be robbed of her glory."

²⁸When they heard this, they got furious and shouted, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" ²⁹The confusion spread all over the city:

ⁱA denarius was one day's pay.

^jFrom Ephesus, during the time of A.D. 54 to 55, Paul wrote his first letter to the Corinthians. There are good reasons to believe that here he also wrote the letters to the Philippians, Philemon, Colossians, and Ephesians.

And they all rushed into the theater together, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's fellow travelers from Macedonia.

¹⁰Paul wanted to go into the crowd, but the disciples wouldn't let him. ¹¹Even some officials of the province of Asia who were his friends sent men to him and urged him not to risk going into the theater.

¹²Some were shouting one thing, some another. The crowd was confused, and most of them didn't know why they were meeting. ¹³Then the Jews pushed Alexander to the front, and some of the crowd told him what to do. Alexander waved his hand to quiet them and wanted to make a defense before the people. ¹⁴But when they found out he was a Jew, they all started to shout in unison and kept it up for about two hours, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

¹⁵Then the city secretary quieted the crowd. "Men of Ephesus," he said, "who in the world doesn't know that this city of the Ephesians is the keeper of the temple of the great Artemis and of the statue that fell down from Zeus? ¹⁶Since nobody can deny this, you must be quiet and not do anything reckless. ¹⁷The men you brought here don't rob temples or insult our goddess. ¹⁸Now if Demetrius and his workers have something against anyone, we have special days and proconsuls to hold court; there they should accuse one another. ¹⁹And if you want anything else, it must be settled in a legal meeting. ²⁰We're in danger of being accused of a riot today for which there is no good reason. We'll

not be able to explain this mob." ²¹After saying this, he dismissed the meeting.

20 When the uproar had died down, Paul sent for the disciples, encouraged them, and saying good-bye to them, left to go to Macedonia.^k ²He went through those parts of the country and spoke much to encourage the people and then went to Greece ³and stayed there three months.^l

At Troas

Just as Paul was going to sail for Syria, the Jews plotted against him, so he decided to go back through Macedonia. ⁴Sopater from Berea, the son of Pyrrhus, went with him; also Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, and Gaius from Derbe, and Timothy, but Tychicus and Trophimus were from the province of Asia; ⁵they came and were waiting for us in Troas. ⁶After the Passover days of bread without yeast we sailed from Philippi and in five days came to them in Troas and stayed there seven days.

⁷On Sunday, when we met for a meal, Paul spoke to the people. Since he intended to leave the next day, he went on talking till midnight. ⁸There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting.

⁹A young man by the name of Eutychus, sitting in the window, was dropping off into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on. Finally, overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was picked up dead. ¹⁰But Paul went down, lay on him, and took him into his arms. "Don't get excited," he said. "He's

^kFrom Macedonia in A.D. 55 Paul wrote his second letter to the Corinthians.

^lFrom Corinth in A.D. 56 Paul wrote his letter to the Romans.

alive!" "Then he went upstairs again, broke the bread, and ate. And after a long talk that lasted till the sun rose, he left.

¹²The people took the boy away alive and were very much comforted.

From Troas to Miletus

¹³We went ahead to the boat and sailed to Assos. There we were going to take Paul into the boat; he had arranged it that way, planning himself to go there on foot. ¹⁴When we met him in Assos, we took him on board and went on to Mitylene. ¹⁵We sailed from there and on the following day came opposite Chios. The next day we crossed over to Samos and on the next came to Miletus. ¹⁶Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus to avoid spending time in the province of Asia; he was in a hurry to get to Jerusalem for the day of Pentecost if possible.

With the Pastors of Ephesus

¹⁷From Miletus he sent men to Ephesus to get the pastors of the church. ¹⁸When they came to him, he said to them: "You know how I lived with you all the time from the first day I came into the province of Asia; ¹⁹how I served the Lord very humbly, with tears, and in trials I endured as the Jews plotted against me; ²⁰how I didn't shrink from telling you anything that would help you or from teaching you publicly and from house to house; ²¹and how I earnestly warned Jews and non-Jews to turn from sin to God and believe in our Lord Jesus. ²²And now, you see, the Spirit compels me to go to Jerusalem. I don't know what will happen to me there, ²³except that the Holy Spirit keeps warning me from town to town that

chains and troubles are waiting for me. ²⁴I don't count my life worth anything. I just want to finish running my race and doing the work the Lord Jesus entrusted to me declaring the good news of God's love.

²⁵"I went around among you preaching the Kingdom, and now know none of you will see me again. ²⁶That is why I declare to you today I am innocent of the blood of any of you, ²⁷because I didn't shrink from telling you God's whole plan.

²⁸"Take care of yourselves and the whole flock in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers to be shepherds of God's church that He bought with His own blood. ²⁹I know when I'm gone fierce wolves will come among you and not spare the flock. ³⁰And even some of you men will start to tell perversions of the truth to get the disciples to leave and follow you. ³¹So watch and remember how for three years, day and night, I didn't stop warning everyone with tears. ³²And now entrust you to God and to the Word of His undeserved love, which can build you up and give you the salvation to be shared by all who are made holy.

³³"I didn't want anyone's silver or gold or clothes. ³⁴You know these hands worked for what I needed for the men with me. ³⁵In every way I showed you that by working hard as I do we should help the weak and remember what the Lord Jesus said: 'We are more blessed when we give than when we receive.' "

³⁶When he had said this, he kneeled down with all of them and prayed. ³⁷They wept very much, put their arms around Paul, and kissed

²⁸ PL 74.1-2
³² DI 33.3-4

Third journey, 56

him. ¹⁰It hurt them most of all that he had said they wouldn't see him again. Then they took him to the ship.

At Tyre

21 When we had broken away from them, we sailed and followed a straight course to Cos and the next day to Rhodes and from there to Patara. ²We found a ship going across to Phoenicia, went on board, and sailed. ³We came in sight of Cyprus, and leaving it on our left, sailed on to Syria and landed at Tyre because the ship was to unload its cargo there.

⁴We looked up the disciples and stayed there seven days. By the Spirit they told Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. ⁵When our time was up, we started on our way. All of them with their wives and children accompanied us out of the city. There we knelt on the beach and prayed ⁶and said good-by to one another. Then we went on board the ship, and they went back home.

At Caesarea

⁷We continued our sailing, going from Tyre to Ptolemais. There we greeted our fellow Christians and spent a day with them. ⁸The next day we left and came to Caesarea. We went into the home of Philip the evangelist, one of the seven, and stayed with him. ⁹He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied.

¹⁰While we were staying there longer than we had expected, a prophet by the name of Agabus came down from Judea. ¹¹He came to us, took Paul's belt, tied his own feet and hands, and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'This is how the Jews in Jerusalem will tie the man this belt belongs to and hand him over to the non-Jews.'"

¹²When we heard this, we and those living there urged him not to go up to Jerusalem.

¹³Then Paul answered, "What are you doing—crying and making me weak in my purpose? I'm ready not only to be bound but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

¹⁴When he would not be persuaded, we were silent and could only say, "The Lord's will be done."

In Jerusalem

¹⁵After those days we got ready and started for Jerusalem. ¹⁶Some of the disciples from Caesarea came with us and took us to the home of Mnason to be his guests. He was from Cyprus and was one of the first disciples. ¹⁷When we came to Jerusalem, our fellow Christians eagerly welcomed us.

¹⁸The next day we went with Paul to James, and all the elders came there too. ¹⁹After greeting them, Paul told them everything God had done through his work among the non-Jews.

²⁰When they heard about it, they praised God. They told him, "You see, brother, how many tens of thousands among the Jews now believe, and all are zealous for the Law. ²¹They've been told you teach all the Jews living among the non-Jews to turn away from Moses and tell them not to circumcise their children or follow the customs. ²²What should we do about it? They will certainly hear you have come. ²³So do what we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow. ²⁴Take them, purify yourself with them, and pay their expenses so that they may *shave their heads*. Then everybody will know there's nothing in what they've told about you but

²¹
24 Nm 6:8,
18-19

you live strictly according to the Law. ⁴⁵About the non-Jews who now believe, we wrote in a letter we decided they should keep away from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals, and from sexual sin."

²⁶Then Paul took the men and the next day purified himself with them and went to the temple to announce when, with the bringing of the sacrifice for each of them, *the days of purification would be over.*

²⁷When the seven days were almost over, the Jews from the province of Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd. They grabbed him, ²⁸yelling, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man who in his teaching everybody everywhere is against our people, the Law, and this place. And now he has even brought non-Jews into the temple and made this holy place unclean." ²⁹They had seen Trophimus from Ephesus with him in the city and thought Paul had taken him into the temple.

³⁰The whole city was aroused and the people rushed together. They took Paul, dragged him out of the temple, and immediately the doors were shut.

³¹They were trying to kill him when it was reported to the tribune who was in charge of about six hundred soldiers: "All Jerusalem is stirred up!" ³²Immediately he took soldiers and captains and ran down to them. When they saw the tribune and the soldiers, they stopped hitting Paul. ³³Then the tribune went to him, arrested him, and ordered him bound with two chains.

He asked who he was and what he had done. ³⁴Some in the crowd shouted this and some that. There was such a noisy confusion he

couldn't get the facts, so he ordered Paul to be taken to the barracks. ³⁵When Paul came to the stairs, the crowd was so violent the soldiers had to carry him. ³⁶The mob was right behind them, yelling, "Kill him!"

Paul Defends Himself

³⁷Just as he was going to be taken into the barracks, Paul asked the tribune, "May I say something to you?"

"Can you talk Greek?" he asked. ³⁸"Aren't you the Egyptian who sometime ago got four thousand dagger-men to rebel and follow him into the wilderness?"

³⁹"I'm a Jew," Paul answered, "from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of an important city. Now I'm asking you, let me talk to the people."

⁴⁰And he let him. Then Paul, standing on the stairs, waved his hand to quiet the people. When there was a hush all around, he spoke to them in the Jewish language:

22 "Brothers and fathers, listen as I now defend myself before you."

⁴¹When they heard him call to them in their own language, they quieted down still more.

⁴²Then he said: "I'm a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia but raised in this city, trained at the feet of Gamaliel in the strict ways of the Law of our fathers, as zealous for God as all of you are today. 'I hunted to their death men and women who believed as I do now, tying them up and putting them in prisons, 'as the high priest and the whole council of elders can tell about me. From then I got letters to our fellow Jews in Damascus and was going there to bind those who were there and bring

them to Jerusalem to be punished. ⁸But as I was on my way and coming near Damascus, suddenly about noon a bright light from heaven flashed around me. ⁹I fell to the ground and heard a voice asking me, 'Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting Me?'

¹⁰"I asked, 'Who are You, Lord?'

"'I am Jesus from Nazareth,' He told me, 'whom you are persecuting.' ¹¹The men who were with me saw the light but didn't understand the voice of Him who was talking to me.

¹²"Then I asked, 'What should I do, Lord?'

"The Lord told me, 'Get up, go into Damascus, and there you will be told everything you are ordered to do.'

¹³"That light was so bright I couldn't see anything. So the men who were with me took me by the hand and led me into Damascus.

¹⁴There was Ananias, a man who feared God according to the Law, and all the Jews living there spoke well of him. ¹⁵He came to me and stood by me. 'Brother Saul,' he said to me, 'see again!' Immediately I could see him.

¹⁶He said, 'The God of our fathers chose you to learn what He wants, to see the Righteous One and hear Him speak to you, ¹⁷because you must be His witness and tell everybody what you've seen and heard. ¹⁸And now, what are you waiting for? Get up, and calling on His name, have yourself baptized and your sins washed away.'

¹⁹"I came back to Jerusalem. While I was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance ²⁰and saw Him. 'Hurry,' He told me, 'and get out of Jerusalem quickly because they will

not accept the truth you tell about Me.'

²¹"'Lord,' I said, 'they know I went from synagog to synagog and put in prison and beat those who believe in You. ²²And when the blood of Your witness Stephen was being poured out, I was standing by, approving, and watching the clothes of those who were murdering him.'

²³"'Go,' He told me. 'I will send you far away to people who are not Jews.'"

²⁴They listened to him till he said that. Then they shouted, "Kill him! Rid the world of such a fellow! He's not fit to live!"

²⁵While they were yelling, tossing their clothes around, and throwing dust in the air, ²⁶the tribune ordered him taken to the barracks and told his men to get information from Paul by whipping him. He wanted to find out why the people were yelling at him like this. ²⁷But when his men had stretched him out with the straps, Paul asked the captain standing near, "Is it right for you to whip a Roman citizen who hasn't been condemned?"

²⁸When the captain heard this, he went and told the tribune about it. "What are you going to do?" he asked. "This man is a Roman citizen."

²⁹The tribune went and asked Paul, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?"

"Yes," he said.

³⁰The tribune declared, "I had to pay a lot of money to be a citizen."

"But I was born a citizen," Paul said.

³¹Immediately those who were going to examine him withdrew from him. When the tribune found out Paul was a Roman citizen, he

was frightened because he had tied him up.

Paul Before the Council

¹⁰The next day, since he wanted to find out exactly what the Jews were accusing Paul of, he untied him and ordered the high priests and the whole council to meet. Then he brought Paul down and had him stand before them.

23 Paul looked earnestly at the council and said, "Fellow Jews, I have lived before God with a very good conscience till this day."

¹¹The high priest Ananias ordered the men standing near him to strike him on the mouth. ¹²Then Paul said to him, "God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! Do you sit there to judge me according to the Law and yet break the Law by ordering them to strike me?"

¹³The men standing near him asked, "Do you insult God's high priest?"

¹⁴"Fellow Jews," Paul answered, "I didn't know he's the high priest. The Bible does say: *Don't speak evil of a ruler of your people.*"

¹⁵When Paul saw that some of them were Sadducees and others Pharisees, he called out in the council, "Fellow Jews, I'm a Pharisee and a son of Pharisees. I'm on trial for my hope that the dead will rise."

¹⁶When he said that, the Pharisees and Sadducees started to quarrel, and the men in the meeting were divided. ¹⁷The Sadducees say the dead don't rise and there is no angel or spirit, while the Pharisees believe in all these things. ¹⁸So there was some loud shouting. Some of the Bible scholars who belonged to the party of the Pharisees got up and argued vehemently: "We find nothing wrong with this man. Suppose a

spirit spoke to him, or an angel—."

¹⁹The quarrel was getting violent, and the tribune was afraid they would tear Paul to pieces. So he ordered the soldiers to go down, take him away from them by force, and bring him to the soldiers' quarters.

²⁰That night the Lord stood near him and said, "Keep up your courage! As you have told the truth about Me in Jerusalem, so you must tell it in Rome."

The Plot to Kill Paul

²¹In the morning the Jews banded together and vowed God should punish them if they ate or drank anything before they had killed Paul. ²²There were more than forty who swore to carry out this plot.

²³They went to the high priests and elders and said, "We have vowed God should punish us if we taste any food before we have killed Paul. ²⁴Now then, you and the council tell the tribune to bring him down to you as if you meant to get more exact information about him. We're ready to kill him before he gets to you."

²⁵But the son of Paul's sister heard about the ambush. He came and got into the barracks and told Paul. ²⁶Then Paul called one of the captains and told him, "Take this young man to the tribune. He has something to tell him."

²⁷He took him to the tribune and said, "The prisoner Paul called me and asked me to bring this young man to you. He has something to tell you."

²⁸The tribune took him by the arm and stepping aside to be alone with him, he asked him, "What have you got to tell me?"

²⁹"The Jews," he answered, "have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down to the council tomorrow as if they

Jerusalem, Pentecost, 56

meant to get more information about him. "Now, don't you listen to them. More than forty of them are ambushing him. They have vowed God should punish them if they eat or drink anything before they have murdered him. They're ready now, just waiting for you to promise them."

"The tribune dismissed the young man. "Don't tell anybody you reported this to me," he ordered.

"Then he called two of his captains and said, "Get two hundred soldiers to go to Caesarea, and seventy on horses, and two hundred with spears, and have them ready to start at nine tonight." "They were also to provide animals for Paul to ride on and so to take him safely to Governor Felix. "The tribune wrote a letter with this message:

"Claudius Lysias sends greetings to the excellent Governor Felix.

"The Jews had seized this man and were going to murder him, but when I found out he was a Roman citizen, I came with the soldiers and rescued him. "I wanted to know what they had against him; so I took him down to their council "and found their accusations had to do with questions about their Law, but there was none for which he deserved to die or be in chains. "Since I'm informed they're plotting against the man, I'm quickly sending him to you and also ordering his accusers to state before you what they have against him."

"So the foot soldiers, as they were ordered, took Paul and brought him to Antipatris during the night. "The next day they returned to their

barracks, letting the men on horses ride on with him. "When these came to Caesarea, they delivered the letter to the governor and handed Paul over to him.

"After he read the letter, he asked which province he was from and found out he was from Cilicia. "I will hear your case," he said, "when your accusers come." And he ordered him kept in Herod's palace.

Before Felix

24 Five days later the high priest Ananias came down with some elders and Tertullus, an attorney, and they reported to the governor what they had against Paul.

"When Paul had been called, Tertullus started to accuse him, saying, "Excellent Felix, you have brought us much peace, and your foresight has given these people reforms "in every way and in every place. We appreciate them and thank you very much. "Not to keep you too long—I ask you to listen in your kindly way to what we briefly have to say. "We have found this man a pest who starts quarrels among all the Jews in the world, and he is a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. "He even tried to pollute the temple, and so we arrested him." When you examine him yourself, you will be able to find out from him everything of which we accuse him."

"The Jews supported his attack by declaring these things were so.

"The governor nodded to Paul to speak, and he answered, "For many years you have been a judge of this

^mOur oldest manuscripts lack vv. 6b-8a: "And we wanted to try him under our Law. But Tribune Lysias came along and with much force took him out of our hands, ordering his accusers to come before you."

nation. Knowing that, I'm glad to defend myself. ¹¹Only eleven days ago, as you can find out for yourself, I went up to Jerusalem to worship. ¹²They didn't find me arguing with anyone in the temple or stirring up a crowd in the synagogues or in the city; ¹³and they can't prove to you the things they're now accusing me of. ¹⁴But I confess to you that according to the way they call a sect I worship the God of our fathers. I believe everything written in the Law and the prophets ¹⁵and trust God for the same thing they're looking for, that the dead will rise, the righteous and the wicked. ¹⁶That's why I'm doing my best always to have a clear conscience before God and men. ¹⁷After some years I came to my people to bring gifts for the poor and offerings. ¹⁸They found me busy with these and purified in the temple, but there was no crowd or noisy mob. ¹⁹There were some Jews from the province of Asia, who should be here before you to accuse me if they have anything against me. ²⁰Or these men should tell what wrong they found in me as I stood before their court, ²¹unless it's the one thing I shouted when I stood among them: 'I'm on trial before you today in regard to the resurrection of the dead.'

²²But Felix, who knew the Christian religion rather well, told them to wait for a decision. "When Tribune Lysias comes down," he said, "I will decide your case." ²³He ordered the captain to guard him but to let him have some liberty and not keep any of his friends from helping him.

²⁴Some days later Felix came again. His wife Drusilla, who was a Jew, was with him. He sent for Paul

and heard him tell about faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁵As he spoke of righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment, Felix was frightened and answered, "Go now. When I get a chance, I'll send for you." ²⁶At the same time he expected Paul to give him money. And so he used to send for him often and talk with him.

²⁷Two whole years passed. Then Porcius Festus succeeded Felix. Since Felix wanted the Jews to remember him for a kindness, he left Paul in prison.

Paul Appeals to the Emperor

25 Three days after Festus took over his duties in the province of Judea he went from Caesarea up to Jerusalem. ²The high priests and the leaders of the Jews reported to Festus what they had against Paul. They urged ³and begged him to do them a favor and have Paul brought to Jerusalem. They were laying an ambush to kill him on the way.

⁴But Festus answered that Paul would be kept in Caesarea and he himself would be going there soon. ⁵"Those of you who have the authority," he said, "come down with me, and if the man has done anything wrong, accuse him."

⁶He stayed with them no more than eight or ten days and then went down to Caesarea. The next day he sat on the judge's chair and ordered Paul brought in.

⁷When Paul came in, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem surrounded him and were accusing him of many serious wrongs that they couldn't prove. ⁸Paul defended himself: "I have in no way sinned against the Law of the Jews or the temple or the emperor."

"But Festus wanted the Jews to remember him for a kindness. So he asked Paul, "Do you want to go up to Jerusalem to be tried there before me in regard to these things?"

¹⁰"I'm standing before the emperor's judgment seat," Paul said, "and there I must be tried. I haven't done the Jews any wrong, as you too know very well. ¹¹Now if I'm guilty and have done something to deserve to die, I don't refuse to die. But if their accusations are nothing, nobody can hand me over to them. I appeal to the emperor!"

¹²Festus talked it over with his council and then answered, "You appealed to the emperor; you will go to the emperor!"

¹³Some time later King Agrippa and Bernice came down to Caesarea to welcome Festus. ¹⁴When they stayed there a number of days, Festus laid Paul's case before the king.

"There's a man here whom Felix left in prison," he said. ¹⁵"When I went up to Jerusalem, the high priests and elders of the Jews informed me about him and asked me to condemn him.

¹⁶"I answered them, 'It isn't customary for Romans to hand over a man before he has faced his accusers and had a chance to defend himself against their accusation.'

¹⁷"They came here with me, and the next day without any delay I sat down in the judge's chair and ordered the man to be brought. ¹⁸When his accusers got up, they didn't accuse him of the crimes I was suspecting. ¹⁹But they disagreed with him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus who died; Paul claimed He is

alive. ²⁰I was puzzled how I should look into this and asked if he would like to go to Jerusalem and be tried there in regard to these things. ²¹But Paul appealed. He wanted to be held and have Augustus" decide his case. So I ordered him to be kept in prison till I send him to the emperor."

²²Agrippa told Festus, "I myself would like to hear the man."

"Tomorrow," he answered, "you will hear him."

Before Agrippa

²³The next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp and went with the tribunes and leading men of the city into the hall. Then Festus gave the order, and Paul was brought in.

²⁴"King Agrippa and all you men here with us," Festus said, "you see this man about whom all the Jewish people in Jerusalem and here have appealed to me, shouting he mustn't live any longer. ²⁵I found he hasn't done anything to deserve to die, but when he appealed to Augustus, I decided to send him. ²⁶I don't have anything reliable to write our lord about him. So I have brought him before you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so we could examine him and I'll have something to write. ²⁷It makes no sense to me to send a prisoner without reporting what he's accused of."

26 Agrippa said to Paul, "You may speak for yourself."

Then Paul, stretching out his hand, began to defend himself:

²⁸"King Agrippa, I think I'm fortunate I'm going to defend myself today before you in regard to

^a Another title for Nero.

everything the Jews accuse me of, ¹⁶because you are so very familiar with all the Jewish customs and problems. So I ask you to listen to me patiently.

¹⁷"The Jews all know how I lived from my youth, from my earliest days, among my people in Jerusalem. ¹⁸They have known long ago, if they want to tell the truth, that I lived the life of a Pharisee, the strictest party of our religion.

¹⁹"And now I'm on trial here because I trust the promise God made to our fathers. ²⁰Our twelve tribes, worshiping zealously day and night, expect to see this promise come true. This is the hope; King, in regard to which some Jews accuse me. ²¹Why do you think it incredible that God raises the dead?

²²"Once I believed I had to work hard against the name of Jesus from Nazareth. ²³I did that in Jerusalem. By the power I got from the high priests I locked up many of the holy people in prison, and when they were to be killed, I voted against them. ²⁴And many a time in every synagog I would punish them to make them blaspheme, and raging furiously against them, I hunted them down even to foreign cities.

²⁵"That is how I came to be traveling to Damascus, authorized and appointed by the high priests, ²⁶when on the way, King, at noon I saw a light brighter than the sun, flashing from heaven around me and those who were going with me. ²⁷All of us fell to the ground, and I heard a voice asking me in the Jewish language, 'Saul, Saul! Why are you persecuting Me? You're only hurting yourself by kicking against the goats.'

²⁸"I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?'

²⁹"I am Jesus,' the Lord answered,

'whom you are persecuting. ³⁰But get up and *stand on your feet*. I showed Myself to you to appoint you to serve Me and tell the truth of what you have seen and what you will see whenever I appear to you. ³¹*I will rescue you from your people and from the non-jews to whom I'm sending you.* ³²*to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light and from the devil's control to God to have their sins forgiven and get a share of what the people enjoy who are made holy by believing in Me.'*

³³"And so, King Agrippa, I didn't disobey what I saw from heaven, ³⁴but first I told the people in Damascus and Jerusalem, then the whole country of the Jews, and the other nations to turn from sin to God and do the works that show they have repented. ³⁵For this the Jews grabbed me in the temple and tried to murder me.

³⁶"God has helped me to this day, and so I have been standing and telling the truth to high and low, stating only what the prophets and Moses said would happen, ³⁷that Christ had to suffer and by being the first to rise from the dead would announce light to our people and the other nations."

³⁸As he was defending himself in this way, Festus shouted, "You're insane, Paul! Your great learning is driving you out of your mind."

³⁹"I'm not insane, excellent Festus," Paul said, "but I'm telling the sober truth. ⁴⁰The king knows about these things, and I'm talking boldly to him. I'm sure he hasn't missed any of them, since this wasn't done in a corner. ⁴¹King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you believe them!"

⁴²"You're trying to persuade me."

26
16 Ef 2:1-2
17 1 Ch 16:25
Jer 1:7-8
18 Is 35:5
42:7-16

Agrippa said to Paul, "that with a little effort you've made me a Christian!"

²⁰"I wish to God," Paul said, "that with little or much effort not only you but all who hear me today would become what I am—except for these chains!"

"The king, the governor, Bernice, and those who sat with them got up ²¹and left and said to one another, "This man isn't doing anything to deserve to die or be in chains."

²²"This man could be free." Agrippa told Festus, "if he hadn't appealed to the emperor."

Paul Sails for Rome

27 When it was decided we should sail to Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were turned over to a captain by the name of Julius, of the troop of Augustus. ²We boarded a ship from Adramyttium that was going to sail to the ports on the coast of the province of Asia, and we started out. Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, went with us.

"The next day we landed at Sidon, where Julius treated Paul kindly and let him go to his friends to get any care he needed. ⁴Leaving Sidon, we sailed on the sheltered side of Cyprus because the winds were against us. ⁵We crossed the sea off Cilicia and Pamphylia and landed at Myra in Lycia. ⁶There the captain of the soldiers found a ship from Alexandria sailing to Italy and put us on it. ⁷We were sailing slowly for a number of days and had some difficulty getting near Cnidus. The wind wouldn't let us go on, and so, starting at Cape Salmone, we sailed

on the sheltered side of Crete. ⁸Hugging the coast, we struggled on to a place called Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea.

"We had lost a lot of time, even the day of fasting⁹ had already gone by, and sailing was now dangerous. ¹⁰So Paul advised them: "Men, I see that in this sailing we're going to suffer hardship and a heavy loss not only of the cargo and ship but also of our lives." ¹¹But the captain of the soldiers listened to the pilot and the captain of the ship and not to what Paul said. ¹²Since that harbor was not a good place to spend the winter, the majority decided to sail away, hoping they could somehow reach Phoenix to spend the winter there. It is a harbor of Crete facing southwest and northwest. ¹³When a gentle breeze blew from the south, they felt they could easily make it. They took up the anchor and sailed close to the shore of Crete.

¹⁴But after a little while a hurricane, called the Northeastern, dashed down from Crete. ¹⁵It caught the ship so that it couldn't face the wind, and we gave up and were swept along. ¹⁶As we ran into the shelter of a small island called Claudia, we managed with a struggle to get hold of the small boat. ¹⁷They pulled it up on deck. Then they passed ropes around the ship to reinforce it. Fearing they would run on the great sandbank near Africa, they lowered the sail and so drifted along. ¹⁸We continued to be tossed by the storm so violently that the next day the men started to throw the cargo overboard, ¹⁹and on the third with their own hands they threw the ship's equipment overboard. ²⁰For a number of days

⁹The Day of Atonement, September 15, A.D. 58.

we couldn't see any sun or stars and were in a great storm until at last we were giving up all hope of coming through alive.

²¹Since hardly anybody wanted to eat, Paul stepped before them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me and not have sailed from Crete. You would have avoided this hardship and damage. ²²But now I urge you to cheer up because you will lose no lives but only the ship. ²³I am God's own and serve Him. Last night His angel stood by me. ²⁴'Don't be afraid, Paul!' he said, 'You must stand before the emperor, and now God has given you all who are sailing with you.' ²⁵So, cheer up, men, because I trust God it will be just as He told me. ²⁶But we must run on some island."

The Shipwreck

²⁷It was the fourteenth night and we were drifting through the Adriatic Sea^P when about midnight the sailors suspected land was coming closer. ²⁸They dropped the lead and found the water 120 feet deep. A little farther they dropped it again and found it was 90 feet. ²⁹Fearing we might run on rocks, they dropped four anchors from the back of the ship and prayed for morning to come.

³⁰Then the sailors tried to escape from the ship. They let the boat down into the sea, pretending they were going to take out the anchors from the front of the ship and let them down. ³¹But Paul told the captain of the soldiers and his men, "If these don't stay on the ship, you can't be rescued." ³²Then the sol-

diers cut the ropes that held the boat and let it drift away.

³³Just before daybreak Paul was urging them all to eat something. "This is the fourteenth day you've waited and gone hungry and not eaten a thing. ³⁴So I urge you to eat something. It will help you come through this safely. None of you will lose a hair of his head." ³⁵After saying this, he took some bread, thanked God in front of everybody, broke it, and started to eat. ³⁶They were all cheered up, and they too had something to eat. ³⁷There were 276 of us in the ship. ³⁸After they had eaten all they wanted, they lightened the ship by dumping the wheat into the sea.

³⁹In the morning they couldn't tell what land it was but gradually could see a bay with a beach on which they planned if possible to run the ship ashore. ⁴⁰They cut off the anchors and left them in the sea. At the same time they untied the ropes that held up the steering oars, spread out the foresail to catch the wind, and steered the ship to the shore. ⁴¹They struck a bank in the water and ran the ship aground. The front of the ship stuck and couldn't be moved, while the back was being pounded to pieces by the sea.

⁴²To keep any of the prisoners from swimming away and escaping, the soldiers planned to kill them, ⁴³but the captain of the soldiers wanted to save Paul, so he kept them from doing this. He ordered those who could swim to jump out first and get to the shore. ⁴⁴and the rest to follow, some on planks and some on other pieces from the ship. In this

^PAt that time the "Adriatic" Sea included the present Adriatic plus a large part of the Mediterranean Sea south of it.

At Malta, October, 58

way all of them came safely to the shore.

Safe on Malta

28 Once we were safe on the shore, we recognized the island: it was called Malta. ²The natives were unusually kind to us. It had started to rain and was cold, and so they made a fire and welcomed all of us around it.

³Paul gathered an armful of dry branches and put them on the fire. The heat made a viper come out, and it bit his hand. ⁴When the natives saw the snake hanging from his hand, they said to one another, "This man certainly is a murderer! He did escape from the sea, but Justice didn't let him live."

⁵So he shook the snake into the fire and suffered no harm. ⁶They were waiting for him to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But they waited long and saw nothing unusual happen to him. Then they changed their minds and said he was a god.

⁷The governor of the island, whose name was Publius, had land around that place. He welcomed us and treated us kindly while we were his guests for three days. ⁸The father of Publius happened to be sick in bed with fever and dysentery. Paul went to him, prayed, and laid his hands on him, and made him well.

⁹After that had happened, the other sick people on the island also came to him and were made well. ¹⁰They honored us in many ways, and when we were going to sail, they put on board whatever we needed.

From Malta to Rome

¹¹After three months we sailed on a ship from Alexandria that had stopped at the island for the winter. It had in front a figure of the Twin Sons of Zeus.⁹ ¹²We stopped at Syracuse and stayed there three days. ¹³From there we sailed around and came to Rhegium. After a day a south wind started blowing, and on the second day we came to Puteoli. ¹⁴There we found fellow Christians who urged us to stay seven days with them.

And so we came to Rome. ¹⁵The fellow Christians in Rome, who had heard about us, came as far as the Market Town of Appius and the Three Shops to meet us. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and felt encouraged.

In Rome

¹⁶When we came into Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself with the soldier guarding him. ¹⁷After three days he called the leaders of the Jews together. When they came, he said to them, "Fellow Jews, although I haven't done anything against our people or the customs of our fathers, I'm a prisoner from Jerusalem who was handed over to the Romans. ¹⁸They examined me and wanted to let me go because I had done no wrong to deserve to die. ¹⁹But the Jews objected and forced me to appeal to the emperor—not that I'm accusing my people of anything. ²⁰That's why I asked to see you and talk to you, since it is for the hope of Israel I wear this chain."

²¹"We have had no letters from Judea about you," they told him, "and no Jew coming here has

⁹*Castor and Pollux, the guardian gods of sailors.*

reported or said anything bad about you. ²²We would like to hear from you what you think, because we know that everywhere people are talking against this sect."

²³They set a day to meet with him, and more of them came to him where he was staying. From morning till evening he explained the matter to them, earnestly telling the truth about God's kingdom and trying to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and the prophets. ²⁴Some of them were convinced by what he said, but others wouldn't believe.

²⁵They disagreed with one another as they were leaving, and Paul added a statement: "The Holy Spirit spoke the truth to your fathers through the prophet Isaiah ²⁶when he said: *Go to these people and say:*

*You will hear and never understand,
look and never see,
²⁷because these people have become dull at heart
and hard of hearing
and have shut their eyes,
so that their eyes don't see,
their ears don't hear,
their minds don't understand,
and they don't turn to Me and let
Me heal them.*

²⁸
^{26 27 Is 6}
⁹⁻¹⁰
^{28 Ps 67 2}
^{98 2-3}

²⁸"You should know that *God's salvation has been sent to the non-Jews, and they will listen.*"^r

²⁹For two whole years he lived in his own rented place and welcomed all who came to him. ³⁰He preached God's kingdom and very boldly taught the truth about the Lord Jesus Christ, and nobody stopped him.

^r*Our oldest manuscripts lack v. 29: "And after he said this, the Jews left, arguing vigorously among themselves."*

PAUL
WRITES TO THE
ROMANS

1 PAUL, SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST, called to be an apostle and appointed to tell God's good news—
He promised it long ago through His prophets in the Holy Bible. It is about His Son, who was born a descendant of David, in terms of human descent; but according to His spirit of holiness, He was declared to be the mighty Son of God by His resurrection. And He is our Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us and made us apostles so that people will believe and obey and so glorify Him among all nations. This includes you who have been called to belong to Jesus Christ—

to all in Rome whom God loves and has called to be His holy people: May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ continue to show you grace and give you peace!

I Want to See You

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you because the news of your faith is spreading all over the world. God, whom I serve in my spirit by telling the good news of His Son, knows how I never fail to mention you whenever I pray and to ask that somehow by God's will I will now at last succeed in coming to you. I long to see you, to share a spiritual gift with you to strengthen you. I mean when I'm with you I'll be encouraged by your faith and you by mine. I want you to know, fellow Christians, so far I have been kept from coming to you, but I often planned to come in order to enjoy some results of

working among you as I do among the other non-Jewish people. I must help Greeks and non-Greeks, the wise and the foolish. So I'm eager to bring the good news also to you in Rome.

I am not ashamed of the Gospel. It is God's power to save everyone who believes it, the Jew first and also the Greek. It reveals God's righteousness as being by faith and for faith, as the Bible says: *The righteous will live by faith.*

God Is Angry

God in heaven shows He is angry at all the ungodliness and wickedness of people who by their wickedness hold back the truth. What can be known about God is clear to them because God has made it clear to them. Ever since He made the world, they have seen the unseen things of God—from the things He made they can tell He has everlasting power and is God. Then they have no excuse. They knew God and didn't honor Him as God or thank Him, but their thoughts turned to worthless things, and their ignorant hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they showed how foolish they are when for the glory of God, who cannot die, they substituted images of man, who dies, and of birds, four-footed animals, and reptiles. And so God, letting them follow the lusts of their hearts, gave them up to live immorally and dishonor their bodies because they traded the

¹⁷ *Mat 24*
²¹ *Psa 106:20*

true God for a lie, worshiped and served what was created instead of the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen! ²⁶That is why God gave them up to shameful lusts. Women have changed their natural way to an unnatural one. ²⁷And men likewise have given up the natural relation with a woman and burned with lust for one another, men doing the shameful act with men and for their error getting punished in themselves as they must. ²⁸As they refused to know God any longer, God gave them up so that their minds were degraded and they lived immorally. ²⁹Their lives are full of all kinds of wrongdoing, wickedness, greed, malice. They are full of envy, murder, quarreling, treachery, viciousness. They gossip and slander. ³⁰They hate God. They are insulting, proud, boasting. They invent new sins. They disobey parents. ³¹They are foolish. They break their promises. They have no love or mercy. ³²Knowing God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve to die, they not only do them but approve when others do them.

God Will Judge the Jews

2 So, whoever you are, if you condemn anyone, you have no excuse. What you condemn in anyone else you condemn in yourself, since you, the judge, are doing the same things. ²We know God is right when He condemns people for doing such things. ³When you condemn people for doing such things but do them yourself, do you think you will escape being condemned by God? ⁴Or do you think lightly of God, who is very kind to you, patiently puts up with you, and

waits so long before He punishes you? Can't you see God is kind to you to move you to repent of your sins?

⁵But you stubbornly refuse to turn from sin, and so you make God more and more angry with you till the day of His anger, when God will show how righteous He is in judging you. ⁶*He will give everyone according to what he has done:* ⁷everlasting life to those who by patiently doing good look for glory, honor, and immortality. ⁸but anger and fury to those who, because they are selfish and refuse to listen to the truth, follow wickedness. ⁹There will be sorrow and anguish for every human being doing wrong, for the Jew first and also the Greek; ¹⁰but glory, honor, and peace for everyone doing good, for the Jew first and also the Greek. ¹¹God doesn't prefer one to another.

¹²All who sin without having the Law will perish without the Law. And all who sin having the Law will be judged by the Law. ¹³We aren't righteous before God if we only hear the Law, but if we do what the Law says, we'll be righteous. ¹⁴When people who are not Jews and don't have the Law do by nature what the Law says, they who don't have the Law are a law to themselves. ¹⁵They show that what the law wants them to do is written in their hearts. Their conscience tells the same truth, and their thoughts between themselves accuse them or defend them, ¹⁶as we'll see on the day when God through Christ Jesus judges the secrets of people according to the good news I tell.

Who Is a Jew?

¹Suppose you call yourself a Jew, rest comfortably in your Law, feel

proud of your God, ¹⁸know what He wants, and approve of the better things, being instructed in the Law. ¹⁹and feel sure you're a guide to the blind and a light to those in the dark. ²⁰that you can train the foolish and teach children because you have in the Law the body of knowledge and truth. ²¹You teach someone else—won't you teach yourself? You preach, "Don't steal"—are you stealing? ²²You say, "Don't commit adultery"—are you doing it yourself? You are disgusted with idols—are you robbing their temples? ²³You feel proud of the Law—are you breaking the Law and so dishonoring God? *"You make the non-jews slander God's name, as the Bible says.*

²⁴Circumcision helps you only if you do what the Law says. If you are breaking the Law, you have lost your circumcision. ²⁵If an uncircumcised man does what the Law demands, will he not be considered circumcised? ²⁶If a man who has never been circumcised really does what the Law says, he will condemn you with your written Law and circumcision for breaking the Law. ²⁷He is no Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is that circumcision which is only outward and physical. ²⁸But he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and a man is circumcised in his heart by the Spirit, not just by doing what the words say. Such a person will not be praised by men but by God.

3 What is the advantage then of being a Jew? Or what good is there in being circumcised? ²Much in every way! The most important advantage is that God entrusted His Word to the Jews.

God Is Faithful

¹What if some were unfaithful? Will their unfaithfulness make God unfaithful? ²Never! God must be true and *any man a liar*, as the Bible says:

*That You may be right when You speak
and prove You are superior when You judge.*

³But if our wrong shows how right God is, what'll we say? Is God wrong (I'm talking like a man) when He's angry and He punishes? ⁴Never! Otherwise how could God judge the world? ⁵But if my lie honors God by showing how much truth there's in Him, why am I still condemned as a sinner? ⁶And "shouldn't we do evil that good may come of it?" Some slander us and claim we say that. They are condemned as they deserve.

All Are Sinners

¹What then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all. We have already accused everybody, Jews and Greeks, that they are under sin, ²as the Bible says: *No one is righteous, no, not one.* ³*No one understands. No one is searching for God.* ⁴*All have turned away and have one and all become worthless. No one is doing anything good, not a single one.* ⁵*Their throats are an open grave. They have spoken to deceive. Their lips hide the poison of snakes.* ⁶*Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.* ⁷*Their feet run fast to pour out blood.* ⁸*Wherever they go, there is destruction and misery.* ⁹*They have not learned the way of peace.* ¹⁰*God does not terrify them.*

¹¹We know that everything the Law says it says to those who are

24 Is 52:5
J
4 Ps 116:11
Ps 51:4
10 12 Ps
14 1-3
53 1-3
Ecc 7:20
13 Ps 5:9
Ps 140:3
14 Ps 10:7
15 17 Is
59:7,8
18 Ps 38:1

under the Law so that nobody can say anything and the whole world must let God judge it. ²⁰What *anyone* does to keep the Law will *not make him righteous^a before God*, because the Law shows us our sins.

God Makes Us Righteous

²¹But now God has shown us His righteousness; the Law and the prophets tell about it, but it is without the Law. ²²God's righteousness comes to all who believe, just by their believing in Jesus Christ.

There is no difference. ²³All have sinned and are without God's glory. ²⁴They are justified freely by grace, through the ransom Christ Jesus paid to free them. ²⁵God publicly set Him up to be the Atonement Cover through faith by His blood, to show His righteousness even though He had patiently passed by the sins done in the past. ²⁶Now He wanted to show His righteousness, to be righteous Himself and make righteous anyone who believes in Jesus.

²⁷What then becomes of our pride? It is excluded. How? By the way of works? No, by the way of faith. ²⁸We are convinced that anyone is justified by faith without the works of the Law.

²⁹Or is God only the God of the Jews? Isn't He also the God of the non-Jews? Certainly also of the non-Jews. ³⁰There is only one God, and He will make the circumcised man righteous on the basis of faith and the uncircumcised by the same faith.

³¹Do we then by faith cancel the Law? Never! We uphold the Law.

If We Believe, We're Righteous

4 What should we say Abraham our natural ancestor, found? ¹He got to be righteous by what he did, he had something to be proud of. But he couldn't feel proud before God. ²What does the Bible say *Abraham believed God and so he was counted righteous*.

³If you work, your pay isn't considered a gift but a debt. ⁴But instead of working you believe in Him who makes the ungodly righteous, your faith is counted a righteousness. ⁵So David calls the man blessed whom God counts righteous apart from what he does ⁶*Blessed are you if your wrongs are forgiven and your sins are covered* ⁷*Blessed are you if the Lord doesn't count sins against you*.

⁸Can only a circumcised person be blessed in this way or also an uncircumcised person? We say *Abraham's faith was counted as his righteousness*. ⁹How was it counted? Was he circumcised then, or not? He wasn't circumcised but uncircumcised. ¹⁰And he received *circumcision as a mark* to confirm the righteousness he got by believing *before he was circumcised*. He was to be the father of all who without being circumcised believe *and so are counted righteous* ¹¹as well as the father of the Jews who are not only circumcised but also walk in the footsteps of our father Abraham by believing as he did before he was circumcised.

¹²It wasn't by the Law that Abraham or his descendants got the

²⁰ Ps 143:2

²⁵ Lv 16:2

⁴

³ Gn 15:6

⁷⁻⁸ Ps 32:1-2

⁹ Gn 15:6

¹¹ Gn 17:11

¹¹ Gn 15:6

^a"Righteous" ["Justify"] is a court term. God, who gives us the righteousness of Christ (3:23-24; 28; 4:5; Phil. 3:9), as a judge declares us righteous and by His verdict makes us righteous in His sight.

promise that the world should be theirs but by the righteousness of faith. ¹¹If the Law is the way to get it, then faith can't get anything and the promise can't give anything. ¹²No, the Law brings God's anger on us, and only where there is no Law there is no breaking of the Law. ¹³God promises to those who believe, in order to bring them a gift of His love. And the promise should hold for all descendants, not only those who cling to the Law but also those who only believe as Abraham did. He is the father of all of us. ¹⁴as it is written: *I have made you a father of many nations.* Standing before God, Abraham believed God makes the dead live and calls into being that which doesn't exist. ¹⁵Hoping contrary to what he could expect, he had the faith to become *a father of many nations*, as he had been told: *So many descendants you will have.* ¹⁶He didn't get weak in faith, although he realized that, being about a hundred years old, he couldn't have children any more, and Sarah couldn't have any either. ¹⁷There was no unbelief to make him doubt what God promised, but by faith he got strong and gave glory to God. ¹⁸He was fully convinced God could do what He promised. ¹⁹That is why *he was counted righteous.* ²⁰But the words *he was counted righteous* were written not only for him ²¹but also for us. He had in mind already then to count us righteous on the basis of our believing in Him who raised our Lord Jesus from the dead. ²²It was He who was handed over to death for our transgressions and then was raised for our justification.

Our Hope

5 Now that we are justified by faith, we have peace with

God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²who gave us the way to come to God's love in which we stand. And we feel proud as we hope for God's glory.

³More than that, we also feel proud of our sufferings. We know suffering stirs up the power to endure, ⁴and if we endure, we prove our strength, and if we prove our strength, we have hope. ⁵In this *hope we're not disappointed*, because the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us, poured God's love into our hearts.

⁶At the right time, while we were still helpless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷A man will hardly die for a righteous person; oh, for a kind person somebody may dare to die. ⁸But God shows how He loves us by this, that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.

⁹Now that His blood has made us righteous, we are all the more certain He will save us from God's anger. ¹⁰If while we were His enemies we were made God's friends by the death of His Son, now that we are His friends we are all the more certain He will save us by His life. ¹¹More than that, we rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has now given us this friendship.

Adam and Christ

¹²One man brought sin into the world, and his sin brought death. And so because all have sinned, death spread to all people. ¹³There was sin in the world before the Law was given, but where there is no Law, sin isn't counted. ¹⁴Still death ruled from Adam to Moses even over those who when they sinned didn't break a law as Adam did.

He was a picture of Him who was to come. ¹⁵But the gift is more than

¹⁷ Gn 17:5
¹⁸ Gn 17:5
¹⁹ Gn 15:5
²²⁻²⁴ Gn 15:6
²⁵ Is 53:12
⁵ Ps 22:5
^{25, 3, 20}

the sin. If one man's sin brought death to all people, we are all the more certain God's love and the free gift of His love in one Man, Jesus Christ, have been richly poured out on all people. ¹⁶The gift also does more than that one man's sin. The sentence, due to one man, condemns us, but the gift, following many sins, makes us righteous. ¹⁷If one man by his sin made death a king, we, on whom God has poured His love and His gift of righteousness, are all the more certain the one Jesus Christ makes us live and be kings.

¹⁸Now then, as by one sin all people were condemned, so by one righteous work all people were judged to be righteous and alive. ¹⁹When one man disobeyed, the many were made sinners. So when One obeyed, the many will be made righteous. ²⁰The Law came to multiply sin, but where there was much sin, God's gift of love was so much greater ²¹that, as sin ruled in its deadly way, so His grace is to rule, giving a righteousness by which we live forever through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Live for God

6 What does it mean? Should we go on sinning so that God may love us all the more? ²Certainly not! We died to sin. How can we live in it any longer?

³Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus by our baptism share in His death? ⁴Sharing in His death by our baptism, we were buried with Him so that as the Father's glory raised Christ from the dead we too will live a new life. ⁵If we were united with Him to die as He did, then we'll also rise as He did. ⁶We know our old self was nailed with

Him to the cross to stop our sinful body and keep us from serving sin any longer. ⁷When we're dead, we're free from sin. ⁸But if we died with Christ, we believe we'll also live with Him ⁹because we know that Christ, risen from the dead, will not die again. Death has no hold on Him any more. ¹⁰When He died, He died to sin once, never to die again, and the life He lives He lives for God. ¹¹So you too, because you are in Christ Jesus, think of yourselves as dead to sin and living for God.

¹²Then sin should no longer rule in your dying bodies and make you do what they wish. ¹³Don't let sin keep on using your organs as tools for doing wrong. But as people who have come back from the dead and live, give yourselves to God, and let God use your organs as tools for doing what is right. ¹⁴Sin will never rule over you, because you are not under the Law but under God's undeserved love.

¹⁵What then? Are we going to sin because we are not under the Law but under God's love? Certainly not! ¹⁶Don't you know if you give yourselves to anyone to obey him as slaves, you are his slaves? Either you are the slaves of sin and will die, or you obey God and become righteous. ¹⁷But thank God! Although you once were the slaves of sin, you have heartily obeyed the pattern of teaching to which you were entrusted. ¹⁸Freed from sin, you were made the servants of righteousness. ¹⁹I talk in a human way because you are naturally weak. But just as you once let uncleanness and wickedness use your organs as slaves to do wrong, so now let righteousness use your organs as slaves in order to live holy. ²⁰When you were slaves of sin, you weren't

free to serve righteousness as your master. ²¹What was your advantage then in doing the things that make you blush now? Why, they end in death. ²²But now that you've been made free from sin and servants of God, your advantage is that you live holy and finally have everlasting life. ²³Sin pays off with death, but God gives everlasting life in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

7 Or don't you know, my fellow Christians—I'm speaking to people who know the Law—that you have to obey the Law only as long as you live? ²The Law, for example, binds a married woman to her husband while he is living, but if her husband dies, the Law doesn't bind her to her husband any more. ³So, while her husband is living, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man. But if her husband dies, she is free and no longer bound by the Law, and so she's no adulteress if she marries another man.

⁴So you too, my fellow Christians, have through Christ's body died to the Law to marry Another—Him who rose from the dead so that we will produce good things for God. ⁵While we were living in the flesh, the Law stirred the sinful lusts in our organs into action to produce fruit for Death. ⁶But now that we have died to the Law which bound us, we are freed from it, not to serve in the old way under the Law but in the new way of the Spirit.

The Law Shows What Sin Is

⁷What does it mean? Is the Law sin? Certainly not! But only by the Law did I learn what sin is. For example, only when the Law said: *Don't lust*, did I know how wrong it is to lust. ⁸Taking the command-

ment as a challenge, sin worked in me every kind of wrong desire. Without the Law sin is dead. ⁹Once I was alive without the Law, but when the commandment came, sin became alive, and I died. ¹⁰And the commandment which is to bring life actually brought me death. ¹¹Taking the commandment as a challenge, sin seduced me and with the commandment killed me.

¹²So the Law itself is holy, and the commandment is holy, right, and good. ¹³Now, did this good thing kill me? Certainly not! But sin, to be sin, clearly used this good thing to kill me so that sin would by the commandment become extremely sinful.

Struggling with Sin

¹⁴We know the Law is spiritual, but I am flesh, sold to be a slave of sin. ¹⁵I am doing something strange, because I don't do what I like but what I hate. ¹⁶But if I do what I don't like, I agree that the Law is right. ¹⁷It is really no longer I doing it, but sin living in me. ¹⁸I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my flesh. I'm willing, but I'm not doing what is right. ¹⁹I don't do the good things I like, but I do the evil I don't like. ²⁰Now if I do what I don't like, it is no longer I doing it but sin living in me.

²¹So I find it a rule: When I want to do what is right, evil is there with me. ²²In my inner being I delight in God's Law, ²³but all through my body I see another law fighting against the Law in my mind and making me a prisoner to the sin ruling my body. ²⁴What a miserable man I am! Who will rescue me from the body that brings me to this death? ²⁵Thank God—He does it through our Lord Jesus Christ! So I

⁷
Ex 20:17
Dt 5:21

serve the Law of God with my mind but with my flesh the law of sin.

The Spirit Gives Life

8 Now those who are in Christ Jesus cannot be condemned. ²The rule of the Spirit, who gives life, has in Christ Jesus freed you from the rule of sin that kills. ³What the Law, weakened by the flesh, could not do God has done by sending His Son to be like sinful flesh and to be a sacrifice for sin. He condemned sin in the flesh ⁴so that we who don't follow the flesh but the spirit will be as righteous as the Law demands. ⁵Those who follow the flesh have their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who follow the spirit have their minds on the things of the spirit. ⁶What the flesh thinks kills; what the spirit thinks gives life and peace. ⁷This is so because the fleshly mind hates God. It refuses to obey God's Law because it can't obey it. ⁸Those who are in the flesh can't please God. ⁹You are not in the flesh but in the spirit if God's Spirit lives in you. But anyone who doesn't have the Spirit of Christ doesn't belong to Him. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, even though your bodies are dead because you were sinful, your spirits are alive because you are righteous. ¹¹And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also make your dying bodies alive by His Spirit living in you.

¹²And so, fellow Christians, we don't owe it to the flesh to live according to the flesh. ¹³If you live according to the flesh, you will die. But if by the spirit you kill the activities of the body, you will live. ¹⁴All who are moved by God's

Spirit are God's children. ¹⁵You didn't receive the spirit of slaves to make you feel afraid again, but you received the Spirit who makes us God's children and moves us to call "Abba, Father!" ¹⁶This Spirit assures our spirit we are God's children, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs God's heirs, who share Christ's inheritance with Him—if we really suffer with Him in order to be glorified with Him.

We Want to Be Free

¹⁸I think what we suffer now isn't important when I compare it with the glory to be revealed to us. ¹⁹Nature is waiting on tiptoe to see the unveiling of God's family. ²⁰Nature must waste away, not because it wants to but because its Master would have it so, but nature hopes. ²¹It too will be freed from the slavery that destroys it, to share the freedom of God's family in glory. ²²We know that all nature has been groaning with the pains of childbirth until now.

²³More than that. Since the Spirit whom we have is our first taste of heaven, we, too, groan inwardly as we look ahead to have our bodies freed and so to be His family. ²⁴We are saved, hoping for this. But if we hope for something we see, we really don't hope. Why should we hope for what we can see? ²⁵But if we hope for what we can't see, we wait for it patiently.

²⁶In the same way the Spirit helps us in our weakness, because we don't know how we should pray, but the Spirit Himself pleads for us with yearnings that can't find any words. ²⁷He who searches our hearts knows what the Spirit means to do, that in God's own way He's pleading for the holy people.

God Gives Us Glory

"We know that God works all things out for good for those who love God, who are called according to His plan. "Those whom He chose from the first He also appointed long ago to be thoroughly like His Son so He would be the first-born among many brothers. "Those whom He appointed long ago He called. Those whom He called He made righteous. And those whom He made righteous He glorified.

"What does this mean? If God is for us, who can be against us? "He didn't spare His own Son but gave Him up for all of us—He will certainly with Him give us everything. "Who will accuse those whom God has chosen? It is God who makes us righteous. "Who will condemn? Christ died, more than that, He rose, He is at the right of God, and He prays for us. "Who will separate us from God's love? Will sorrow, hardship or persecution, hunger or nakedness, danger or a sword? "So it is written: *For you we are being killed all day long. We are considered sheep to be slaughtered.* "But in all this He who loved us helps us win an overwhelming victory. "I'm convinced that no death or life, no angels or their rulers, nothing now or in the future, no powers, "nothing above or below, or any other creature can ever separate us from God, who loves us in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

God's People

9 I'm telling the truth in Christ, I'm not lying, as my conscience by the Holy Spirit assures me, "when I say I have a great sorrow and

in my heart a pain that never leaves me. "I could wish myself cut off from Christ and damned for my fellow Jews, my own flesh and blood. "They are the people of Israel. They were made God's family. They have the glory, the covenant, the Law, the worship, and the promises. "They have the ancestors, and from them according to His body came Christ, who is God over everything, blessed forever. Amen.

"It doesn't mean God failed to do what He said. Not all who are descended from Israel are the real Israel, "and not all who are descended from Abraham are for that reason his real children. No, *Isaac's children will be called your descendants.* "This means children born in a natural way are not God's children. Only the children he had because God promised them are counted his descendants.

God's Right to Choose

"God promised: *I will come back at the right time, and Sarah will have a son.* "The same thing happened to Rebekah. She was going to bear children for our ancestor Isaac. "They had not been born yet or done anything good or bad. Even then—in order that God may carry out His purpose according to His choice, which doesn't depend on anything we do but on Him who calls us— "she was told: *The older will serve the younger.* "And so the Bible says: *I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau.*

"Does this mean God is unjust? Never! "He says to Moses: *I will be merciful to whom I want to be merciful; I will pity whom I want to pity.* "Then it doesn't depend on anyone wanting it or running hard

6
33-34 15:50-8
36 Ps 44:22
9
7 Gn 21:12
9 Gn 18
10 14
12 Gn 25:23
13 Mt 1:2-3
15 Et 33:19

after it but on God being merciful. ¹⁷The Bible says to Pharaoh: *I raised you to the throne to demonstrate My power on you and to spread the news of Me all over the earth.* ¹⁸So He pities whom He wants to pity and makes stubborn whom He wants to make stubborn.

¹⁹You will ask me, "Why does He still find fault with anyone? Who can resist His will?" ²⁰But now, who are you, man, to talk back to God? *Will anything shaped by a man say to him, "Why did you make me like this?"* ²¹Doesn't a potter have the right over *his clay* to make out of the same mud one thing for a noble purpose and another for a lowly purpose?

²²God wanted to show people His anger and let them know His power, but He waited very patiently before He would *punish those who deserved it* and had prepared themselves *for destruction*, ²³so as to show the riches of glory He has in store for those He's merciful to and long ago prepared for glory— ²⁴I mean us whom He called not only from the Jews but also from the non-Jews.

God Chooses Non-Jews

²⁵So He says in Hosea: *Those who are not My people I will call My people, and those who are not loved I will call My loved ones,* ²⁶and where they were told, "You are not My people," they will be called sons of the living God. ²⁷Isaiah exclaims in regard to Israel: *Though the people of Israel are as many as the sand by the sea, only a remnant will be saved.* ²⁸The Lord will completely and decisively execute His sentence on the country. ²⁹So Isaiah said long ago: *If the Lord of armies hadn't left us some survi-*

vors, we would have become like Sodom and ended like Gomorrah.

³⁰What does it mean? Non-Jewish people who didn't search for righteousness found a righteousness we get by believing, ³¹while Israel, pursuing a Law with its righteousness, didn't find it. ³²Why? They didn't try to get it by faith but thought they could get it by works. They stumbled over *the stumbling block*, ³³as the Bible says: *I'm putting in Zion a Stone they will stumble over and a Rock they will fall over. But if you believe in Him, you will not be disappointed.*

Jews Should Believe

10 Fellow Christians, my heart's desire and my prayer to God is to save the Israelites. ²I cannot testify they are zealous for God but I don't understand. ³Not knowing the righteousness God gives, and trying to set up their own, they haven't submitted to God's righteousness. ⁴You see, Christ is the end of the Law to give righteousness to everyone who believes.

⁵Moses writes: *If you have done the righteous things demanded by the Law, you will find life in them.* ⁶But the righteousness you get by faith says this: *Don't ask yourself, Who will go up to heaven? which means, bring Christ down? or, Who will go down into the depths? which means, bring Christ up from the dead.* ⁷But what does it say? *The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart.* This is the word of faith that we preach. ⁸If with your mouth you confess, "Jesus is the Lord," and in your heart you believe "God raised Him from the dead," you will be saved. ⁹With your heart you believe and become

¹⁷ E 4 9 16
¹⁸ E 4 4 21
 7 3 9 12
 14 4 17
²⁰ 15 29 16
 45 9
²¹ Jer 18 6
²² 15 13 5
 Jer 50 25
²⁵ 26 Hos 2 1
 23 1 10
²⁷ 28 15 10
 22 23
²⁹ 16 1 9
³² 33 15 8 14
 28 16
 10
⁵ L 4 19 5
 6 D 1 8 4
⁶ 8 D 1 30
¹² 14
 P 1 107 26

righteous; with your mouth you confess and are saved. "Anyone who believes in Him, the Bible says, will not be disappointed." There is no difference between Jew and Greek, because they all have the same Lord, who gives His riches to all who call on Him. "Everyone who calls on the Lord's name will be saved."

"But how can they call on Him if they haven't believed in Him? How can they believe in Him if they haven't heard of Him? How can they hear if nobody preaches? How can men preach if they're not sent? Just as the Bible says: *How beautiful is the coming of those who bring good news!*

"But not all have obeyed the good news. Isaiah asks: *Lord, who has believed what we told them?*

"So then saving faith comes through effective hearing, and effective hearing through the message about Christ.

"But I ask, didn't they hear it? Of course they did.

*Their voices have gone all over the earth
and their words to the farthest parts of the world.*

"Again I ask, didn't Israel know? Moses was the first to say:

*I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation,
I will make you angry with a people who don't understand.*

"Then Isaiah boldly says:
I will let those who don't look for Me find Me.

I will let those who don't ask for Me know Me.

"And He says about Israel: *All day long I have stretched out My hands to a people who disobey Me and oppose Me.*

The Remnant.

11 So I ask, "Has God rejected His people?" Certainly not—I'm an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham and of the tribe of Benjamin. "God has not rejected His people whom He chose long ago. Or don't you know what the Bible says in the story of Elijah when he pleads with God against Israel: *'Lord, they have killed Your prophets, they have torn down Your altars, I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me? 'But what did God answer him? I have kept for Myself seven thousand men who have not knelt to Baal.* "So there is right now, too, a remnant God has chosen by His grace. "But if He was moved only by His grace, it couldn't have been due to what they have done; otherwise it wouldn't be His unearned love anymore.

"What does it mean? Israel didn't get what it wanted, but those whom God chose did get it.

God's Way of Winning Jews

"And the minds of the others were dulled, as the Bible says:

*God has given them a spirit of deep sleep,
eyes that should not see,
and ears that should not hear,
and so it has been until this day.*

"And David says:

*Let their table be a snare and a trap,
to make them fall and get what they deserve.*

"Let their eyes turn dark so they cannot see,
and bend their backs forever.

"Did they stumble, I ask, to be lost altogether? Certainly not! By their error salvation has come to the non-Jews to make the Jews jealous.

11 16 28 16
13 Jom 2 32
15 15 52 7
16 15 53 1
18 Ps 19 4
19 Dt 32 21
20 21 15
65 1 2
11
1-2 1 Sm
12 22
Ps 94 14
3-4 1 K 19
10 14
15 18
8 Dt 28 4
15 29 10
9 10 Ps 69
22 23
11 Dt 32 21

¹²And if their error made the world rich and their loss made the non-Jews rich, how much more certainly will that happen when their full number comes in! ¹³Now, I am speaking to you non-Jews. As I am sent to the non-Jews, I glorify my work. ¹⁴Perhaps I can *make* my fellow Jews *jealous* and save some of them. ¹⁵When God rejects them, the world is reconciled to God; when God accepts them, what can it mean but that the dead will live?

¹⁶If the first handful of dough is holy, so is the whole dough. If the root is holy, so are the branches. ¹⁷But if some of the branches have been broken off, and you, a wild olive, have been grafted in among them, and the rich sap from the root of the olive tree nourishes you too, ¹⁸don't brag of being more than the other branches. If you brag, remember you don't support the root, but the root supports you. ¹⁹"Branches were cut off," you will say, "to graft me in." ²⁰Right! They were broken off because they didn't believe, but you stand by believing. Don't feel proud but be afraid. ²¹If God didn't spare the natural branches, He will not spare you. ²²Now see how kind and how severe God can be—severe to those who fell but kind to you if you cling to His kindness; otherwise you too will be cut off.

²³And if the others will no more refuse to believe, they will be grafted in, because God can graft them in again. ²⁴You have been cut from an olive tree that grows wild and have been unnaturally grafted into a cultivated olive; how much more likely it is that these natural branches will be grafted back into their own olive tree!

²⁵To keep you from thinking too

well of yourselves, my fellow Christians, I want you to know this secret truth: The minds of a part of the Jews were dulled until the full number of the non-Jews comes in. ²⁶And in this way all Israel will be saved, as the Bible says: *The Savior will come from Zion. He will get rid of ungodliness in Jacob.* ²⁷*And this will be My covenant with them when I take away their sins.*

²⁸God's rule in telling the good news is to treat them as His enemies to help you. But He chose them, and so He loves them on account of their fathers. ²⁹God never changes His mind when He gives anything or calls anyone. ³⁰Once you disobeyed God, but now that the Jews have disobeyed, He has been merciful to you. ³¹So they also have disobeyed now that when you enjoy His mercy, they may have it too. ³²You see, God has put all people in a prison of disobedience in order to be merciful to all.

³³How deep are God's riches, wisdom, and knowledge, how impossible it is to find out His decisions and trace His ways! ³⁴*Who has found out how the Lord thinks? Or who has become His adviser? ³⁵Or who has first given Him something for which he must be paid back?* ³⁶Everything is from Him, by Him, and for Him. To Him be glory forever. Amen.

Live for God

12 I appeal to you, fellow Christians, by the mercies of God, to give your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, and so worship Him as thinking beings. ²Don't live like this world, but let yourselves be transformed by a renewing of your minds so you can test and be sure what God wants,

14 D1 32 21
26-27 15 58
20-21,
27 9
34 15 40 13
35 Job 35 7
41 11

what is good and pleasing and perfect.

¹As God gave me His gift of love for every one of you, I tell you, don't think too highly of yourselves, but take a sane view of yourselves, everyone according to the amount of faith God gave you. ²We have many parts in one body, and these parts don't all do the same thing. ³In the same way, many as we are, we are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another. ⁴We have gifts that are different according to what His love gave us. If you can speak God's Word, do it according to the faith you have. ⁵If you can serve, then serve. If you can teach, teach. ⁶If you can encourage, encourage. If you share, be generous. If you manage anything, do it eagerly. If you help people in need, do it cheerfully.

Love

⁷Love sincerely. Hate evil; cling to what is good. ⁸Love one another tenderly as fellow Christians. Outdo one another in showing respect. ⁹Don't be backward in zeal. Glow with the Spirit. Serve the Lord. ¹⁰Be happy in your hope, patient in trouble, and keep busy praying. ¹¹Share what you have with the holy people who need it. Eagerly welcome strangers as guests.

¹²Bless those who persecute you, bless, and don't curse them. ¹³Be happy with those who are happy, weep with those who weep. ¹⁴Live in harmony with one another. Don't be too ambitious, but go along with the humble ways of others. *Don't think you are wise.*

¹⁵Don't pay back evil for evil. *Be concerned with things that everybody considers noble.* ¹⁶As much as you can, live in peace with

everybody. ¹⁷Don't take revenge, dear friends, but let God punish, because the Bible says: *I alone have the right to avenge. I will pay back, says the Lord.* ¹⁸No, *if your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him a drink. If you do this, you'll heap burning coals on his head.* ¹⁹Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil with good.

Obey Your Government

13 Everyone should obey the government that is over him, because there is no government except that which is put there by God. God has ordered our government to be over us. ²Then anyone who is against the government opposes what God has ordered, and those who oppose will be condemned.

³If you do right, you don't have to be afraid of those who rule, but only if you do wrong. Would you like to live without being afraid of your government? Do what is right, and it will praise you. ⁴It is God's servant to help you. If you do wrong, you should be afraid, because the government doesn't carry a sword without a purpose. It is God's servant, an avenger, who must punish anyone doing wrong. ⁵You must obey, then, not only because God punishes wrong but also because your conscience tells you to obey.

⁶That is why you also pay taxes. Men in the government serve God and are busy doing their work. ⁷Pay to all whatever you owe them. If you owe anyone tribute, pay tribute; if taxes, then taxes; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

Love One Another

¹Don't owe anybody anything but

12
16 Pr 3 7
17 Pr 2 4 Ga
19 Qi 32 35
20 Pr 25 21-22

to love one another. If you love the other person, you have kept the Law. ⁹The commandments: *Don't commit adultery, Don't murder, Don't steal, Don't covet*, and any others are summed up in this: *Love your neighbor like yourself.* ¹⁰Love does no wrong to another person. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the Law.

¹¹Do this especially since you know the time we're living in. It's time now for you to wake up from sleep because we are now nearer being rescued than when we first believed. ¹²The night is almost over, and the day is dawning. Then let us put away the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. ¹³Let us live nobly as in the daytime, not carousing or getting drunk, not sinning sexually or living wild, not quarreling or being jealous. ¹⁴But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and don't plan to have your fleshly desires aroused.

Weak Christians

14 Welcome a man who is weak in his faith and not just to argue about different opinions. ²One person believes he can eat anything, but a weak Christian eats only vegetables. ³If you eat, don't despise anyone who doesn't eat, and if you don't eat, don't criticize anyone who eats, because God has accepted him. ⁴Who are you to criticize someone else's servant? He belongs to the Lord, who is concerned whether he succeeds or fails. And he will succeed, because the Lord can make him succeed.

⁵One man thinks one day is better than the other; another thinks they're all alike. Everyone should be thoroughly convinced in his own mind. ⁶He who has a special day

means to honor the Lord. He who eats does it for the Lord since he thanks God. And he who keeps from eating does it for the Lord, and he thanks God. ⁷None of us lives for himself, and none dies for himself. ⁸If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. ⁹Christ died and became alive again to be Lord of the dead and the living.

¹⁰I ask one of you, "Why do you criticize your fellow Christian?" Or another, "Why do you despise your fellow Christian?" We must all stand before God to be judged. ¹¹It is written: *"As sure as I live," says the Lord, "everyone will kneel to Me, and every tongue will praise God."* ¹²So each of us will have to give an account of himself to God.

¹³Then let us stop criticizing one another. But instead decide not to lay any stumbling block or trap in the way of a fellow Christian. ¹⁴I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus nothing is unclean in itself. Anything is unclean only to him who thinks it is unclean. ¹⁵But if what you eat hurts your fellow Christian, you're not living according to love anymore. By what you eat don't ruin him for whom Christ died. ¹⁶You have something good that nobody should say anything bad about. ¹⁷God's kingdom is not eating and drinking but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸If you serve Christ in this way, God is pleased with you, and people approve of you.

¹⁹So we eagerly go after the things which mean peace and by which we help one another grow. ²⁰Don't ruin God's work just for food. Everything is clean, but it's wrong for you to eat if it makes someone stumble.

¹³
⁹ Ex 20:13
¹⁵ 17
^{DI} 5:17
¹⁹ 21
^L 19:18
¹⁴
¹¹ 15:49-18
¹⁴ 45:22-24

²¹It is good not to eat meat, drink wine, or do anything else that makes your fellow Christian stumble, sin, or be weak in faith. ²²The faith you have, have it between yourself and God. Happy are you if you never have to condemn yourself in regard to anything you approve. ²³If anyone doubts and still eats, he is condemned because he doesn't go by what he believes. Anything that is not an act of faith is sin.

15 But we who are strong must be patient with the weaknesses of the weak and not just please ourselves. ²Every one of us should please his neighbor for his good, to help him grow. ³Even Christ didn't please Himself, but it happened to Him as it is written: *Those who insult You insult Me.*

Jews and Non-Jews

⁴All that was written long ago was written to teach us by the endurance and encouragement we get from the Bible to have hope. ⁵May God, who helps you to endure and encourages you, give you such harmony with one another as you follow Christ Jesus ⁶that together with one voice you praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷Then, as Christ has welcomed you, welcome one another in order to glorify God. ⁸I tell you Christ became a servant to the Jews to do what God promised the fathers—showing that He tells the truth—and to have the other nations praise God for His mercy, as it is written:

For this I will praise You among the nations and sing to honor Your name.

¹⁰And again:

Be happy, you other nations, with His own people!

¹¹And again:

All you nations, praise the Lord, and all the people should praise Him.

¹²Again, Isaiah says:

Jesse will have the Descendant who will rise to rule the nations, and He will be the hope of the nations.

¹³The God of hope fill you with perfect happiness and peace as you believe, to make you overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

New Fields

¹⁴I am convinced, my fellow Christians, you are full of kindness, fully equipped with every kind of knowledge, and able to correct one another. ¹⁵Just to remind you, I have written you a letter, part of which is rather bold because God has by a special gift of His love ¹⁶made me a servant of Christ Jesus among the non-Jewish nations, to work for God's good news as a priest and bring the nations as an offering made holy by the Holy Spirit and accepted by God. ¹⁷So I can in Christ Jesus be proud of what I'm doing before God ¹⁸because I'll dare to tell only what Christ has done through me to make the nations obedient, by my speaking and working, ¹⁹by the power to do miracles and wonders, by the power of God's Spirit, so that I have finished telling the good news of Christ all the way from Jerusalem as far around as Illyricum.

²⁰But I was ambitious to tell the good news only where Christ's name wasn't known, so as not to build on any foundation others had laid, ²¹but as it is written:

Those who were never told about Him will see.

15
3 Ps 69 9
9 2 Sm 22 50
Ps 18 49
10 Dt 32 43
11 Ps 117 1
12 Hk 11 1, 10
21 Hk 52 15

and those who never heard will understand.

I Hope to See You

²¹That is why I have so often been kept from coming to you. ²²But now there is in this territory no more opportunity for me to work, and for many years I have longed to come to you ²³on my way to Spain. I hope to see you when I pass through and after I have enjoyed being with you for a while to have you send me on my way there.

²⁴Right now I am going to Jerusalem to bring help to the holy people there. ²⁵You see, Macedonia and Greece decided to share their goods with the poor among the holy people in Jerusalem. ²⁶So they decided, and they really owe something to the Jews. If the Jews have shared their spiritual goods with the non-Jews, the non-Jews owe it to them to serve them with their earthly goods. ²⁷When that is done and I've brought them this contribution with my seal on it, I will come to you on my way to Spain. ²⁸I know when I come to you I'll bring a full blessing of Christ.

²⁹By our Lord Jesus Christ and the love we have from the Spirit I urge you to join me in my struggle by praying for me to God ³⁰to rescue me from those in Judea who refuse to believe and to have the holy people in Jerusalem welcome the help I bring ³¹so that by God's will I'll come to you with joy and be refreshed with you.

³²The God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Farewell

16 I'm introducing Phoebe, our fellow Christian, to you. She is a worker in the church in

Cenchreae. ²Welcome her in the Lord as holy people should, and give her any help she may need from you, because she has become a protector of many, including me.

³Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ⁴who risked their necks to save my life. Not only I but all the churches among the non-Jews are thanking them. ⁵Greet also the church that meets at their home.

Greet my dear Epaphroditus, who was the first in the province of Asia to turn to Christ.

⁶Greet Mary, who has worked very hard for you.

⁷Greet Andronicus and Junias, my fellow Jews, who went to prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles. They also came to Christ before I did.

⁸Greet Ampliatus, who is dear to me in the Lord.

⁹Greet Urban, our fellow worker in Christ, and my dear Stachys.

¹⁰Greet Apelles, a veteran in Christ.

Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus.

¹¹Greet Herodian, my fellow Jew. Greet those in the family of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

¹²Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, who have worked hard for the Lord.

Greet dear Persis, who has worked very hard for the Lord.

¹³Greet Rufus, the chosen one in the Lord, and his mother—who has been a mother to me too.

¹⁴Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the fellow Christians who are with them.

¹⁵Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas,

and all the holy people who are with them.

¹⁶Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

¹⁷I urge you, fellow Christians, to watch those who cause disagreements and make people fall by going against the teaching you learned. Turn away from them. ¹⁸Such men are not serving Christ, our Lord, but their own bellies and by their fine and flattering talk are deceiving innocent people. ¹⁹Everybody has heard how you obey, and so I'm happy about you. I want you to be wise for anything good, and too innocent for anything bad— ²⁰The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.

The undeserved love of our Lord Jesus be with you!

²¹Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my fellow Jews.

²¹I, Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord.

²⁴Gaius, my host and the host of the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, greets you, and Quartus, our fellow Christian.^b

²⁵Now, to Him—

²⁰ Gn 3:15

who can make you strong by the good news I bring and the preaching of Jesus Christ, by unveiling the mystery veiled in silence for long ages ²⁶but now brought to light and by the writings of the prophets, as the everlasting God ordered them, shown to all the nations to get them to believe and obey— ²⁷to the only wise God through Jesus Christ be glory forever. Amen.

^bOur oldest manuscripts, including p 46, lack v. 24; they have most of these words at the end of v. 20.

CORINTHIANS

1 PAUL, APOSTLE OF CHRIST JESUS, called by God's will, and Sosthenes, my fellow worker, ²to God's church in Corinth, made holy by Christ Jesus and called to be holy, with all who anywhere call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours— ³may God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you and give you peace.

⁴I am always thanking God for you, because He has loved you in Christ Jesus ⁵and in Him made you rich in every way, in speech and knowledge of every kind. ⁶as the truth of Christ we spoke was confirmed in you. ⁷And so you don't lack any gift as you eagerly look for our Lord Jesus Christ to appear again. ⁸He will strengthen you to the end so that nobody can accuse you of anything on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹You can depend on God, who called you to the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Everyone for Christ

¹⁰Fellow Christians, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ I urge you all to agree and not be divided but perfectly united in your understanding and judgment. ¹¹Chloe's people told me you are quarreling, my fellow Christians. ¹²I mean that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or, "I belong to Apollos," or, "I belong to Peter," or, "I belong to Christ." ¹³Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized into Paul's name? ¹⁴I thank God I didn't baptize any of

you except Crispus and Gaius. ¹⁵Then nobody can say you were baptized into my name. ¹⁶I also baptized the family of Stephanas. I don't know if I baptized anyone else. ¹⁷Christ didn't send me to baptize but to tell the good news; nor to be a clever speaker, or the cross of Christ would lose its power.

God's Foolish Things

¹⁸The story of the cross is something foolish to those who perish, but it is God's power to us who are saved. ¹⁹The Bible says: *I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and defeat the intelligence of the intelligent.* ²⁰Where is the wise man? Where is the Bible scholar? Where is the debater of our time? Hasn't God *made foolish the wisdom of the world?* ²¹Since by God's wisdom the world by its wisdom didn't get to know God, God decided to use our foolish preaching to save those who believe it. ²²Now that Jews ask for wonderful proofs and Greeks look for wisdom, ²³we preach a crucified Christ. The Jews stumble over Him, the Greeks think He's something foolish, ²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, He is Christ, God's power and God's wisdom. ²⁵The foolish thing God does is wiser than men, and the weak thing God does is stronger than men.

²⁶You see what happened, fellow Christians, when God called you. Not many of you are wise as the world judges, not many in positions of power, not many born of noble

Ephesus. Spring of A.D. 55

parents. ²⁷No, God chose the foolish things in the world to make wise men feel ashamed. God chose the weak things in the world to make strong men feel ashamed. ²⁸God chose the low things in the world, what it despises, what is nothing, to make what is something nothing—²⁹and to keep anybody from bragging before God. ³⁰He gave you your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom, righteousness, holiness, and ransom from sin, ³¹so that it may be as the Bible says: *If you feel proud, feel proud of the Lord.*

2 When I came to you, fellow Christians, I didn't come to tell you God's truth with any extra-fine speech or wisdom. ²While I was with you, I was determined to know only Jesus Christ and Him nailed to a cross. ³I came to you weak and afraid and with much trembling. ⁴When I spoke and preached, I didn't use clever talk to persuade you, but I let the Spirit and His power prove the truth to you ⁵so that your faith will not depend on men's wisdom but on God's power.

⁶But we do speak a wisdom to those who are ripe for it, a wisdom unknown to the world today and to its rulers who pass away. ⁷Yes, we tell about God's secret wisdom that was kept hidden but that God before the world began planned for our glory. ⁸None of those who rule this world knew it. If they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹But it is as the Bible says:

*No eye has seen,
no ear has heard,
and no mind has thought of
what God has prepared for
those who love Him.*

¹⁰God has revealed it to us by His Spirit. The Spirit finds out every-

thing, even the deep things of God. ¹¹Who knows what a man thinks except his own inner spirit? In the same way only God's Spirit knows what God thinks. ¹²Now we were not given the spirit of the world but the Spirit who comes from God so that we know the good things God gave us. ¹³And we tell about them in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit as we explain the things of the Spirit to those who have the Spirit.

¹⁴But a natural man doesn't welcome the things of God's Spirit. He thinks they are foolish and he can't understand them, because you must have the Spirit to see their real value. ¹⁵If you have the Spirit, you can find out the real value of everything, but nobody can know your real value. ¹⁶*Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to teach Him?* And we have the mind of Christ.

We Plant and Build

3 Fellow Christians, I couldn't talk to you as spiritual people but had to treat you as living in your weak flesh, as babies in Christ. ²I gave you milk to drink, not solid food, because you weren't ready for it. Why, you aren't ready for it even now yet, ³because you still live in your weak flesh.

When you are jealous, quarreling, and forming different parties, aren't you following your flesh and acting like other people? ⁴When one of you says, "I belong to Paul," and another, "I belong to Apollos," aren't you just ordinary people? ⁵What is Apollos anyhow? Or what is Paul? Men by whose help you came to believe, and each helped only as the Lord gave him the ability. ⁶I planted, Apollos wa-

³¹ Jer 9:24
²
⁹ 1a 6a,4
¹⁶ 1a 40:13

tered, but God made it grow. ⁷Now then, the one who plants isn't anything, or the one who waters, but God, who makes it grow. ⁸The man who plants and the one who waters are together, but each of us will get paid for his own work. ⁹We are God's men, working together. You are God's field.

You are God's building. ¹⁰In His love God gave me a work to do, and so as an expert master builder I laid a foundation, and somebody else is building on it. Everyone should be careful how he builds on it. ¹¹Nobody can lay any other foundation than the one that is already laid, and that is Jesus Christ. ¹²If on this foundation you build anything of gold, silver, fine stones, wood, hay, or straw, ¹³what each one does will be known. That day will show what it is because the fire will reveal it and test it to show what kind of work everyone has done. ¹⁴If what you built on the foundation stands the test, you will get paid. ¹⁵If your work is burned, you will lose something, but you will be saved, though it will be like going through a fire.

¹⁶Don't you know you are God's temple and God's Spirit lives in you? ¹⁷If anybody destroys God's temple, God will destroy him, because God's temple is holy. And you are that temple.

¹⁸Don't deceive yourself. If any one of you imagines he is wise in the ways of this world, he should become a fool to become really wise. ¹⁹God considers this world's wisdom to be foolish, as the Bible says: *He catches the wise with their own trickery.* ²⁰and again: *The Lord*

knows that the planning of the wise is useless.

²¹So don't feel proud of men. You see, everything is yours— "Paul, Apollos, Peter, the world, life or death, present or future things— everything is yours. ²²but you belong to Christ, and Christ to God.

We Are Managers

4 Think of us as servants of Christ and managers who distribute God's hidden truths. ²Now then, you demand of any manager that he be trustworthy.

³It means very little to me that you or any human judges should examine me. I don't even examine myself. ⁴I don't know of anything that is against me, but that doesn't make me righteous.^a It is the Lord who examines me. ⁵So don't judge anything too early. Wait till the Lord comes. He will let the light shine on what is hidden in the dark and bring to the light the plans people have in their hearts. And then everyone will get his praise from God.

⁶Fellow Christians, in a special way of speaking I have referred only to myself and Apollos, but I want you to learn from us not to get away from the Bible and not to brag about one man at the expense of another.

Not a King but a Father

⁷Does anyone see anything special in you? What do you have that wasn't given to you? And if it was given to you, why do you brag as if it hadn't been given to you?

⁸So you're already satisfied! You've already become rich! You've become kings without us! I only wish you had become kings—we would like to be kings with you.

³
¹⁹ Job 5:13
²⁰ Ps 94:11

^a See note at Rom. 3:20

"I think God has had us apostles come last in the procession like men condemned to die because we have become a big show for the world, for angels and people to see. "We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are honored, but we are despised. "Up to this hour we are hungry, thirsty, poorly dressed, beaten, homeless, "and we wear ourselves out working with our hands. When we're insulted, we bless. When we're persecuted, we put up with it. "When slandered, we talk kindly. We have come to be the filth of the world, the scum of the earth, and we are that to this day.

"I'm not writing this to make you feel ashamed, but I'm warning you as my dear children. "You may have ten thousand to guide you in Christ, but not many fathers, because in Christ Jesus I became your father by telling you the good news. "So I urge you to become like me. "That is why I sent you Timothy, who is my dear and dependable son in the Lord. He will help you keep in mind my ways in Christ Jesus, just as I teach them everywhere in every church.

"Some of you are puffed up as though I were not coming to you. "But I'll come to you soon if the Lord wants me to, and then I will find out, not what these puffed-up fellows say but what they can do. "God's kingdom isn't just talk but power.

"Which would you like? Should I come to you with a stick or with love and a gentle spirit?

Put Out the Wicked Man

5 We actually hear there is sexual sin among you, and such as isn't found even among the people of the

world, that a man has his father's wife. "And you feel proud of yourselves! Shouldn't you rather have wept and put away from you the man who did this? "Although I'm away from you, I am with you in spirit, and being with you, I have already decided in regard to the man who did this. "Call a meeting. My spirit and the power of our Lord Jesus will be with you. Then in the name of our Lord Jesus "hand such a person over to the devil, to destroy his sinful ways in order to save his spirit on the Lord's day.

"It isn't good for you to feel proud. Don't you know a little yeast ferments the whole dough? "Get rid of the old yeast in order to be a new dough, as you are really free from the old yeast, because our *Passover Lamb* was sacrificed; it is Christ. "Let us, then, celebrate our festival, not with old yeast, not with any yeast of vice and wickedness, but with the sweet bread of purity and truth.

"In my letter I wrote you not to mix with those who live in sexual sin. "I didn't mean you should altogether keep away from people who live in sexual sin in this world, from those who are greedy, who rob, or worship idols; then you would have to get out of this world. "But now I write you: Don't mix with anyone who calls himself a Christian but lives in sexual sin or is greedy, worships idols, slanders, gets drunk, or robs. Don't even eat with such a person.

"Is it my business to judge those who are outside the church? "God judges those who are outside. Shouldn't you judge those who are inside the church? *Put the wicked man away from you.*

7 Ex 12:21
13 Dt 17:7
19:19
22:21, 24
24:7

Don't Sue One Another

6 When one of you has a case against another, do you dare to bring it before a court of unrighteous men and not before the holy people? ²Or don't you know these holy people will judge the world? And if you judge the world, aren't you able to judge trifles? ³Don't you know we'll judge angels? Shouldn't we then judge things of this life? ⁴If then you are having things of this life decided, will you let men who count nothing in the church be your judges? ⁵I say this to make you feel ashamed. Really, isn't any one of you wise enough to decide a matter between one Christian and another? ⁶No, one Christian sues another—and before unbelievers!

⁷Without going any further, suing one another means you have utterly failed. Why don't you rather suffer wrong? Why don't you rather let yourself be robbed? ⁸No, you do wrong, and you rob, and you do it to your own fellow Christians.

You Are God's Temple

⁹Or don't you know wicked people will have no share in God's kingdom? Don't be mistaken about this: Nobody who lives in sexual sin or worships idols, no adulterers or men who sin sexually with other men, ¹⁰who steal, are greedy, get drunk, slander, rob will have a share in God's kingdom. ¹¹Some of you used to do these things. But you have washed, you've been made holy and righteous by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

¹²I'm allowed to do anything, but not everything is good for us. I'm allowed to do anything, but I'll not

be a slave of anything. ¹³Food is for the stomach, and the stomach for food, but God will put an end to both of them. The body is not made for sexual sin but for the Lord; and the Lord is for the body. ¹⁴And God, who raised the Lord, will also raise us by His power.

¹⁵Don't you know your bodies are members of Christ? Now, should I take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶Or don't you know he who gives himself to a prostitute is one body with her? The Bible says: *The two will be one flesh.* ¹⁷But if you give yourself to the Lord, you are one spirit with Him.

¹⁸Flee from sexual sin. Every other sin a man may do is outside his body. But if he sins sexually, he sins against his own body. ¹⁹Or don't you know your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, whom God gives you and who is in you? You don't belong to yourselves, ²⁰because you were bought for a price. Then glorify God with your bodies.

If You Are Married

7 Now about the things you wrote—it is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman. ²But to avoid sexual sins, every man should have his own wife, and every woman her own husband.

³A husband should do for his wife what he owes her, and a wife should do the same for her husband. ⁴A wife can't do as she likes with her body; her husband has a right to it. In the same way a husband can't do as he likes with his body; his wife has a right to it. ⁵Don't deprive one another, unless you agree to do so for a while to take time to pray. And come together again, or the devil

¹⁶ Gn 2:24

will tempt you because you cannot control yourselves. ⁸But as I say this, I'm yielding to you, not ordering you.

⁹I would like everybody to be like myself, but each one has only the gift God gave him, one this and another that. ¹⁰To those who aren't married and to widows I say, it is good for you to stay single like myself, ¹¹but if you can't control yourselves, get married; it is better to marry than to burn with desire.

¹²If you are married, I—that is, not I, but the Lord—order a wife not to leave her husband. ¹³If she does leave him, she should stay single or make up with her husband. And a husband should not divorce his wife.

If You're Married to an Unchristian

¹⁴To the rest I say (not the Lord), if a Christian has a wife who doesn't believe and she agrees to live with him, he should not divorce her. ¹⁵And if a wife has a husband who doesn't believe and he agrees to live with her, she should not divorce her husband. ¹⁶An unbelieving man married to such a woman serves a holy purpose, and an unbelieving wife married to a Christian serves a holy purpose. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but now they are holy. ¹⁷But if the unbelieving person leaves, let him go. In such a case a Christian man or woman is not bound. But God called us to live in peace. ¹⁸You wife, what do you know—you may save your husband. Or you husband, what do you know—you may save your wife.

Stay as God Called You

¹⁷But everyone should live the life the Lord assigned to him just as God

called him. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches.

¹⁸Were you circumcised when you were called? Don't try to get rid of your circumcision. Were you uncircumcised when you were called? Don't be circumcised. ¹⁹Circumcision is nothing, and the lack of it is nothing, but doing what God orders is everything. ²⁰Everyone should stay as he was called. ²¹Were you a slave when you were called? Don't let that trouble you. Of course, if you have a chance to get free, take it. ²²If you are a slave when you are called in the Lord, you are the Lord's free man. In the same way, if you are free when you are called, you are Christ's slave. ²³You were bought for a price; don't become slaves of men. ²⁴My fellow Christians, everyone should stay with God just as he was when he was called.

To Marry or Not to Marry

²⁵For the unmarried girls I have no order from the Lord, but the Lord's mercy made me one you can trust, and I'll tell you what I think. ²⁶On account of the troubles we're in I believe it is good for anyone to stay as he is. ²⁷Are you married? Don't look for a divorce. Are you separated from a wife? Don't look for a wife. ²⁸But if you get married, it's no sin, and if a girl gets married, it's no sin. But if you do, you'll have trouble in your life, and I'm trying to spare you.

²⁹I mean, my fellow Christians, the time has been shortened. While it lasts, if you have a wife, live as if you had none. ³⁰If you weep, as if you weren't weeping. If you're happy, as if you weren't happy. If you buy anything, act as if you didn't have it. ³¹While you use the

world, don't try to get out of it all you can, since this world in its present form is passing away.

¹⁴I don't want you to worry. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's things, how he can please the Lord. ¹⁵But once he's married, he worries about earthly things, how he can please his wife. ¹⁶He's interested in two different things. An unmarried woman or girl is concerned about the Lord's things, to be holy in body and in spirit. But once she's married, she worries about earthly things, how she can please her husband. ¹⁷I'm saying this to help you, not to hold you by a rope but to show you how to live nobly for the Lord without being troubled about other things.

¹⁸If a man thinks he's not acting properly toward his girl, if his passion is too strong and it must be so, he should do what he wants to—it's no sin—they should get married. ¹⁹But suppose a man has a strong character and the willpower and feels no necessity but has made up his mind to keep his girl as she is, he'll be doing right. ²⁰If, then, he marries his girl, he's doing right. But if he doesn't marry her, he'll be doing better.

²¹A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. If her husband dies, she's free to marry anyone she wants to, but it should be in the Lord. ²²But she'll be happier if she stays as she is. That is my judgment, and I think I too have God's Spirit.

Meat Sacrificed to Idols

8 About the meat sacrificed to idols.

We know that all of us have some knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ²If anybody thinks he knows something, he still has

something to learn. ¹But if he loves God, God knows him.

²Now about eating meat that was sacrificed to idols, we know there is no real idol in the world and there is only one God. ³Even if there are so-called gods in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), ⁴yet we have one God, the Father: from Him comes everything, and we live for Him. And one Lord, Jesus Christ: He made everything, and we live by Him.

⁵But not everybody knows this. Some are still so used to an idol they think of the meat they eat as sacrificed to the idol, and their conscience, being weak, is stained with guilt.

⁶Food will not bring us closer to God. We lose nothing by not eating and gain nothing by eating. ⁷But be careful, or weak Christians may fall into sin because you do as you please. ⁸If anybody sees you who know better lying down to eat in the temple of an idol, won't you be encouraging him who has a weak conscience to eat the meat sacrificed to idols? ⁹Then your knowledge is ruining the weak fellow Christian for whom Christ died. ¹⁰But when you sin against your fellow Christians in this way and wound their weak consciences, you sin against Christ.

¹¹So if food makes my fellow Christian sin, I will never eat meat—I don't want to give him a reason for sinning.

A Pastor's Pay

9 Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Didn't I see Jesus, our Lord? Aren't you my work in the Lord? ²If I'm not an apostle to others, I certainly am one to you. You are the Lord's seal that proves

I'm an apostle. That's how I defend myself before those who examine me. Don't we have the right to eat and drink? Don't we have the right to take a Christian wife with us like the other apostles, the Lord's brothers, and Peter? Or do only I and Barnabas have no right to stop working for a living?

Does a soldier ever pay his own expenses? Does anyone plant a vineyard and not eat its grapes? Or does anyone take care of a flock and not drink any milk from it? Am I stating only a human rule? Doesn't the Law say the same thing? The Law of Moses says: *Don't muzzle an ox when he's treading out grain.* Is God here interested in oxen? Surely He has us in mind. This was written to show us when we plow or thresh we should expect to get a share of the crop. If we have sown the spiritual life in you, is it too much if we'll reap your earthly goods? If others enjoy this right over you, don't we have a better claim? But we haven't made use of this right. No, we put up with anything in order not to hinder the preaching of Christ.

Don't you know that the men who work at the temple get their food from the temple? That those who help at the altar get their share of what is on the altar? In the same way the Lord has ordered that those who tell the good news should get their living from the good news.

But I haven't used any of these rights. And I'm not writing this to get such things done for me. I'd rather die than let anyone take away my boast. If I tell the good news, I have nothing to boast about. I must tell it. Woe to me if I don't tell the good news! If I do it because I want to, I get a reward. But if I don't

want to do it, I still have this work entrusted to me.

What then is my reward? Just this: When I tell the good news, I won't let it cost anybody anything, and so I won't take advantage of my right in telling the good news.

Everything to Everybody

Although I am free from all people, I made myself a slave of all of them to win more of them. To the Jews I became like a Jew to win Jews; to those under the Law I became like a man under the Law—although I'm not under the Law—to win those under the Law. To those who don't have the Law I became like a man without the Law—although I'm not outside the Law of God but under the law of Christ—to win those who don't have the Law. To weak persons I became weak to win the weak. I've been everything to everybody to be sure to save some of them.

I'm doing everything for the good news in order to have a share of what it gives. Don't you know that all who are in a race run but only one wins the prize? Like them, run to win! Anyone who enters a contest goes into strict training. Now, they do it to win a wreath that withers, but we to win one that never withers. So I run with a clear goal ahead of me. I fight and don't just shadow box. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that, when I've called others to run the race, I myself will not somehow be disqualified.

A Warning

10 I want you to know, fellow Christians, our fathers were all under the cloud and all went through the sea, and by baptism in

9 Or, 25.

the cloud and in the sea all were united with Moses. 'all ate the same food of the Spirit. 'and all drank the same water of the Spirit, because they drank from the spiritual Rock that went with them, and that Rock was Christ. 'Yet God wasn't pleased with most of them—they were killed in the desert.

'Now, this happened in order to warn us not *to long for* what is evil as they did. 'Don't worship idols as some of them did, as the Bible says: *The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to play.* 'Let us not sin sexually as some of them did—23,000 died on one day. 'Let us not go too far in testing the Lord's patience as some of them did—the snakes killed them. 'Don't complain as some of them did—the angel of death killed them. 'These things happened to them to make them a lesson to others and were written down to warn us who are living when the world is coming to an end. 'So if you think you stand, be careful you don't fall.

'You haven't been tempted more than you could expect. And you can trust God. He will not let you be tested more than you can stand. But when you are tested, He will also make a way out so that you can bear it.

Meat Sacrificed to Idols

'And so, my dear friends, keep away from the worship of idols.

'I'm talking to sensible people. Judge for yourselves what I say. 'Is the cup of blessing which we bless not a communion of the blood of Christ? Is the bread which we break not a communion of the body of Christ? 'All of us are one body, because there is one bread and all of us share that one bread.

'See how the Jews do it. Don't those who eat the sacrifices share the altar? 'What do I mean by this? That a sacrifice made to an idol is something or that an idol really is something? 'No, these sacrifices of the non-Jews are made to devils and not to God. I don't want you to be partners of devils. 'You can't drink the Lord's cup and the cup of devils. You can't share the Lord's table and the table of devils. 'Or are we trying to make the Lord jealous? Are we stronger than He?

'We are allowed to do anything, but not everything is good for others. We are allowed to do anything, but not everything helps them grow. 'Nobody should look for his own good, but everybody for the good of the other person. 'Eat anything sold in the market, and don't ask any questions or let your conscience trouble you, 'because the earth and everything in it belong to the Lord. 'If any of the unbelievers invites you and you want to go, eat anything they serve you, and don't ask any questions or let your conscience trouble you. 'But if somebody tells you, "This was sacrificed," don't eat it, keeping in mind him who told you, and conscience— 'I don't mean yours but the other one's conscience. What good is there in doing what I please if someone else's conscience condemns it? 'If I give thanks for what I eat, why should I let myself be denounced for eating what I thank God for? 'So, whether you eat or drink or do anything else, do everything to glorify God. 'Don't be the reason for others to sin, whether they are Jews, Greeks, or God's church. 'So I try to please everybody in every way and don't look for my advantage but for that of

10
5 Nm 14 16
6 Nm 11 4 34
7 Ex 32 6
20 Dt 32 17
Ps 106 37
21 Mt 1 7 12
22 Dt 32 21
26 Ps 24 1

many people so that they may be saved.

11 Imitate me as I imitate Christ.

Long Hair and Hats

¹I praise you for thinking of me in every way and for keeping the truths as I delivered them to you.

²I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband, and the head of Christ is God. ³Any man who keeps his head covered when he prays or speaks God's Word dishonors his head. ⁴But any woman who prays or speaks God's Word with nothing on her head dishonors her head. She's exactly like the woman whose head is shaved. ⁵If a woman wears nothing on her head, she should also get her hair cut. But if it is a disgrace for a woman to get her hair cut or shaved off, she should keep her head covered. ⁶A man shouldn't cover his head, because he is *God's image* and glory; but a woman is a man's glory. ⁷The man wasn't made from the woman but the woman from the man. ⁸and the man wasn't made for the woman but the woman for the man. ⁹That's why a woman should wear something on her head to show she is under authority, out of respect for the angels.

¹⁰Yet in the Lord a woman needs a man, and a man needs a woman. ¹¹As the woman was made from the man, so a man is born of a woman, and it all comes from God.

¹²Judge for yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with nothing on her head? ¹³Doesn't nature itself teach you it's disgraceful for a man to have long hair ¹⁴but that it's a woman's glory to wear her hair long? Her hair is

given her as a covering. ¹⁵But if anybody means to argue about it—we don't have such a custom, nor do God's churches.

How to Go to the Lord's Supper

¹⁶While I'm giving these instructions, I'm not praising you for doing harm instead of good at your meetings. ¹⁷In the first place, I hear that when you meet as a church you are divided, and some of it I believe is true. ¹⁸Of course there must be divisions among you to show clearly which of you can stand the test.

¹⁹When you get together for a common purpose, it is not the Lord's Supper you are eating. ²⁰As a matter of fact, each of you eats his own supper ahead of time; and so one stays hungry and another gets drunk. ²¹Don't you have homes where you can eat and drink? Or do you despise God's church and humiliate those who don't have anything? What should I say to you? Should I praise you? I won't praise you for this.

²²The Lord gave me what I taught you, that the night He was betrayed the Lord Jesus took bread. ²³He gave thanks, broke it, and said, "This is My body, which is for you. Do this to remember Me." ²⁴He did the same with the cup after the supper. He said, "This cup is the new *covenant* in My *blood*. Every time you drink it, do it to remember Me."

²⁵Every time you eat this bread and drink the cup, you are telling how the Lord died, till He comes. ²⁶Then anyone who eats the bread or drinks the Lord's cup in an unworthy way is sinning against the Lord's body and blood. ²⁷Examine yourself and then eat some of the bread and drink from the cup. ²⁸Anyone who eats and drinks without seeing

⁷ Gn 1:27
²⁵ Ex 24:8
Zch 9:11

that the body is there is condemned for his eating and drinking.

¹⁰That is why many of you are sick and ailing and a number are dead. ¹¹If we would look at ourselves critically, we would not be judged. ¹²But if the Lord judges us, He corrects us to keep us from being condemned with the world.

¹³So then, my fellow Christians, when you get together to eat, wait for one another. ¹⁴If you are hungry, eat at home, so you will not meet just to be condemned.

About the other things I'll give directions when I come.

The Spirit's Gifts

12 Fellow Christians, I want you to know about the gifts of the Spirit. ²You know that when you were people of the world, you were led away to the idols, that can't talk, as you felt yourselves moved. ³So I tell you, if you are moved by God's Spirit, you don't say, "Jesus is cursed," and only if you are moved by the Holy Spirit can you say, "Jesus is the Lord."

⁴Now gifts are given to different persons but by the same Spirit. ⁵Ways of serving are assigned to them but by the same Lord. ⁶Powers are given to them, but the same God works everything in all people. ⁷Now, the Spirit shows Himself to each one to make him useful. ⁸The Spirit gives one person the ability to speak of wisdom. To another the same Spirit gives the ability to speak intelligently. ⁹To another the same Spirit gives faith. To another that same Spirit gives the ability to heal. ¹⁰Another can work miracles. Another can speak God's Word. Another can tell the true Spirit from evil spirits. Another can talk other languages. Another can

tell the meaning of languages. ¹¹One and the same Spirit works all these things and gives as He wishes to each in his own way.

¹²As the body is one and yet has many parts, and all the parts of the body, many as they are, form one body, so is Christ. ¹³By one Spirit all of us—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—were baptized to form one body, and that one Spirit was poured out for all of us to drink.

¹⁴Not one part but many make up the body. ¹⁵Suppose a foot says, "I'm not a hand, and so I'm not a part of the body"; it is still a part of the body. ¹⁶Or suppose an ear says, "I'm not an eye, and so I'm not a part of the body"; it is still a part of the body. ¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, how could we hear? If it were all hearing, how could we smell? ¹⁸As it is, God arranged the parts, fitting each of them into the body as He wanted it to be. ¹⁹If all of it were one part, how could there be a body? ²⁰As it is, there are many parts and one body.

²¹The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you," or the head to the feet, "I don't need you." ²²No, we really can't do without the parts of the body that we think are weaker. ²³And the parts of the body that we think less honorable we dress with special honor so that our shameful parts have a special nobility, ²⁴which our noble parts don't need. But God has put the body together and given special honor to the part that lacks it, ²⁵to keep the body from dividing and have the parts feel the same concern for one another. ²⁶If one member suffers, all the others suffer with it. If one is honored, all the others are happy with it.

²⁷Now, you are the body of Christ,

and everyone has his place in it. ²⁸God has appointed in the church first apostles, next preachers, third teachers, then miracle workers, then healers, helpers, managers, and those who can talk (various) kinds of languages. ²⁹Are all apostles? Are all preachers? Are all teachers? Can all do miracles? ³⁰Can all heal? Can all talk in other languages? Can all tell what they mean? No, ³¹but try to have the better gifts.

Love

And now I'll show you the best way of all.

13 If I speak the languages of men and of angels but don't have any love, I've become a loud gong or a clashing cymbal. ²Even if I speak God's Word and know every kind of hidden truth and have every kind of knowledge, even if I have all the faith to move mountains but don't have any love, I'm nothing. ³Even if I give away all I have to feed the hungry and give up my body but only to boast and don't have any love, it doesn't help me.

⁴Love is patient. Love is kind. Love isn't jealous. It doesn't brag or get conceited. ⁵It isn't indecent. It isn't selfish. It doesn't get angry. It *doesn't plan to hurt anyone*. ⁶It doesn't delight in evil but is happy with the truth. ⁷It bears everything, believes everything, hopes for everything, endures everything.

⁸Love never dies. If there are prophecies, they will come to an end; or other languages, they will stop; or knowledge, it will vanish. ⁹We learn only a part of anything and prophesy only a part. ¹⁰But when that which is perfect comes, what is only a part will vanish. ¹¹When I was a child, I used to talk like a child, think like a child, plan

like a child. Now that I'm a man, I've given up the ways of a child. ¹²Now we see by a mirror and are puzzled, but then we'll see face to face. Now I learn only a part of anything, but then I'll know as He has known me.

¹³And now these three, faith, hope, and love, go on, but the most important of these is love.

Speak to Be Understood

14 Pursue love, be eager to have the gifts of the Spirit, and especially to speak God's Word. ²When a man talks in another language, he doesn't talk to people but to God, because nobody understands him; his spirit is talking mysteries. ³But when you speak God's Word, you talk to people to help them grow, to encourage and comfort them. ⁴When you talk in another language, you encourage yourself. But when you speak God's Word, you help the church grow. ⁵I want you all to talk in other languages, but I would rather have you speak God's Word. It is more important to speak God's Word than other languages, unless you explain what you say in order to help the church grow. ⁶Now, my fellow Christians, if I come to you and talk other languages, how can I help you unless I tell you what God has told me and bring it as His Word or as something I know and teach?

⁷Lifeless instruments such as a flute or a lyre produce sounds, but if there's no difference in the sounds, how can you tell what is played on a flute or a lyre? ⁸And if the trumpet doesn't sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle? ⁹In the same way, if you don't talk with a clear meaning, how will anyone know what you're saying? You'll be talking into the air. ¹⁰There are, I

¹³
5 Zech 7:10.
8:17

suppose, ever so many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning. ¹¹Now if I don't know what a language means, I'll be a foreigner to him who speaks it, and he'll be a foreigner to me. ¹²So you too, since you are eager to have the Spirit's gifts, try to be rich in them so as to build up the church. ¹³If then you talk another language, pray to be able to explain it.

¹⁴If I pray in another language, my spirit prays, but my mind isn't helping anyone. ¹⁵What then? I will pray in my spirit but also pray so as to be understood. I will sing praise in my spirit but also sing so as to be understood. ¹⁶Otherwise, if you praise God only with your spirit, how can an ordinary person who is there say "Amen" to your prayer of thanks? He doesn't know what you mean. ¹⁷It is good that you give thanks, but it doesn't help the other person. ¹⁸I thank God I talk more in other languages than any of you, ¹⁹but in a church I would rather say five words that can be understood, in order to teach others, than ten thousand words in a language nobody understands.

²⁰Fellow Christians, don't be childish in your understanding. In evil be babies, but grow up in your thinking. ²¹It is written in the Bible: *"In strange languages and by the mouth of foreigners I will speak to these people, but even then they will not listen to Me,"* says the Lord. ²²Then other languages are not meant to warn believers but unbelievers, while God's Word isn't meant for unbelievers but for believers. ²³Now if the whole congregation meets and all talk other languages and then some ordinary people or unbelievers come in, won't they say you're crazy? ²⁴But

if all speak God's Word and some unbeliever or ordinary person comes in, all convince him of his sin and all examine him. ²⁵The secrets of his heart are shown, and so he bows down with his face on the ground, worships God, and declares, *"God is certainly here among you."*

Keep Order in Worship Services

²⁶What should you do, then, my fellow Christians? When you meet, everyone is ready with a song, something to teach, some truth from God, another language, or an explanation. Do it all to help one another grow. ²⁷If you talk another language, only two should talk, or three at the most, and one at a time, and somebody should explain. ²⁸If there's nobody to explain what you say, you shouldn't say anything in church but only talk to yourself and to God.

²⁹Two or three should speak God's Word, and the others should decide whether they are telling it right or not. ³⁰If God gives a truth to another person who is seated, the first speaker should stop talking. ³¹You can all speak God's Word one after another so that everybody learns something and is encouraged. ³²Men who speak God's Word control their own spirits. ³³You see, God is not a God of disorder but of peace.

As in all the churches of the holy people, ³⁴the women should be silent in church because they are not allowed to speak. They should submit, as the Law says. ³⁵If there is something they want to know, they should ask their husbands at home. It is a disgrace for a woman to speak in church.

³⁶Did God's Word first come from you? Or were you the only ones to

¹⁴
²¹ ¹⁶ ²⁸ ¹¹ ¹²
²⁵ ¹⁵ ⁴⁵ ¹⁴

whom it came? "If anyone thinks he speaks for God or has the Spirit, he should know that what I write you is what the Lord orders. "But if anyone ignores this, he should be ignored.

"So, my fellow Christians, be eager to speak God's Word, and don't try to keep anyone from talking other languages. "But everything should be done in a fine and orderly way.

Jesus Rose

15 My fellow Christians, I am telling you the good news I brought you and you accepted. You stand in it and are saved by it if you cling to the words I used in telling it to you—unless you were trifling when you believed. "I brought you what I received—something very important—that Christ died for our sins as the Scriptures said He would, "He was buried, and He rose on the third day as the Scriptures said He would. "Peter saw Him, then the twelve, "then more than five hundred Christians at one time; most of these are still living, but some have gone to their rest. "Then James saw Him, then all the apostles. "Last of all I saw Him, I who was like one prematurely born. "since I am the least of the apostles and not fit to be called an apostle because I persecuted God's church. "God's grace made me what I am, and His grace wasn't wasted on me. But I did far more work than all the others—not I but God's grace that was with me. "Now, whether I did it or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.

We'll Rise

"If we preach that Christ rose from the dead, how can some of you say,

"The dead don't rise"? "If the dead don't rise, Christ didn't rise. "And if Christ didn't rise, our preaching means nothing, and your faith means nothing. "And we stand there as men who lied about God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He didn't raise if it is true that the dead don't rise. "You see, if the dead don't rise, Christ didn't rise. "But if Christ didn't rise, your faith can't help you, and you are still in your sins. "Then also those who have gone to their rest in Christ have perished. "If Christ is our hope only for this life, we should be pitied more than any other people.

"But now Christ did rise from the dead, the first in the harvest of those who are sleeping in their graves. "Since a man brought death, a Man also brought the resurrection of the dead. "As in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. "But everyone in his own group: first Christ, then, when He comes, those who belong to Christ.

"Then the end will come when He hands over the kingdom to God the Father after He has put an end to every other government, authority, and power, "since He must rule as King till He puts all enemies under His feet. "The last enemy He will get rid of is death. "You see, He puts everything under His feet. When He says: *Everything is put under Him*, this clearly doesn't include Him who *puts everything under Him*. "But when *everything has been put under Him*, then the Son also will put Himself under Him who *put everything under the Son* so that God will be everything in everything.

"Otherwise, what will they do

25 Ps 110:1
26 28 Ps 86

who are baptized for the dead?^b Why are they baptized for them if the dead don't actually rise?

³⁰And why are we in danger every hour? ³¹As I'm proud of you, my fellow Christians, in Christ Jesus, our Lord, I assure you I'm facing death every day. ³²If like other men I have fought with wild animals in Ephesus, what good is it to me? If the dead don't rise, *let us eat and drink—tomorrow we die!* ³³Don't let anybody deceive you. "Bad company ruins good habits."^c ³⁴Come back to a sober and righteous life, and don't sin any more. Some people don't know God. I say this to make you feel ashamed.

Our Glorified Bodies

³⁵But somebody will ask, "How do the dead rise? And what kind of body will they have when they come back?"

³⁶Just think a little! The seed you sow has to die before it is made alive. ³⁷And the seed you sow is not the body that it will be, but a bare kernel, maybe wheat or something else. ³⁸But God gives it the body He wanted it to have, and to each kind of seed its own body. ³⁹Not all flesh is the same. Human beings have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds have another, and fish have another kind of flesh. ⁴⁰And so there are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies. But the splendor of the heavenly bodies is different from that of the earthly bodies. ⁴¹The shining of the sun is different from the shining of the moon, and the shining of the stars is

different again. Even one star shines brighter than another.

⁴²That is how it will be when the dead rise. When the body is sown, it decays; when it rises, it can't decay. ⁴³When it is sown, it isn't wonderful; when it rises, it is wonderful. It is sown weak; it rises strong. ⁴⁴It is sown a natural body; it rises a body of the Spirit. Just as there is a natural body, so there is a body of the Spirit.

⁴⁵That is what the Bible says: *Adam*, the first man, was *made a natural living being*; the last Adam became a Spirit who makes alive.

⁴⁶That which has the Spirit doesn't come first, but the natural; then that which has the Spirit. ⁴⁷The first man is *made of the soil of the ground*; the Second Man is from heaven. ⁴⁸The people of the ground are like the man from the ground; the people of heaven are like the Man from heaven. ⁴⁹Just as we have been like the man from the ground, let us be like the Man from heaven. ⁵⁰I tell you, fellow Christians, flesh and blood can't have a share in God's kingdom, or decay have what doesn't decay.

⁵¹Now I'll tell you a secret. We're not all going to die, but we're all going to be changed—⁵²in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye when the last trumpet sounds. It will sound, and the dead will rise immortal, and we'll be changed. ⁵³This decaying body must be made one that can't decay, and this dying body must be made one that can't die. ⁵⁴When this decaying body is made one that can't decay and this dying body is made one that can't

³² 1s 22 13
⁴⁵⁻⁴⁷ Gn 2 7

^b*The relative of a Christian who had died may wish to be baptized in order to see this Christian again in heaven. Or he may want to express the hope that a Christian friend who has died will rise.*

die, then will happen what is written: *Death is swallowed up in victory!*

⁵*Where, Death, is your victory?*

Where, Death, is your sting?

⁶Sin gives death its sting, and the Law gives sin its power. ⁷But thank God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁸Stand firm, then, my dear fellow Christians, and let nothing move you. Always keep on doing a great work for the Lord since you know in the Lord your hard work isn't wasted.

The Collection

16 About the collection for the holy people—do just as I ordered the churches in Galatia to do. ²Every Sunday each of you should at home lay aside some money he makes and save it so that none will have to be collected when I come. ³But when I come, I will send the men whom you approve with letters to take your gift to Jerusalem. ⁴If it is worthwhile for me to go too, I'll go with them.

⁵⁴ 16:25-8
⁵⁵ *Mos* 13:14
¹⁶
¹³ *Ps* 31:24

I Am Coming

¹I will come to you when I go through Macedonia. I am going through Macedonia, ²and probably will stay with you or even spend the winter with you so that you will send me on my way wherever I'm going. ³I don't want to see you now just in passing, because I hope to stay with you for some time if the Lord will let me. ⁴But I'll be staying in Ephesus till Pentecost, ⁵because a door has opened wide for me to do effective work, and many are opposing me.

^c*Menander*

Timothy, Apollos, and Others

¹⁰If Timothy comes, see to it he's not afraid when he's with you. He's doing the Lord's work just as I am. ¹¹Nobody should despise him. Send him on his way in peace so he will come to me, because I'm expecting him with the other Christians.

¹²As for Apollos, our fellow worker—I tried hard to get him to go to you with the other Christians, but God didn't at all want him to go now. He will come when the time is right.

¹³Watch, stand firm in your faith, *be men, be strong.* ¹⁴Do everything with love.

¹⁵You know that the family of Stephanas was the first to be won in Greece, and they gave themselves to the service of the holy people. I urge you, my fellow Christians, ¹⁶let such people and anyone else who works hard with you lead you. ¹⁷I'm glad Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus came here, because they have made up for your absence: ¹⁸They have refreshed me—and you too. You should appreciate men like that.

Greetings

¹⁹The churches in the province of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca and the church at their home send you hearty greetings in the Lord. ²⁰All the Christians greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. ²¹Here is the greeting that I, Paul, write with my own hand.

²²If anyone doesn't love the Lord, a curse on him! Our Lord, come!

²³May the Lord Jesus love you! ²⁴My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

PAUL
WRITES THE SECOND LETTER TO THE
CORINTHIANS

1 PAUL, APOSTLE OF CHRIST JESUS by God's will, and Timothy, our fellow worker, to God's church in Corinth and to all the holy people everywhere in Greece— 'may God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you and give you peace!

God Comforts and Rescues Us

'Let us praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercy and the God of every comfort. 'He comforts us in all our suffering to make us able to comfort others in all their suffering with the same comfort with which God comforts us. 'As Christ's sufferings overflow to us, so Christ makes our comfort overflow. 'If we suffer, it helps us to comfort and save you. If we are comforted, it helps us to comfort you effectively when you endure the same sufferings as we do. 'Our hope for you is unshaken because we know as you share our sufferings you share our comfort.

'Fellow Christians, we want you to know our suffering in the province of Asia was so extreme, so much more than we could stand, we even despaired of living. 'Yes, we felt sentenced to death. We were not to trust ourselves but God, who raises the dead. 'He rescued us from such a death, and He who is our hope will rescue us again. He will continue to rescue us 'if you, too, will help us by praying—and have many people look up to God and thank Him for what He gave us.

We Were Sincere

'This is what we're proud of. Our conscience tells us that with God's holiness and sincerity, without human cleverness but with God's love, we have lived in the world and especially with you. 'We are writing you only what you can read and understand. And I hope you will understand till the end, 'as you have to some extent understood us, that you can be proud of us as also we of you on the day of our Lord Jesus.

'Feeling sure of this, I wanted you to have the benefit of a double visit. I planned to come to you first. 'go from you to Macedonia, then come back again from Macedonia to you and let you send me on to Judea.

'When I wanted to do this, was I trifling? Or do I go on making my plans any way I please so that I can say "Yes, yes" and "No, no"? 'You can trust God that what we tell you isn't yes and no. 'God's Son Jesus Christ, whom I, Silas, and Timothy preached to you, wasn't yes and no, but in Him there has come and is a yes. 'For all God's promises He is the Yes that makes them come true. And so He makes it possible for us to give glory to God by saying, "It is true."

'It is God who makes us and you firm in the anointed Savior and also has anointed us. 'He has put His seal on us and given us the Spirit as a guarantee in our hearts.

I Don't Want to Hurt You

¹I call on God as a witness against me that I stayed away from Corinth in order not to hurt you. ²I don't mean we're lords of your faith, but we're working with you to make you happy. You stand on your own feet by faith.

2 I made up my mind not to come if I had to bring you grief again. ³If I make you sad, who should make me happy but the person I'm making sad? ⁴This is what I said in my letter. I didn't want to come and be made sad by those who should have made me happy. Feeling sure about all of you that what makes me happy makes all of you happy too. ⁵I was deeply troubled and in anguish when I wrote you with much weeping, not to make you sad but to have you realize how very much I love you.

J
3 Ex 24 12
31 16
p. 33
Ez 11 19
36 26

Forgive the Man Who Did Wrong

¹If someone caused grief, he didn't do it to me but to some extent (not to make it too strong) to all of you. ²Most of you have punished him; that's enough for such a person. ³Now you should turn around, forgive and comfort him, or too much grief may overwhelm such a person. ⁴So I urge you to assure him of your love. ⁵I wrote you to see if you would stand the test and obey in every way.

⁶When you forgive anyone, I do too. If I forgave anything, I did it in the presence of Christ to help you ⁷and to keep the devil from getting the best of us. We know what he has in mind.

An Odor of Life

¹I went to Troas to tell the good

news of Christ, and there a door to do the Lord's work stood wide open for me. ²but my spirit couldn't get any relief because I didn't find Titus, my fellow worker. So I said good-by to the people and went to Macedonia.

³But thank God! He always leads us on triumphantly in Christ and everywhere through us spreads the fragrance of knowing Him. ⁴Yes, we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are saved and among those who perish— ⁵to some an odor of death that kills, to others an odor of life that gives life.

And who is qualified for this?— ⁶At least we don't peddle an impure Word of God like many others, but in Christ we talk sincerely as men who come from God and stand before God.

3 Are we again recommending ourselves? Or do we, like some people, need letters of recommendation to you or from you? ²You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by everybody. ³Anyone can see you are Christ's letter, prepared by us, not written with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on stone tablets but on tablets of human hearts.

⁴That is how Christ gives us confidence in God. ⁵We can't do anything by ourselves and so claim to produce it ourselves, but God gives us our ability. ⁶He has made us able servants of a new covenant, not of a written Law but of the Spirit, because the written Law kills, but the Spirit makes alive.

The Glory of the New Covenant

¹Now if that service, engraved in stone and bringing death, came with such glory the people of Israel couldn't look at *Moses' face* because

it *shone with the glory* that was fading. ⁸How much more certainly will the service of the Spirit have *glory*? ⁹If the service that condemns has *glory*, the service that gives righteousness much more certainly overflows with *glory*. ¹⁰That which had *glory* lost it because the other *glory* outshone it. ¹¹If that which fades away had its *glory*, that which is permanent much more certainly has *glory*.

¹²Because we expect this, we are very bold ¹³and not like Moses, who wore a *veil over his face* to keep the people of Israel from seeing the last rays of the fading *glory*. ¹⁴But their minds have been closed. To this day the same *veil* is still there on the reading of the old covenant and isn't taken away, because it is put away only in Christ. ¹⁵Yes, to this day, when they read Moses, a *veil* lies on their hearts. ¹⁶But *whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away*.

¹⁷The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. ¹⁸And all of us, reflecting the *Lord's glory* in our unveiled faces, are changed from glory to glory to be like Him, as we expect it from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Treasure in Clay Jars

4 And so we who by God's mercy have this service don't get discouraged. ²But we have renounced the secret ways that anybody should feel ashamed of. We don't use trickery or falsify God's Word. But by clearly telling the truth we recommend ourselves to everyone's conscience before God.

³If the good news we tell is veiled, it is veiled to those who perish, ⁴whose minds the god of this world has blinded—they don't believe—to

keep them from seeing the light of the good news of the glory of Christ, who is God's image.

⁵You see, we don't preach ourselves but Jesus Christ as the Lord, and we are your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶God, who said: "*Let light shine out of the dark*," has shone in our hearts to bring you the light of knowing God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

⁷We have this treasure in clay jars to show that its extraordinary power comes from God and not from us. ⁸In every way we are hard pressed but not crushed, in doubt but not in despair; ⁹hunted but not forsaken; struck down but not destroyed. ¹⁰We are in our bodies always being killed with Jesus so that you can see in our bodies the life of Jesus. ¹¹While we're living, we're always being given up to die for Jesus so that you can see in our dying bodies the life of Jesus. ¹²So death is working in us, but life is working in you.

¹³It is written: *I believed and so I spoke*. Having the same spirit of faith, we also believe and so we speak. ¹⁴because we know that He who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and bring us with you before Him.

¹⁵All this is to help you so that God's love, as it spreads will move more and more people to overflow with thanks to God's glory. ¹⁶That is why we are not discouraged. No, even if we outwardly perish, inwardly we're renewed from day to day. ¹⁷The light trouble of this moment is preparing for us an everlasting weight of glory, greater than anything we can imagine. ¹⁸We don't look at the things that are seen but at the things that are not seen. What we see lasts only a while,

7-16 E+ 34
29-30 33-35
18 E+ 16 7 10
24 17
4
6 Gn 1,2
13 Ps 116 10

but what we don't see lasts forever.

We Long for a Heavenly Body

5 If the earthly tent we live in is torn down, we know we'll get one from God, not made by human hands but lasting forever in heaven. ¹In this body we sigh as we long to put on and live in the body we get from heaven. ²Of course, if we put that on, we'll not be found without a body. ³So while we are in this tent, we sigh, feeling oppressed because we don't want to put off this body but put on the other and have life swallow up our death. ⁴It is God who has prepared us for this and given us His Spirit as a guarantee.

⁵And so we always feel confident. We know that as long as we are living in this body we are living away from the Lord. ⁶We live by trusting Him, without seeing Him. ⁷We feel bold and prefer to move out of this body and move in with the Lord. ⁸Now, whether we live here or move out, we try hard to please Him. ⁹We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, each to receive according to what he has done with his life, whether he has used it for good or evil.

Christ Compels Us

¹Since we know the terror of the Lord, we're trying to win the confidence of people. God already knows what we really are, and I hope you too are clearly conscious of it. ²We are not recommending ourselves to you again but giving you a reason to be proud of us so that you can answer those who boast about outward things but nothing in the heart. ³If we were crazy, it was for God. If we're sane, it is for you. ⁴The love of Christ compels us because we're convinced One died for all and so all have

died. ⁵He died for all that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died and rose for them.

⁶And so from now on we don't think of anyone only as a human being. Once we thought of Christ only as a man, but not now anymore. ⁷So if anyone is in Christ, he is a new being. The old things have passed away. They have become new.

Be God's Friends

¹But God has done it all. When we were His enemies, through Christ He made us His friends and gave us the work of making friends of enemies. ²In Christ, God was getting rid of the enmity between Himself and the people of the world by not counting their sins against them, and He has put into our hands the message how God and men are made friends again. ³Since God is pleading through us, we are ambassadors for Christ. We ask you for Christ, "Come and be God's friends." ⁴God made Him who did not know sin to be sin for us to make us God's righteousness in Him.

6 As men who are working with God we plead with you: Don't let God's undeserved love be wasted on you. ²He says:

*When the time comes to be kind, I will answer you,
and when the time comes to save,
I will help you.*

You know—

Now is the time when He welcomes us,

Now is the time when He saves us.

So We Endure

¹We're not in any way giving people a reason to turn away, to keep them from finding fault with

our work. 'Instead we're in everything showing we're God's good workers by great endurance in suffering, in need, and in hardships; 'when we're beaten or put in prison; in riots; when we're overworked and go without sleep and food; 'by being pure, by knowledge, by patience and kindness; by the Holy Spirit; by sincere love; 'by telling the truth; by God's power; with the weapons of righteousness in the right hand and the left; 'when we're honored or dishonored, blamed or praised. Treated as deceivers, we are honest; 'as unknown, we are well known; as *dying*, and you see, we go on *living*; as *corrected but not killed*; 'as sad, we're always glad; as beggars, we're making many rich; as having nothing, we really have everything.

'We have talked frankly to you Corinthians. Our *hearts are wide open*. 'There's plenty of room in them for you, but you're narrow in your feelings toward us. 'I ask you as my children: Treat me as I treat you, and open your hearts wide too.

Don't Touch Anything Unclean

'Don't be yoked with unbelievers. How can right and wrong be partners? Or how can light have anything to do with darkness? 'How can Christ agree with the devil? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? 'How can God's temple agree with idols? Now, we are the temple of the living God, as God said: *I will live and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be My people*. 'So *come out of them, and separate from them*, says the Lord, *and don't touch anything unclean*. *Then I will welcome you, "and I will be your Father, and you will be*

My sons and daughters, says the Almighty Lord.

7 Since we have such promises, dear friends, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that soils body and spirit as we try to be perfectly holy in the fear of God.

You Encouraged Us

'Make room in your hearts for us. We haven't wronged anyone, ruined anyone, gotten the best of anyone. 'I'm not saying this to condemn you. I've told you before, you are in our hearts to die together and to live together. 'I have much confidence in you. I'm very proud of you. I'm very much encouraged. I'm overjoyed in all our troubles.

'Even when we came to Macedonia, our bodies got no rest. We were in every kind of trouble, outwardly fighting and inwardly afraid. 'But *God, who comforts those who feel miserable, comforted us* by the coming of Titus, 'and not only by his coming but also by the way you encouraged him. He told us how you long for me, how sorry you are, and how eager to take my side, and this made me happier still.

'I'm not sorry if my letter made you sad. Even if I did feel sorry when I saw that letter make you sad, though only for a while. 'I'm glad now, not that you were sad but that your sadness led you to feel sorry for sin. You were sad in God's way. And so we haven't done you any harm. 'Being sad in God's way makes you repent of sin so as to save you—you can't regret that. But the sorrow of the world brings death. 'See how eager God's sorrow has made you, how ready to clear yourselves, how disgusted with wrong, how alarmed you were,

9 Ps 118
17-18
11 Ps 119:32
16 10L+26
11:12
2 Sam 7:7
14 N 52:11
Jer 32:38
51:45
Ez 20:34
41:37-37
Amos 4:13
7
6 N 49:13

what longing and zeal you felt, and how ready you were to punish! In every way you've shown you're innocent in this matter. ¹²Although I wrote you, I didn't have in mind the man who did wrong or him who was wronged, but I wanted to show you before God how zealous you are for us. ¹³This is what encouraged us.

While we were encouraged, we were much more delighted to see how happy Titus was because all of you had cheered him up. ¹⁴If I boasted to him about you, you didn't disappoint me. But just as everything we told you was true, so what we had proudly told Titus proved to be true. ¹⁵And his heart goes out to you, all the more as he recalls how ready all of you were to do what he asked and how you welcomed him with respect and trembling. ¹⁶I'm glad I can in every way feel confident about you.

Finish Your Collection

8 Fellow Christians, we want you to know what God's gift of love has done in the churches of Macedonia. ²While they were severely tested by trouble, their overflowing joy and their deep poverty have yielded a richly overflowing generosity. ³I assure you they have given all they could, yes, more than they could give, ⁴of their own free will, and with much pleading they begged us for the privilege of sharing in the help given the holy people. ⁵They did more than we expected: they gave themselves to the Lord first and then to us, doing just what God wanted.

⁶This led us to urge Titus, as he had started it, to finish in you, too, this work of love. ⁷As you are rich in everything, in faith, speech,

knowledge, every kind of zeal, and in the love we stirred up in you, we want you also to be rich in this work of kindness.

⁸I'm not ordering you but testing you by the zeal of others to see how real your love is. ⁹You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ—He was rich, but became poor for you to make you rich by His poverty.

¹⁰I'm telling you what I think you should do about this, because it is best for you. Last year you were the first not only to do something but to want to do something. ¹¹Now finish the job—you were eager to undertake it—in the same way finish it as well as you can. ¹²If you're eager to give, God accepts you according to what you have, not according to what you don't have.

¹³We don't mean to bring relief to others and hardship to you but to be fair. ¹⁴Right now what you don't need should relieve their need so that what they will not need will relieve your need, and so it will be fair, ¹⁵as it is written: *Anyone who got much didn't have too much, and anyone who got little didn't have too little.*

¹⁶We thank God for making Titus just as eager to help you as I am. ¹⁷He welcomed my request. He's very eager and is by his own choice coming to you.

¹⁸We're sending with him the fellow Christian whom all the churches praise for his telling the good news. ¹⁹More than that, the churches appointed him to travel with us in this work of love we're doing to honor the Lord and show we're willing to help.

²⁰We're trying to avoid any criticism of the way we're handling this great gift. ²¹We *intend to do what's*

⁸
^{15 E* 16 18}
^{21 Pr 24}

right not only before the Lord but also before other people.

²²We are also sending with them our fellow Christian whom we have often tested in many ways and found zealous and now more eager than ever because he has so much confidence in you.

²³As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker among you. And our fellow Christians, the messengers of the churches, are the glory of Christ. ²⁴Show the churches how you love them and how right we were when we boasted to them about you.

How to Give

9 I really don't need to write you about helping the holy people, ²because I know how eager you are. That's what I'm telling the people in Macedonia in boasting about you, "Greece has been ready since last year," and your enthusiasm has stirred up most of them. ³Now I'm sending my fellow workers so that we may not have been wrong in boasting about you on this point but that you may be ready as I said. ⁴Otherwise, if any Macedonians come with me and find you aren't ready, you would make us (to say nothing of yourselves) feel ashamed of being so confident. ⁵So I thought it necessary to urge these fellow workers to go to you ahead of me, arrange in advance the gift you promised and have it ready as money that was gladly given and not forced out of you.

⁶Remember this: *If you sow little, you won't get much grain. But if you sow generously, you will get much grain.* ⁷Everyone should do what he has made up his mind to do, not with regret or being forced, because *God loves anyone who gives gladly.*

God Blesses You

"God can pour out every gift of His grace on you so you will always in every way have all you need and plenty to do any good work. ⁸The Bible says of such a person: *He scatters his gifts to the poor. His righteousness goes on forever.* ⁹He who gives *seed to the sower and bread to eat*, will give you seed and multiply it and make *your righteous grain* grow. ¹⁰You will get rich in everything so you can give generously in every way; through us this will make people thank God. ¹¹This work you do in serving others doesn't only supply the needs of the holy people; it makes them pour out many thanks to God. ¹²As you prove by this service what you are, they praise God that you submit to the good news of Christ which you confess and that you freely share with them and with everybody. ¹³While they pray for you, they long for you because they see what an extraordinary gift God's love has brought you. ¹⁴Thanks be to God for His gift that is more than we can tell.

I Am Bold

10 I myself, Paul, plead with you with the gentleness and kindness of Christ—I who am humble when I'm face to face with you but get bold toward you when I'm away! ²I beg you that when I come I don't have to be as confident and bold as I think I'll dare to be against some men who think we're living according to the flesh. ³Of course, we're living in the flesh, but we're not fighting in a fleshly way. ⁴The weapons we fight with are not those of the flesh but have the power before God to tear down

9
6-7, Ps 22:8
9 Ps 112:9
10 Is 55:10
Mos 10:12

fortresses. "With them we tear down arguments and everything raising its proud head against the knowledge of God and make every opposing thought a prisoner and have it obey Christ. "We're ready to punish every disobedience when you are completely obedient.

"You see things as they are outwardly. If anyone feels sure he belongs to Christ, he should remind himself that we belong to Christ just as he does. "If I boast a little too much about our authority, which the Lord gave us to build you up and not to tear you down, I will not have to feel ashamed. "I don't want to seem to scare you with my letters.

¹⁰"His letters are impressive and strong," somebody says, "but when he's with us, he's weak, and people despise what he says." ¹¹Such a person should understand: When we come, we'll act exactly the way we express ourselves in letters when we're away.

We Are Proud of Our Work

¹²We don't dare to put ourselves in a class or compare ourselves with some of those who speak highly of themselves, but when they measure themselves by their own yardstick and compare themselves with themselves, they don't show good sense.

¹³Now we'll limit our boasting. Our limit is the field of work to which God has bound us. This includes coming to you. ¹⁴It is not as though we were not coming to you and so we are reaching beyond our limit. We were the first to reach you with the good news of Christ. ¹⁵We are not going beyond our limit and boasting of work done by others, but we expect your faith to grow so

as to enlarge the work in our field in your area till it goes beyond you. ¹⁶and so we'll tell the good news in the countries beyond you without boasting of work already done in another man's field.

¹⁷But if anyone feels proud, he should feel proud of the Lord. ¹⁸Not the man who approves of himself is really approved but he of whom the Lord approves.

I Am Jealous

11 I wish you would put up with a little foolishness of mine. Yes, do put up with me. ²I am jealous of you with God's own jealousy. I promised you in marriage, to bring you as a pure bride to one husband—to Christ. ³But I'm afraid that as *the snake* by its trickery *seduced* Eve, your minds may somehow be corrupted and you may lose your simple and pure loyalty to Christ. ⁴When somebody comes along and preaches a different Jesus whom we didn't preach or gives you a different spirit you didn't get before or a different gospel you didn't receive before, you put up with it well enough.

⁵I don't think I'm in any way less than your "super" apostles. ⁶Even if I'm no trained speaker, I know what I'm talking about. In every way we have shown you this before everybody.

⁷Did I do wrong when I humbled myself so you would be lifted up, when I charged you nothing for bringing you God's good news? ⁸I robbed other churches, taking pay from them in order to serve you. ⁹When I was with you and needed anything, I didn't bother anyone to help me, because our

¹⁰
¹⁷ Jer 9:24
¹¹
³ Gn 3:4-12

fellow workers^a who came from Macedonia supplied all I needed. I kept myself from being a burden to you in any way, and I'll continue to do so. ¹⁰As the truth of Christ is in me, this boast of mine will not be silenced anywhere in Greece. ¹¹Why? Because I don't love you? God knows I do. ¹²And I will go on doing as I do, to take away the opportunity of those who want it to get others to think they are like us in the work they're boasting about. ¹³Such men are false apostles, deceitful workers masquerading as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴And no wonder, when the devil himself masquerades as an angel of light. ¹⁵So it isn't surprising if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. In the end they'll get what they deserve for what they're doing.

I Will Boast

¹⁶Again I say nobody should think I'm a fool. But if you do, then let me come to you as a fool and also boast a little. ¹⁷What I say when I boast so confidently is not the Lord's way of speaking but a fool's. ¹⁸Since many brag in a human way, I will too. ¹⁹because you, being wise, like to put up with fools. ²⁰You put up with anyone who makes you his slaves or devours what you have or traps you or lords it over you or slaps your face. ²¹I'm ashamed to admit it: As you say, we have been too weak.

But what anyone else dares to claim—I'm talking like a fool—I can claim too. ²²Are they Jews? So am I! Do they belong to the people of Israel? So do I! Are they descended from Abraham? So am I! ²³Are they servants of Christ? I'm mad to talk

like this, but I'm a better one! I've done much more hard work, been in prison much more, been beaten very much more, and often faced death. ²⁴Five times the Jews gave me thirty-nine lashes, three times I was beaten with a stick, once I was stoned, ²⁵three times I was in a shipwreck, a night and a day I drifted in the water. ²⁶I've traveled much and faced dangers of flooded streams and of robbers, dangers from Jews and non-Jews, dangers in the city, in the wilderness, and on the sea, dangers from false friends. ²⁷I have toiled and struggled, often sleepless, hungry and thirsty, often starving, cold, and naked. ²⁸Besides everything else, I have a daily burden—I'm anxiously concerned about all the churches. ²⁹When anyone is weak, am I not weak too? When anyone is led into sin, don't I feel a burning shame? ³⁰If I have to boast, I'll boast of the things that show how weak I am. ³¹The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, who is blessed forever, knows I'm not lying. ³²In Damascus the governor under King Aretas had the city of Damascus watched to catch me, ³³but through an opening in the wall I was let down in a basket, and I escaped.

Caught Up to Paradise

12 I have to boast. It doesn't do any good, but I'll go on with what the Lord has shown and told me. ²I know a man in Christ; fourteen years ago—whether in his body or outside it, I don't know, God knows—that man was caught up to the third heaven. ³I know that such a man—whether in his body or outside it, I don't know, God

^a*Silas and Timothy (Acts 18:5; 2 Cor 1:19)*

knows—'was caught up to Paradise and heard what no human being can or may tell. 'About such a man I will boast, but as to myself, I will boast only of my weaknesses.

'But if I would want to boast, I wouldn't be a fool, because I'd be telling the truth. But I'm not going to do it, in order to keep anyone from thinking more of me than he judges me to be by seeing me or hearing me.

'To keep me from feeling proud because such wonderful things were revealed to me, a thorn was put into my flesh, the devil's messenger to plague me and keep me from getting proud. 'Three times I begged the Lord to have him leave me alone, 'but He told me. "My grace is enough for you. When you are weak, My power is doing its best work." So I'll delight rather to feel proud of my weaknesses in order to have Christ's power rest on me. 'That's why I'm glad to be weak and mistreated, to suffer hardships, to be persecuted and hard pressed for Christ. You see, when I'm weak, then I'm strong.

I Will Be No Burden

"I've become a fool. You forced me to it. Really, you should have spoken well of me. Even if I'm nothing, I wasn't in any way inferior to your "super" apostles. "The miracles that prove I'm an apostle were very patiently done among you—miracles, wonders, and works of power.

"How were you treated worse than the other churches except that I didn't burden you? Forgive me this wrong! "Here I'm ready to come to you a third time, and I'm not going to be a burden, because I don't want your things but you. Children shouldn't save up for their parents but parents for their children.

"And I'll be very glad to spend what I have and myself, too, to help you. Do you love me less because I love you so much?

"But granting I was no burden to you, was I a clever fellow who trapped you with some trick? 'Did I take advantage of you through any of the men I sent you? 'I urged Titus to go to you, and I sent the fellow worker with him. Titus didn't take advantage of you, did he? Didn't both of us act in the same spirit? And do exactly the same things?

"Have you been thinking all along we're only defending ourselves before you? We are speaking before God in Christ, and everything, dear friends, is meant to help you.

Will There Be Trouble?

"I'm afraid I may come and find you different from what I want you to be, and you may find me different from what you want me to be. And there may be quarreling, jealousy, angry feelings, selfishness, slander, gossip, proud and disorderly behavior. 'When I come, my God may again humble me before you, and I may have to weep over many who formerly lived in sin and haven't felt sorry for the unclean, sexual, and lustful things they did.

13 This will be the third time I'm coming to you.

Everything must be proved by two or three witnesses. 'When I was with you the second time as well as now when I'm not with you, I warned and I still warn you who formerly lived in sin and all you others: When I come again, I won't spare you—'seeing that you want proof that Christ is speaking through me. He's not weak in dealing with you but powerful in you. 'He died

10:13
19:15

on a cross in weakness, but He lives by God's power. We too are weak in Him, but with Him we'll live by God's power as it comes to you.

³Examine yourselves to see if you really believe. Test yourselves. Don't you know Jesus Christ is in you—unless you fail in your test? ⁴I hope you'll see we haven't failed in our test. ⁵We pray God you will do no wrong—not to show we haven't failed, but we want you to do what is right even if we may seem to have failed. ⁶We can't do anything against the truth but only work for it. ⁷We are glad when we're weak and you're strong. And we're praying that you may grow to be perfect.

¹⁰Here's the reason I'm writing this while I'm not with you: When I come, I don't want to be sharp in using the authority the Lord gave me to build you up and not to tear you down.

Farewell

¹¹Finally, fellow Christians, farewell! Keep on growing to be perfect. Take encouragement from me. Agree with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you. ¹²Greet one another with a holy kiss. ¹³All the holy people greet you. ¹⁴The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all!

PAUL
WRITES TO THE
GALATIANS

1 PAUL, AN APOSTLE not sent from men or by any man but by Jesus Christ and by God the Father, who raised Him from the dead, ²and all the Christians who are with me, to the churches in Galatia— ³blessing and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴who gave Himself for our sins to save us from this present wicked world according to the will of our God and Father. ⁵To Him be glory forever! Amen.

You Are Turning Away

⁶I am surprised you are so soon leaving Him who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to another kind of good news, ⁷which really is not another. But there are some men who are troubling you and want to change the good news of Christ. ⁸But even if we or an angel from heaven would bring you any other good news than what we brought you, a curse be on him! ⁹I say again what we said before: If anyone brings you any other good news than the one you received, a curse be on him!

¹⁰Do I say this now to get the approval of men—or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I wouldn't be a servant of Christ.

Jesus Gave Me the Good News

¹¹I tell you, my fellow Christians, the good news I told is not a human idea, ¹²because no man gave it or

taught it to me, but Jesus Christ revealed it to me.

¹³You have heard what I used to do when I still lived according to the Jewish religion, how violently I persecuted God's church and tried to destroy it ¹⁴and how in this Jewish religion I was ahead of many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my ancestors.

¹⁵But God *had appointed me before I was born*, and in His love He called me. ¹⁶And when He kindly decided to show me His Son so that I would tell the good news of Him among the Gentiles, I didn't talk it over with other men ¹⁷or go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me, but I went immediately to Arabia^a and then came back to Damascus.

¹⁸After three years I went up to Jerusalem to get to know Peter, and I stayed with him fifteen days. ¹⁹But I didn't see any of the other apostles, only James, the Lord's brother. ²⁰(And I declare before God I'm writing you no lie.) ²¹Then I went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia. ²²In Judea the churches of Christ didn't know me personally. ²³They only heard people say: "The man who used to persecute us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy." ²⁴and they praised God for what they saw in me.

^a*This part of Arabia may be near Damascus.*

Fellowship with the Apostles

2 Fourteen years later I went up to Jerusalem again, this time with Barnabas, and I also took Titus with me. ²(God had told me to go.) Then I laid before the Christians, and privately before the leaders, the good news I preach among the non-Jewish people. I didn't in any way want to run or to have run in vain.

³Titus was with me, and he's a Greek. But nobody forced him to be circumcised ⁴to please the false Christians who had come in secretly. They sneaked in to spy out the liberty we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves. ⁵Not for a moment did we let them dictate to us, so that you will always have the real good news.

⁶I don't care what those leaders once were—*God doesn't prefer one to another*. Those leaders didn't teach me anything new. ⁷On the contrary, they saw I had been entrusted with bringing the good news to the non-Jews as Peter was to bring it to the Jews. ⁸He who had worked in Peter to make him an apostle to the Jews had worked in me to make me an apostle to the non-Jews. ⁹When James, Peter, and John, who were considered pillars, saw what God's love had given me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship with the understanding that we work among the non-Jews and they among the Jews. ¹⁰All they asked was that we remember the poor, and that I was eager to do.

^bSee note at Rom. 3:20.

I Criticized Peter

¹¹But when Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he had shown how wrong he was. ¹²He had been eating with the non-Jews before certain men came from James. But when they came, he held back and kept away from non-Jews because he was afraid of those who believed in circumcision. ¹³And the other Jews acted just as insincerely as he did, so much so even Barnabas was carried away to be a hypocrite with them.

¹⁴But when I saw they were not doing right according to the truth of the good news, I told Peter before everybody: "If you, a Jew, don't live like a Jew but like a non-Jew, how can you insist the non-Jews must live like Jews?"

¹⁵"We were born Jews and not Gentile sinners: "yet we know a person cannot become righteous^b by doing what the Law says, but only by believing in Jesus Christ. Even we believed in Jesus Christ in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by the deeds of the Law, because no one will be justified by the works of the Law.

¹⁷"Now if we who want to be righteous in Christ are found to be sinners like the non-Jews, does Christ encourage us to sin? Never! ¹⁸But if I build up again what I've torn down, I make myself a sinner. ¹⁹By the Law I died to the

²
6 01 10 17
16 Ps 143 2

Law, to live for God.^c ²⁰I was crucified with Christ, and I don't live anymore, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in my body I live by believing in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. ²¹I don't reject God's gift of love. You see, if we could get righteousness through the Law, then Christ died for nothing."

The Believer Is Blessed

3 You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you—you who saw Jesus Christ publicly pictured as crucified? ¹I want you to tell me just one thing: Did you get the Spirit by doing what the Law says or by the truth you heard and believed? ²Are you so foolish? You started with the Spirit; are you now going to finish with the flesh? ³Did you experience so much for nothing? Perhaps it really was for nothing! ⁴Does God give you the Spirit and make such powers active in you by your doing what the Law says or by the truth you hear and believe?

⁵It was the same way with Abraham. He believed God, and so he was counted righteous. ⁶You see, then, that those who believe are Abraham's real descendants. ⁷The Bible foresaw that God would make the nations righteous by faith, and long ago He told Abraham the good news: *Through you all nations will be blessed.* ⁸So those who believe are blessed with Abraham, who believed.

⁹There is a curse on all who

depend on doing what the Law says, because it is written: *Cursed is everyone who doesn't follow and do everything written in the book of the Law.* ¹⁰It is clear that no one is justified before God by the Law, because the righteous will live by faith. ¹¹But the Law is not based on faith; no, it says: *If you do these things, you will find life in them.* ¹²Christ paid the price to free us from the curse of the Law when He was cursed for us (it is written: *Cursed is everyone who hangs on a cross*) ¹³so that in Jesus Christ Abraham's blessing would come to the nations and we by believing would get the promised Spirit.

The Promise Was First

¹⁴My fellow Christians, let me use an example from daily life. Once a will is ratified, even if it's only a man's will, nobody sets it aside or adds to it. ¹⁵Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his Descendant. He doesn't say: "and by the descendants," in the plural, but in the singular: "and *by your Descendant,*" which is Christ. ¹⁶Now, I say this: First God confirmed His covenant; and the Law, which came 430 years later, doesn't set aside and cancel its promise. ¹⁷If we get the inheritance by the Law, we don't get it by a promise; but God gave it to Abraham by a promise.

Our Guardian

¹⁸Why, then, was the Law given?

^cThe meaning of vv. 17–19 is this: When we don't try to be righteous by doing what the Law demands, we "tear down" the Law, and the Jews may think we are just non-Jewish sinners. If, to please the Jews, we try again to do what the Law demands and so "build it up," the Law only condemns us as sinners. The Law condemned Jesus for our sins and killed Him, and us with Him. Now the Law can't demand any more from us than from a dead person.

It was added to arouse transgressions^d until the Descendant would come to whom the promise was made. And it was given through angels in the hands of a mediator.^e ²⁰A mediator deals with more than one, but God is one.^e

²¹Is the Law, then, opposed to God's promises? Never! If a law had been given that could make us alive, it certainly would have given us righteousness. ²²But the Bible has condemned all people as sinners so that believers by believing in Jesus Christ would get the promised blessing. ²³Before faith came, we were under the Law, guarded in prison for the faith that was to be revealed. ²⁴Then the Law has been our guardian so that we would come to Christ and be justified by faith. ²⁵But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. ²⁶You are all God's children by believing in Christ Jesus, ²⁷because all of you who were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸There is no Jew or Greek, no slave or free person, no man or woman—you're all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants and heirs of the blessing God promised.

God's Sons

4 Now, I say that as long as the heir is a child, he is no better than a slave, although he owns everything. ²He is under guardians

and managers till the day set by his father. ³So it is with us. When we were children, we were slaves under the elementary ways of the world. ⁴But when the right time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, ⁵to free those under the Law and make us His sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God sent into our hearts the Spirit of His Son, who cries, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave but a son. And if you are His son, God has made you His heir.

⁸But when you didn't know God, you were slaves to gods who really don't exist. ⁹Now that you know God—or rather, God knows you—how can you turn back to those elementary ways, so weak and beggarly, and want to be slaves to them again? ¹⁰You keep days, months, seasons, and years! ¹¹I'm afraid the work I did on you may have been wasted.

You Welcomed Me

¹²I beg you, my fellow Christians, become like me, since I became like you. You did me no wrong. ¹³You know I brought you the good news the first time because I was sick. ¹⁴Though my sick body was a test to you, you didn't despise or scorn me, but you welcomed me as if I were God's angel or Christ Jesus Himself. ¹⁵You thought you were happy—what has become of that? I tell you, if possible, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to

^dThe Law was like a stick with which a trainer stirs up a sleeping wild animal to show how terrible it is.

^eGod gave the Law to Moses, who brought it to the people, but God gave His promise directly to Abraham.

^fIt may have been malaria that forced Paul to leave the swampy country of Pamphylia and go up into the mountains, 3,600 feet above sea level, and so come to the Galatians. (Acts 13:13-14)

me. ¹⁶Can it be I have become your enemy by telling you the truth?

¹⁷Those men are making much of you without meaning well. They want to exclude you,⁸ so that you will have to make much of them. ¹⁸It is fine if somebody, meaning well, is always making much of you, not just while I'm with you.

¹⁹My children, I'm suffering birth pains for you again till Christ is formed in you. ²⁰I could wish I were with you right now and could talk in a different tone of voice because I'm puzzled about you.

We Are like Isaac

²¹Tell me, you who want to be under the Law, will you not listen to what the Law says? ²²It is written: Abraham had two sons; one was the son of the slave and the other the son of the free woman. ²³Now, the son of the slave was born like other children, but the son of the free woman by being promised.

²⁴This has figurative meaning. The women are two covenants. The children of the covenant given on Mount Sinai are born to be slaves; this is Hagar. ²⁵"Hagar" in Arabia means Mount Sinai. She is like Jerusalem today, because she and her children are slaves. ²⁶But the Jerusalem that is above is free; and she is our mother. ²⁷It is written:

*Be glad, barren woman, you who don't have any children;
break into shouting, you who feel no pains of childbirth,
because the deserted woman has many more children
than the one who has the husband.*

²⁸Now you, my fellow Christians,

like Isaac, are children born by a promise.

²⁹At that time the son born like other children persecuted the son born by the Spirit. And so it is now. ³⁰But what does the Bible say? *Put away the slave and her son, because the son of the slave must not get any of the inheritance of the son of the free woman.* ³¹Now, then, fellow Christians, we are not children of a slave but of a free woman.

Christ Freed Us

5 Christ has freed us so that we'll be free. Stand firm, then, and don't get caught again under a yoke of slavery.

¹I, Paul, tell you, if you get circumcised, Christ will do you no good. ²And again I warn everyone who gets circumcised he must do everything the Law says. ³You who try to become righteous by the Law have cut yourselves off from Christ and lost God's grace. ⁴But we who believe by the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of the righteous. ⁵In Christ Jesus no circumcision or the lack of it can do anything but only faith that is active in love.

⁶You were running well. Who has kept you from obeying the truth? ⁷You were not persuaded by Him who called you. ⁸A little yeast ferments the whole dough. ⁹I'm convinced in the Lord you'll think as I do, but anyone who troubles you will have to take his punishment, whoever he may be. ¹⁰My fellow Christians, if I'm "still preaching that people have to be circumcised," why am I still persecuted? If I were preaching that, the Jews would have

⁸Perhaps from Paul, who was anxious to win the non-Jews, and from happiness in Christ.

²⁷ 15:54-1:30
³⁰ Co 2:10

no reason to oppose the Cross. ¹¹I could wish the men who upset you would castrate themselves.

¹²You were called to be free, my fellow Christians. Only don't use your freedom as a chance to sin as you like, but in love serve one another. ¹³You keep the whole Law when you do one thing: *love your neighbor like yourself*. ¹⁴But if you bite and eat one another, be careful, or you'll be devoured by one another.

¹⁵I say, follow the Spirit, and you will not do what the flesh wants. ¹⁶What the flesh wants is against the Spirit, and what the Spirit wants is against the flesh, because they are opposed to each other and so keep you from doing what you want to do. ¹⁷But if the Spirit leads you, you are not under the Law.

¹⁸Now, you know the works of the flesh. They are: sexual sin, uncleanness, wild living, ¹⁹worshiping of idols, witchcraft, hate, wrangling, jealousy, anger, selfishness, quarreling, divisions, ²⁰envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, those who do such things will have no share in God's kingdom.

²¹But the Spirit produces love, joy, peace. He makes us patient, kindly, good, faithful, ²²gentle, and gives us self-control. There's no law against such things. ²³But if we belong to Christ Jesus, we have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁴If we live by the Spirit, let us also follow the Spirit. ²⁵Let us not get conceited, challenge one another and get jealous of one another.

When Anyone Sins

6 My fellow Christians, if you find anyone doing wrong, you who

have the Spirit should set him right. But be gentle and keep an eye on yourself; you may be tempted too. ²Help one another carry these burdens, and so do everything the Law of Christ demands.

³If anyone thinks he's something when he's nothing, he's fooling himself. ⁴Everyone should examine his own work. Then he will have something in himself that deserves praise, without comparing himself with anyone else. ⁵Everyone will have to carry his own burden.

We Reap What We Sow

⁶If someone teaches you the Word, share all your good things with your teacher. ⁷Don't make a mistake; you can't fool God. Whatever you sow, you'll reap. ⁸If you sow to please your own flesh, you will from your flesh reap destruction. If you sow to please the Spirit, you will from the Spirit reap everlasting life. ⁹Let us not get tired of doing good. At the right time we'll reap if we don't give up. ¹⁰So whenever we have a chance, let us do good to everybody but especially to our family of believers.

The World Is Crucified to Me

¹¹See what big letters I make when I write to you with my own hand.

¹²These men who want to be popular in a worldly way are insisting you must be circumcised only to keep themselves from being persecuted for the Cross of Christ. ¹³Why, these who are circumcised don't keep the Law themselves, but they want you to be circumcised so they can boast of that physical fact about you. ¹⁴May I never boast of anything but the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me and I to the

world. ¹⁵No circumcision or the lack of it is anything, but only the new life that is created. ¹⁶*Peace* and mercy on all who follow this rule, that is, *on God's Israel*.

¹⁷From now on nobody should

make trouble for me, because I have on my body the scars of a slave of Jesus.

¹⁸The love of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, my fellow Christians. Amen.

EPHESIANS

1 PAUL, APOSTLE OF CHRIST JESUS by God's will, to the people who are holy and faithful in Christ Jesus; ²May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you and give you peace.

What God Has Done

¹Let us praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in Christ has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heaven.

²He has done what in His kindness He planned to do: Before He made the world, He who loved us ³appointed us to be made His sons by Jesus Christ. In Him He chose us to be holy and blameless before Him ⁴in order to praise the glory of the love He gave us in His dear Son, ⁵who bought us with His blood to forgive our sins and set us free. So ⁶He poured out the riches of His grace on us, giving us every kind of wisdom and understanding ⁷as He told us the hidden meaning of His will.

It was His kindly purpose in Christ ⁸to manage everything in heaven and on earth in such a way that when the right time would come it would all be organized under Christ as its Head.

⁹He who accomplishes everything just as He wants to plan it, long ago appointed us in Christ and chose us according to His purpose ¹⁰that we, the first to find our hope in Christ, should live to praise His glory. ¹¹When you heard the message of the truth, the good news that you were saved, and you believed in Him,

you, too, were sealed in Him by the Holy Spirit—whom He promised ¹²and who is now the Guarantee of our inheritance—that He might free you to be His people and to praise His glory.

I'm Praying for You

¹³That is why, since I heard how you believe in the Lord Jesus and love all the holy people, ¹⁴I never stop thanking God for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁵I ask the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, to give you His Spirit to make you wise and reveal the truth to you as you learn to know Him better ¹⁶and to enlighten the eyes of your minds so that you know the hope He called you to, the riches of the glory of the *inheritance* He gives to *His holy people*, ¹⁷and the vast resources of His power working in us who believe. It is the same mighty power ¹⁸with which He worked in Christ, raised Him from the dead, and *made Him sit at His right* in heaven, ¹⁹above all rulers, authorities, powers, lords, and any name that can be mentioned, not only in this world but also in the next. ²⁰And *He put everything under His feet*, and gave Him as the Head of everything to the church, ²¹which is His body, having all that is in Him who fills everything in every way.

God's Love Saved You

2 You too were dead in your transgressions and sins, ²in which you once followed the ways

1
18 D1 22 3-4
20 Pa 110 1
22 Pa 86

of this present world and the ruler whose power is in the air, the spirit who is now working in the people who disobey. 'Among them all of us once lived in our fleshly lusts, doing what our flesh and mind wanted to do, and by nature we, like the others, were people with whom God was angry.

'But God, who is rich in mercy, loved us with such a great love. 'He made us who were dead in sins alive with Christ. (You are saved by a gift of His grace.) 'And since we are in Christ Jesus, He raised us with Him and had us sit with Him in heaven 'to show in the coming ages the immeasurable riches of His love by being kind to us in Christ Jesus. 'You are saved by a gift of grace which you get by faith. You didn't do it. It is God's gift. 'It isn't because of anything you have done, or you might boast. 'He has made us what we are, creating us in Christ Jesus to do good works, in which God long ago planned for us to live.

Jews and Non-Jews

'Remember, then, physically you once were Gentiles, and those who call themselves "circumcised" (which is physical and done by human hands) called you "uncircumcised." 'You were then without Christ, excluded from being citizens of Israel and strangers to the covenants that had the promise. You had no hope or God in the world.

'Once you were *far away*, but now in Christ Jesus the blood of Christ has brought you *near*. 'He is our *Peace*: In His flesh He has made the Jew and the non-Jew one by breaking down the wall of enmity that kept them apart 'and by

putting away the Law with its rules and regulations, in order to make the Jew and the non-Jew in Himself one new man (so making peace) 'and to make both in one body friends with God by His cross, on which He killed the enmity. 'And He came with *the good news of peace to you who were far away and to us who were near*, 'since by one Spirit He enables both to come to the Father.

'Then you are no longer foreigners or strangers but fellow citizens, a part of God's holy people and members of His family. 'You are built on the *foundation* of the apostles and prophets, and Christ Jesus Himself is the *Cornerstone*. 'In Him the whole building is fitted together and grows to be a holy temple in the Lord. 'In Him you too are built up with the others to be God's home in the Spirit.

God's Purpose in Me

3 For this reason I, Paul, whom Christ Jesus made a prisoner for you who are not Jews—^a 'surely you've heard how God gave me gifts of His love to bring you 'and how He revealed to me the hidden truth, as I have briefly written. 'When you read this, you can see I understand the hidden truth of Christ. 'The people of other times weren't told about it as the Spirit now has revealed it to His holy apostles and prophets, 'that in Christ Jesus the people who are not Jews have the same inheritance, belong to the same body, and have the same promise through the good news.

'I was made a servant of it by the gift of love God gave me by the working of His power. 'To me, the least of all His holy people, He gave

^a Here Paul breaks off and doesn't take up the thought again till v. 14.

this gift of His love: to bring the news of the unsearchable riches of Christ to the non-Jews ⁹and let everybody see clearly what God planned to do according to the truth hidden from the beginning in God, who created everything, ¹⁰so that through the church God's many-sided wisdom would now be shown to the rulers and authorities in heaven. ¹¹He planned it through the ages and then did it in Christ Jesus, our Lord. ¹²In Him, by believing in Him, we have confidence and can boldly come to God. ¹³So I ask you not to get discouraged by what I suffer for you. It is an honor to you.

How Christ Loves Me

¹⁴For this reason I kneel before the "Father," ¹⁵from whom every group in heaven and on earth gets the name of "family,"^b ¹⁶and ask Him, as He is rich in glory, to give you this: that His Spirit will inwardly strengthen you with power. ¹⁷Christ will live in your hearts by faith, and you will be firmly rooted and built up in love. ¹⁸so that you and all the holy people can grasp how broad and long and high and deep love is, ¹⁹and know how Christ loves us—more than we can know—and so you will be filled with all that is in God.

²⁰Now to Him who by the power working in us can do far, far more than anything we ask or imagine. ²¹to Him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus to all ages forever. Amen.

^b"Family" (= clan) in Greek is the same word as "Father" with a special ending.

We Are One

4 So I, a prisoner in the Lord, urge you to live as people whom God has called should live. ²Be humble and gentle in every way, be patient, and lovingly bear with one another. ³Do your best to keep the oneness of the Spirit by living together in peace: ⁴one body and one Spirit—even as you have been called to share one hope— ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who rules over us all, works through us all, and lives in us all.

⁷But each of us has been given the gift measured out by Christ who gave it. ⁸So it says: He *went up on high, took prisoners, and gave gifts to people.* ⁹Now what can "He went up" mean but that He had gone down to the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰He who went down also "went up" above all the heavens to fill everything. ¹¹And He gave us some men to be apostles, some to speak the Word, some to tell the good news, some to be pastors and teachers, ¹²in order to get His holy people ready to serve as workers and build the body of Christ ¹³till all of us get to be one as we believe and know God's Son, reach a mature manhood, and grow to the full height of Christ. ¹⁴We shouldn't be babies any longer, tossed and driven by every windy thing that is taught, by the trickery of men and their clever scheming in error. ¹⁵Let us tell the truth with love and in every way grow up into Him who is the Head—Christ. ¹⁶He makes the whole body fit together, unites it by every contact with its support, and to the extent that each part is

working He makes the body grow and builds it up in love.

A New Life

¹⁷So I tell you and call on you in the Lord not to live any more like the people of the world. Their minds are set on worthless things. ¹⁸Their understanding is darkened. Their ignorance and their closed minds have made them strangers to the life God gives. ¹⁹Having lost their sense of right and wrong, they've given themselves up to a life of lust to practice every kind of vice with greed.

²⁰But that is not what you learned when you got to know Christ, ²¹if you have heard Him and in Him have been taught the truth as it is in Jesus. ²²Strip off your old self, which follows your former ways of living and ruins you as it follows the desires that deceive you. ²³Become new in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴and put on the new self, which is created to be like God, righteous and holy in the truth.

²⁵So don't lie any more, but *tell one another the truth*, because we are members of one another. ²⁶*Be angry but don't sin*. Don't let the sun go down on your anger. ²⁷Don't give the devil a chance to work.

²⁸Anyone who has been stealing should not steal any more, but instead work hard, doing something good with his own hands so that he has something to share with anyone in need. ²⁹Don't say anything bad but only what is good, so that you help where there's a need and benefit those who hear it.

³⁰And don't grieve God's Holy Spirit, by whom you were sealed for the day when you will be set free.

³¹Get rid of all bitter feelings, temper, anger, yelling, slander, and

every way of hurting one another. ³²Be kind to one another and tenderhearted, and forgive one another as God in Christ has forgiven you.

You Are a Light

5 As God's dear children try to be like Him ²and live in love as Christ loved us and gave Himself for us as a *fragrant offering and sacrifice* to God.

³Sexual sins, anything unclean, or greed shouldn't even be mentioned among you. This is the right attitude for holy people. ⁴No shameful things, foolish talk, or coarse jokes! These aren't proper. Instead give thanks. ⁵Be sure of this, that nobody who is immoral, unclean, or greedy (a greedy person worships an idol) has any share in the kingdom of Christ, who is God. ⁶Don't let anybody fool you with meaningless words. These things bring God's anger and punishment on those who don't obey the truth. ⁷So don't share their ways.

⁸Once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light, ⁹since light produces everything good and righteous and true. ¹⁰And test things to see if they please the Lord. ¹¹Don't have anything to do with the works of darkness, from which no good can come. Instead show that they are wrong. ¹²We're ashamed even to mention what such people do secretly. ¹³When you show that anything is wrong, it is seen in the light; anything you can see is as clear as light. ¹⁴So it says: "Wake up, sleeper! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

¹⁵Be very careful, then, on how you live. Don't be unwise but wise. ¹⁶And make the most of your

²⁵ Zch 8:16
²⁶ Ps 4:4
⁵
² Ex 20:41
⁶ Ps 40:6

opportunities because these are evil days. ¹⁷So don't be foolish, but understand what the Lord wants. ¹⁸*Don't get drunk on wine*, which means wild living. But let the Spirit fill you ¹⁹as you speak psalms, hymns, and songs to one another, and with your hearts sing and play music to the Lord, ²⁰always thanking God the Father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Husband and Wife

²¹As you respect Christ, submit to one another. ²²You married women, obey your husbands as you obey the Lord, ²³because a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the Head of the church, which is His body that He saves. ²⁴Yes, as the Church obeys Christ, so wives should obey their husbands in everything.

²⁵You husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it ²⁶to make it holy by washing it clean with water by the Word, ²⁷to have the Church stand before Him as something wonderful, without a spot or a wrinkle or anything like that; yes, it should be holy and without a fault. ²⁸This is how husbands should love their wives, like their own bodies. A man who loves his wife is loving himself. ²⁹Nobody ever hated his own body. Everybody feeds it and treats it tenderly, as Christ does the church ³⁰because we are parts of His body. ³¹*This is why a man will leave his father and mother and live with his wife, and the two will be one flesh.* ³²There's a great truth hidden here—I mean that of Christ and the Church. ³³But every one of you, too, love your wife as you love yourself. And a wife should respect her husband.

¹⁸ Pr 23:31
³¹ Gn 2:24

²⁻³ Ex 20:12
⁴ Pr 3:11

Children and Parents

6 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, because it is right. ²*Honor your father and mother*—this is an important commandment with a promise: ³*it will be well with you, and you will live long on the earth.*

⁴And you fathers, don't make your children angry, but raise them by letting *the Lord train* and correct them.

Servants and Masters

⁵You servants, obey those who are your masters in this world, with respect and trembling and as sincerely as you obey Christ, ⁶working not only while you are being watched, as if you merely wanted to please men, but as servants of Christ who are glad to do what God wants them to do. ⁷Serve eagerly as you would serve the Lord and not merely men. ⁸You know that if you do a good thing, the Lord will pay you back whether you are a slave or a free man.

⁹You masters, treat your slaves in the same way, and stop threatening them. You know that they and you have one Master in heaven, and He doesn't prefer one to another.

Put on the Whole Armor

¹⁰Finally, let the Lord and His mighty power make you strong. ¹¹Put on God's whole armor, and you will be able to stand against the devil's tricky ways. ¹²You're not fighting against flesh and blood but against the rulers, authorities, and lords of this dark world, against the evil spirits that are above. ¹³This is why you should take God's whole armor; then you can resist when things are at their worst and having done everything, you can hold your

ground. ¹⁴Stand, then, *with truth as a belt fastened around your waist, with righteousness covering you as a breastplate.* ¹⁵and with shoes on your feet, ready to *bring the good news of peace.* ¹⁶Besides all these, take faith as the shield with which you can put out all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷And take salvation as your helmet, and the Spirit's sword, which is God's Word.

¹⁸Pray at all times in the Spirit, using every kind of prayer. Be alert and keep at it continually as you pray for all the holy people. ¹⁹For me too, that when I start to talk I'll be told what to say and will boldly tell the hidden truth of the good

news ²⁰(for which I'm an ambassador in chains) just as boldly as I must tell it.

Farewell

²¹You should know what is happening to me and how I'm getting along. And so Tychicus, our dear fellow Christian and loyal helper in the Lord, will tell you everything. ²²I'm sending him to you to let you know about us and to encourage you.

²³May God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give our fellow Christians peace and love with faith! ²⁴His love be with all who have an undying love for our Lord Jesus Christ.

¹⁴ 16 11 5
¹⁶ 59 17
¹⁵ 16 52 7
¹⁷ 16 49 2

PAUL
WRITES TO THE
PHILIPPIANS

1 PAUL AND TIMOTHY, servants of Christ Jesus, to all who are holy in Christ Jesus in Philippi, especially to the pastors and helpers: ²May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you and give you peace.

You Are in My Heart

³Every time I think of you, I thank my God. ⁴Every time I pray for all of you, I always do it with joy ⁵because you have shared in telling the good news from the first day till now. ⁶I'm sure that He who started a good work in you will go on to finish it till the day of Christ Jesus. ⁷And it is right for me to feel like this about all of you. Whether I'm in my chains or defending and confirming the good news, you're all in my heart as sharing God's love with me. ⁸God knows how I long for you all with the tenderness of Christ Jesus.

¹⁹ Job 13 16

⁹And I pray your love will still grow more and more in knowledge and in every kind of understanding ¹⁰so that you approve the better things and are pure, harming nobody, till the day of Christ, ¹¹as Jesus Christ has filled your life with righteous works by which you glorify and praise God.

¹²And I pray your love will still grow more and more in knowledge and in every kind of understanding ¹³so that you approve the better things and are pure, harming nobody, till the day of Christ, ¹⁴as Jesus Christ has filled your life with righteous works by which you glorify and praise God.

If Only Christ Is Preached

¹⁵I want you to know, my fellow Christians, that what happened to me actually helped spread the good news ¹⁶so that the governor's whole palace and all the others have found out I'm in chains for Christ. ¹⁷And so my chains have given most of our

friends the confidence in the Lord to speak God's Word more boldly and fearlessly than ever.

¹⁸Some men are moved by jealousy and rivalry to preach Christ, but others by goodwill. ¹⁹Those who love to preach Him know I'm appointed to defend the good news. ²⁰But the others preach Christ selfishly, without a pure motive, and mean to stir up trouble for me even while I am in chains. ²¹But what does it mean? Only this, that in one way or another, whether their motive is false or real, they preach Christ—and I'm glad of that.

Live or Die?

Yes, and I'm also going to be happy ²²because I know that your prayer and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ will make *this turn out victoriously for me* ²³as I eagerly hope there will be nothing for me to be ashamed of. But by speaking very boldly I will now as always glorify Christ in my body by living or by dying ²⁴since for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²⁵If I live here in my body, I'll enjoy the results of my work. And which would I like best? I don't know. ²⁶I find it hard to choose between the two. I want to leave and be with Christ; that is much better. ²⁷But when I think of you, I feel a greater need to stay in my body. ²⁸And since I feel convinced of this, I know I'll live and be with all of you to help you grow and be happy in your faith. ²⁹And so by coming to you

Ephesus, Early in A.D. 55

again I want to give you all the more reason to glory in Christ Jesus.

Fighting for the Faith

¹⁷But live as citizens worthy of the good news of Christ so that, whether I come and see you or stay away, I will hear you are standing firm, one in spirit, and fighting side by side like one man for the faith in the good news. ¹⁸Don't let your enemies frighten you in any way. This is how you prove to them they will be destroyed and you will be saved, and this proof is from God. ¹⁹It is given to you to be for Christ, not only to believe in Him but also to suffer for Him ²⁰as you have the same struggle you once saw me have and now hear that I have.

Live in Harmony

2 Now if you are encouraged in Christ, moved by comforting words of love, if you and we have the same Spirit, if you are tender and sympathetic, ²make me very happy—be one in thought and in love, live in harmony, keep one purpose in mind. ³Don't be selfish or proud, but humbly treat others as better than yourselves. ⁴Each of you, don't be interested in your own things, rather in the things of others.

Be like Jesus

¹Think just as Christ Jesus thought: ²Although He was God, He decided not to take advantage of His being equal with God as though it were stolen goods, ³but He emptied Himself, made Himself a slave, became like other human beings, ⁴and was seen to have the ways of a man. He became obedient and humbled Himself till He died, yes, died on a cross. ⁵That is why God also exalted Him up on high and

gave Him the name above every other name ⁶that at the name of JESUS *everyone* in heaven and on earth and under the earth *should kneel*" ⁷and everyone should confess, "JESUS CHRIST IS LORD!" and so glorify God the Father.

Work Out Your Salvation

⁸My dear friends, you have always obeyed, not only when I was with you but even more now that I'm away. And so work out your salvation with fear and trembling ⁹since it is God who makes you willing and gives you the energy to do what He wants.

¹⁰Do everything without complaining or arguing, ¹¹so that you will be blameless and innocent, *God's children with whom nobody can find a fault* in the middle of a crooked and perverted people, among whom you shine like stars in the world ¹²as you cling to the Word of Life. Then I can boast on the day of Christ I didn't run in vain or *work in vain*. ¹³But even if my life is poured out while I bring your faith as a sacrifice and service to God, I'm glad, and I'm happy with all of you. ¹⁴You too, be glad and be happy with me.

Timothy and Epaphroditus

¹I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon to get news about you that will cheer me up too. ²You see, I don't have anybody who will take such a real interest in your welfare as he will. ³All look after their own interests, not after those of Jesus Christ. ⁴But you know how he has stood the test, how like a son helping his father he worked hard with me to tell the good news. ⁵So I expect to send him as soon as I see

²
¹⁰⁻¹¹ 16-45
²³⁻²⁴
¹⁵ D1-32.5
¹⁶ 16 49.4
⁶⁵⁻²³

what's going to happen to me. ²²And I trust the Lord that I'll be coming soon too.

²³I feel I must send you Epaphroditus, my fellow Christian, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, whom you sent to help me in my needs, ²⁴since he has been longing to see all of you and is feeling troubled because you heard he was sick. ²⁵He was sick and almost died, but God had pity on him and helped him; not only him but me, to keep me from having one sorrow after another. ²⁶So I'm especially eager to send him and give you the joy of seeing him again and to feel more relief myself. ²⁷So give him a very happy welcome in the Lord, and value men like him. ²⁸For the work of Christ he risked his life and almost died, to make up for the service you couldn't give me.

Only Christ

3 Now, then, my fellow Christians, be happy in the Lord. It is no trouble to write the same things to you, and it is necessary for your safety. ²Look out for those dogs, look out for those who do wrong, look out for the men who circumcise only their bodies. ³We are really the circumcised people, we who worship by God's Spirit, are proud of Christ Jesus, and don't trust anything human, ⁴though I, too, have something human to trust. If anybody else thinks he has anything human to trust, I have more. ⁵I was circumcised on the eighth day, a descendant of Israel of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew son of Hebrew parents; in regard to the Law, a Pharisee, ⁶so zealous I persecuted the church, and according to the Law so righteous nobody could find any fault with me.

⁷But any advantages I had I considered a loss for Christ. ⁸Yes, I think it is all a loss because it is so much better to know Christ Jesus, my Lord. For Him I have lost everything and consider it garbage in order to win Christ ⁹and find myself in Him, not having my own righteousness based on the Law but the righteousness that depends on faith, that God gives those who believe in Christ. ¹⁰I want to know Him and the power of His resurrection, to share His sufferings and be like Him in His death ¹¹if somehow I will get to be one of those who rise from the dead.

¹²I don't mean I have already reached this or am already at the goal, but I eagerly go after it to make it mine because Christ Jesus made me His own. ¹³Fellow Christians, I don't think I have it in my hands. But one thing I do: I forget what is behind, reach for what is ahead, ¹⁴and with my eyes on the mark I go after the heavenly prize to which God has called us in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵Let us all who are mature think this way. But if you think differently about anything, God will reveal this to you too. ¹⁶Only be guided by what we have learned so far.

Citizens of Heaven

¹⁷My fellow Christians, all together imitate me more and more, and watch those who live according to the example we're giving you. ¹⁸As I have often told you and now tell you with tears, many live as the enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹In the end they will be destroyed. Their god is their belly, they glory in their shame, and their mind is on earthly things. ²⁰But we are citizens of heaven and look for the Lord Jesus

Christ to come from heaven as the Savior, ²¹who will change our humble bodies and make them like His glorified body by the power by which He can make everything serve Him.

4 And so, my fellow Christians, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord, dear friends.

Two Women

¹I urge Euodia and Syntyche to agree in the Lord. ²And I beg you, my true fellow worker, help them. They fought side by side with me in telling the good news, and with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in *the book of life*.

Be Happy

¹Be happy in the Lord always! I'll say it again: Be happy! ²Everybody should know how gentle you can be. The Lord is near. ³Don't worry about anything, but in everything go to God, and pray to let Him know what you want, and give thanks. ⁴Then God's peace, better than all our thinking, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

⁵Finally, my fellow Christians, keep your minds on all that is true or noble, right or pure, lovely or appealing, on anything that is excellent or that deserves praise. ⁶Do what you have learned, received, and heard from me and what you saw me do. Then the God of peace will be with you.

Your Gift

¹⁰It made me very happy in the Lord that now again you showed a fresh interest in me. You were interested but didn't have a chance to show it. ¹¹I'm not saying I need anything. I've learned to be content whatever my condition. ¹²I know how to live with too little or too much. In every way of life I've learned the secret of eating heartily and of being hungry, of having too much and too little. ¹³I can do everything through Him who gives me the strength.

¹⁴But it was kind of you to share my trouble. ¹⁵You people at Philippi know too, that when I first told you the good news and then left Macedonia, you were the only church to share with me by an account of gifts and receipts.

^{3 Pt. 69:28}
^{10 Et. 20:41}

¹⁶Even while I was in Thessalonica, you more than once sent help for my needs. ¹⁷It isn't the gift I want but to see the profits growing and credited to you. ¹⁸You have paid me in full, and I have more than enough. I am fully supplied, now that I received from Epaphroditus what you sent. It is *a sweet odor*, a sacrifice that God accepts and is pleased with. ¹⁹And my God will give you all you need according to His riches, in His glory, and in Christ Jesus. ²⁰To our God and Father be glory forever. Amen.

²¹Greet everyone who is holy in Christ Jesus. The Christians who are with me greet you. ²²All the holy people greet you, especially those of the emperor's household. ²³The undeserved love of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirits. Amen.

PAUL
WRITES TO THE
COLOSSIANS

1 PAUL, APOSTLE OF CHRIST JESUS by God's will, and our fellow worker Timothy, ²to the holy and faithful fellow believers in Christ at Colossae: May God our Father bless you and give you peace.

We're Praying for You

¹In our prayers for you we are always thanking God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁴because we have heard how you believe in Christ Jesus and love all the holy people ⁵and what you hope for is stored up for you in heaven. You heard of it before when you were told the truth of the good news ⁶that has come to you. As it is producing fruit and growing all over the world, so it did among you since the day you heard it and got to know what it really means to have God love you, ⁷as you learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is loyally serving Christ in our place. ⁸And he's the one who told us about your love in the Spirit.

⁹That is why, since the day we heard of it, we haven't stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with a clear knowledge of His will by giving you every kind of spiritual wisdom and understanding ¹⁰so that you live worthy of the Lord, aiming to please Him in every way as you produce every kind of good work and grow by knowing your God better. ¹¹We ask Him according to His wonderful might to strengthen you with all the power

you need to endure patiently whatever comes as you joyfully ¹²thank the Father, who made you fit to share everything the holy people have in the light.

God's Son Brought Peace

¹³He rescued us from the tyranny of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, ¹⁴who paid the ransom to forgive our sins and set us free. ¹⁵He is the image of the invisible God, born before and above everything created, ¹⁶since in Him was created everything you can see and cannot see in heaven and on earth—thrones, lords, rulers, or powers—everything was created by Him and for Him. ¹⁷He was before everything, and He holds everything together. ¹⁸He is the Head of the Church, which is His body. He is the Beginning, the first among the dead to become alive that He may be first in everything. ¹⁹God decided to have His whole being live in Him ²⁰and by Him to reconcile to Himself^a everything on earth and in heaven in a peace made by the blood on His cross.

Our Work Among You

²¹Once you were strangers to God and in your hearts His enemies, doing wicked things, ²²but now by dying in His human body He has made of you enemies friends in order to have you stand before Him without sin or fault or blame ²³if, of

^a God and the world, who are enemies, become friends in Christ.

course, you continue in your faith to stand firm on the foundation and are not moved from the hope of the good news you heard. This has been preached to every creature under heaven, and I, Paul, was made its servant.

⁴I delight to suffer for you now and in my body am enduring what still needs to be endured of Christ's sorrows for His body, which is the church. ⁵God made me its servant when He gave me this work among you in order to do everything God meant to do by His Word. ⁶This was a mystery hidden from the people of all the ages but now shown to His holy people, ⁷whom God wanted to tell how rich among the non-Jews is the glory of this hidden truth: Christ, the Hope of glory, is in you.

⁸Him we preach, warning everyone and teaching everyone, using every kind of wisdom, in order to present everyone perfect in Christ. ⁹This is what I'm working for, struggling like an athlete by His power that is working mightily in me.

2 I want you to know how much I'm struggling for you and the people of Laodicea and all who haven't seen me face to face. ²to encourage you, as you're bound together by love, to be ever so richly convinced in your understanding and to know well God's hidden truth, that is Christ. ³in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴I say this so that nobody will mislead you by fine-sounding arguments. ⁵Although I'm away from you, I'm with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly and firm you are in your faith in Christ.

You Live in Christ

⁶Just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, so live in Him. ⁷In Him be rooted, built up, and strengthened in your faith, as you were taught, and overflow with thanksgiving.

⁸Be careful or somebody will capture you by his philosophy, tricking you with meaningless words, as he follows the traditions of men and the elements of the world but not Christ.

⁹In Him, that is, in His body, lives all the fullness of the Deity. ¹⁰And in Him, who is the Lord of all rulers and powers, you have a full life. ¹¹In Him you also were circumcised, not by human hands but by putting away the sinful body by the circumcision of Christ ¹²since in baptism you were buried with Him and raised with Him through faith produced by the power of God, who raised Him from the dead.

¹³Yes, you who were dead in sins and in your uncircumcised bodies He has made alive with Him when He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴wiped out the Law's demands that were against us and took them out of the way by nailing them to the cross. ¹⁵He stripped rulers and powers of their armor and made a public show of them as He triumphed over them in Christ.

Man-made Rules

¹⁶Then nobody should say you are wrong in what you eat or drink or do on a festival, on the first of the month, or on a Sabbath. ¹⁷These have been a shadow of the coming things, but the real things are in Christ.

¹⁸Nobody who likes to be humble and worship angels should con-

demn you. Such a person goes on searching his visions and without a reason is puffed up by his fleshly mind. ¹¹He doesn't cling to the Head, who by being in touch with the whole body nourishes it and by its ligaments binds it together to make it grow as God gives it growth.

¹²With Christ you have died to the elements of the world. Then why, as though you were living with the world, do you let others dictate to you: ²¹"Don't take hold, don't taste, and don't touch"? ²²These are rules about all such things as are meant to be used up and pass away. You are doing *what men order and teach*; ²³this looks like wisdom, with its self-imposed worship, humble way, and harsh treatment of the body. But it lacks honor—it serves the full enjoyment of the flesh.

In Christ We Put Away Sin

3 Now if you were raised with Christ, be eager for the things that are above, where Christ is *sitting at the right of God*. ²Keep your mind on things above, not on earthly things. ³You see, you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, your Life, appears, then you too will appear with Him in glory.

⁵Kill, then, what is earthly in you: sexual sin, uncleanness, passion, evil lust, and greed, which is idol worship; ⁶these are bringing down God's anger. ⁷Once you also practiced them when you lived in them. ⁸But now also get rid of all such things as anger, rage, malice, slander, and dirty talk. ⁹Don't lie to one another, seeing that you have put away your old self and its ways ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is continually renewed in knowledge *to be like Him who*

made him. ¹¹Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is everything and in everything.

Live as God's People

¹²Then, as holy people whom God has chosen and loved, be tender-hearted, kind, humble, gentle, patient; ¹³bear with one another and forgive one another if you have a complaint against anyone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴With all this have love, which binds it all together to make it perfect.

¹⁵Let the peace of Christ, to which you were called as one body, be in your hearts to decide things for you. And be thankful. ¹⁶Let Christ's Word live richly in you as you teach and warn one another, using every kind of wisdom. With thankful hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. ¹⁷And everything you say or do, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by Him give thanks to God the Father.

Parents, Children, and Slaves

¹⁸You married women, submit to your husbands as it is right in the Lord. ¹⁹You husbands, love your wives, and don't be harsh with them.

²⁰You children, obey your parents in everything. This is pleasant when it is done in the Lord. ²¹Parents, don't irritate your children, or they will get discouraged.

²²You slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything. Don't serve them only when they are watching you, as if you meant only to please them, but sincerely because you respect the Lord. ²³Whatever you do, work heartily as for the Lord and not for men, ²⁴because you know

²
22 14 29 13
³
1 Ps 110:1
10 Gn 1:26-27

the Lord will give you the inheritance as your reward. Serve the Lord Christ. ²"The man who does wrong will get paid for the wrong he has done, and there will be no exceptions.

4 You masters, be just and fair to your slaves because you know you too have a Master in heaven.

Winning the Others

¹Keep on praying, watch as you pray, and give thanks. ²At the same time also pray for us that God will open a door for the Word and let us tell the hidden truth of Christ, for which I am in chains. ³that I may make it as well known as I should.

⁴Be wise in the way you live with those who are outside, and make the most of your opportunities.

⁵Always talk pleasantly, season your talk with salt so you will know how you should answer everyone.

Tychicus and Onesimus

¹Tychicus, a dear fellow Christian, loyal helper and fellow servant in the Lord, will tell you all about me. ²I'm sending him to you to bring you the news about us and encourage you. ³Onesimus, our loyal and dear fellow Christian who is one of you, is with him. They will

tell you about everything that is happening here.

Greetings

¹⁰Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends greetings. So does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. You received directions about him. If he comes to you, welcome him. ¹¹Jesus, called Justus, also greets you. They are the only Jews working with me for God's kingdom. They've been a comfort to me. ¹²Epaphras, one of your men, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you. He is always wrestling in prayer for you that you will stand mature and convinced in everything God wants. ¹³I assure you he works hard for you and the people in Laodicea and Hierapolis. ¹⁴Luke, the doctor and dear friend, and Demas greet you. ¹⁵Greet the fellow Christians in Laodicea, and Nympha and the church that meets at her home.

¹⁶When this letter has been read to you, have it read also in the church at Laodicea, and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea.

¹⁷Tell Archippus, "See that you do all the work you were given to do as the Lord's servant."

¹⁸I, Paul, am writing this greeting with my own hand. Remember I'm in chains. May the Lord be gracious unto you.

PAUL
WRITES THE FIRST LETTER TO THE
THESSALONIANS

1 PAUL, SILAS, AND TIMOTHY to the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Blessing to you and peace!

The Good News

“We always thank God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, never forgetting before our God and Father how your faith is working, your love is toiling, and your hope in our Lord Jesus Christ is enduring. “We know, fellow Christians, whom God has loved, that He has chosen you, because the good news we told wasn’t just words to you, but it had power, the Holy Spirit, and a strong conviction; you know this is the kind of men we proved to be among you for your good. “And you became just like us and like the Lord as you welcomed the Word, which brought you much suffering, with such joy in the Holy Spirit that you became a model for all the believers in Macedonia and Greece. “Not only has the Lord’s Word spread from you through Macedonia and Greece, but everywhere people have heard of your faith in God so that we don’t need to say anything. “They tell how we came to you and you turned from the idols to God, to serve a God who lives and is real and to wait for His Son to come from heaven—whom He raised from the dead—Jesus, who saves us from the punishment that is coming.

2 You know, my fellow Christians, our coming to you wasn’t

in vain. “We had suffered and been shamefully mistreated in Philippi, as you know. But then we took courage in our God to tell you God’s good news though it meant a hard struggle.

“Our appeal isn’t based on error or an unclean desire, and we aren’t tricking you. “No, we have God’s approval to be entrusted with the good news. And so we tell it, not to please people but God, who tests our hearts. “We never flattered, as you know, or found excuses to make money, as God knows, nor did we try to get you or other people to praise us, although we can claim respect as apostles of Christ.

You Are Dear to Us

“But we became children when we were with you—and like a mother tenderly caring for her children. “So we longed for you and were determined to share with you not only God’s good news but our own lives, so dear had you become to us. “You remember, my fellow Christians, how hard we worked and struggled. Night and day working for our living, not to burden any of you, we preached God’s good news to you. “You are witnesses and God too, how holy, righteous, and blameless we proved to be to you who believe. “As you know, like a father urging his children we used to urge, encourage, and warn every one of you to live worthy of God, who is calling you into His kingdom and glory.

“We continually thank God also.

Corinth. A.D. 50

for this, that when you accepted God's Word, which you heard from us, you didn't accept it as the word of men but as the Word of God, which it really is. And it is working in you who believe.

¹⁴You, our fellow Christians, became just like God's churches in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, since you suffered the same things from your own people as they did from the Jews. ¹⁵These killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets and drove us out. They don't please God, are opposed to everybody, ¹⁶and try to keep us from talking to the non-Jews to save them, and so they always *fill up the cup of their sins*. Now God is angry with them forever.

¹⁷My fellow Christians, when we were torn from you like orphans for a little while—you were out of sight but not out of mind—we were all the more eagerly and intensely longing to see you. ¹⁸We wanted to come to you—I, Paul, wanted to again and again—but the devil stopped us.

¹⁹After all, who is our hope or joy or crown of glory before our Lord Jesus when He comes? Aren't you that? ²⁰Why, you are our glory and joy!

We Long to See You

3 When we couldn't stand it any longer, we thought it best to be left alone in Athens. ²and we sent Timothy, our fellow Christian who works with God in telling the good news of Christ, to strengthen you and encourage you in your faith, ³so that these troubles will not disturb anyone, because you know they are planned for us. ⁴When we were with you, we warned you, "We're going to suffer." And so it happened, as you know. ⁵That's why I couldn't stand it any longer,

and I sent to find out about your faith. I was afraid the Tempter had in some way tempted you and our work was wasted.

⁶But now Timothy came back to us from you and told us the good news of your faith and love, also that you always think kindly of us and long to see us as we long to see you. ⁷So you, fellow Christians, by your faith have encouraged us in all our distress and trouble. ⁸Now we live if you stand firm in the Lord.

⁹How can we thank God for all the joy you give us before our God ¹⁰as day and night we are most ardently praying to see you face to face and to supply whatever is lacking in your faith? ¹¹May our God and Father Himself and the Lord Jesus lead us to you.

¹²The Lord make you grow in love and overflow with it for one another and for everybody, just as we love you, ¹³and so may He give you inward strength to be holy and without a fault before our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all His holy ones! Amen.

Live to Please God

4 And now, my fellow Christians, this is what we ask and urge you to do in the Lord Jesus. You learned from us how you must live and please God, and that is how you are living. But now do so more and more. ²You know what instructions we gave you by the Lord Jesus. ³God wants you to be holy and keep away from sexual sin. ⁴Every one of you should know how to get a wife in a holy and honorable way ⁵and not in the way of passionate lust like *the people of the world who don't know God*. ⁶Nobody should wrong and cheat his fellow Christian in business,

¹⁶ Gn 15:16
⁴
⁵ Ps 79:6
 Jer 10:25

because *the Lord avenges* all these things, as we told you and warned you before. ⁷God didn't call us to be unclean but holy. ⁸Now, if anyone rejects this, he doesn't reject a man but God, *who gives you His Holy Spirit*.

⁹You don't need anyone to write you about brotherly love, because God has taught you to love one another, ¹⁰and you are practicing it toward all the Christians all over Macedonia. But we urge you, my fellow Christians, grow more and more, ¹¹do your best to live quietly, mind your own business, and work with your hands, as we ordered you to do, ¹²so that you live nobly with those who are not Christians—without needing anything.

Your Dead Will Rise

¹³We want you to know about those who go to their rest, my fellow Christians, so you don't grieve like the others, who have no hope. ¹⁴We believe that Jesus died and rose again; then God will in the same way through Jesus bring with Him those who went to their rest. ¹⁵We tell you only what the Lord has told us: We who are left behind and are still living when the Lord comes will not get ahead of those who went to their rest. ¹⁶When the order is given and the archangel calls and God's trumpet sounds, the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, and the dead who are in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are still living and left behind will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we'll always be with the Lord. ¹⁸Now, then, comfort one another with what I have told you.

Watch!

5 You don't need anyone to write and tell you exactly when things will happen, my fellow Christians, ²because you know very well the Lord's day will come just like a thief in the night. ³When people say, "All's well and safe!" then destruction will come on them suddenly like pains on a woman who is going to have a baby, and they will not escape. ⁴But you, my fellow Christians, are not in the dark that you should let that day take you by surprise like a thief. ⁵You are all the children of light and of the day. We have nothing to do with night and darkness. ⁶Let us not sleep, then, like the others, but be awake and sober. ⁷People sleep at night and get drunk at night. ⁸But let us who live in the daylight be sober and *put on faith and love as a breastplate* and the hope of *salvation as a helmet*. ⁹God didn't appoint us to be punished by His anger but to be saved by our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us so that, awake or asleep, we may live with Him. ¹¹Then encourage one another and strengthen one another just as you are doing.

Some Last Words

¹²We ask you, fellow Christians, to appreciate the men who work with you and lead you in the Lord and warn you. ¹³Love them and think very highly of them on account of the work they're doing. Live in peace with one another.

¹⁴We urge you, fellow Christians, warn those who are disorderly, cheer up those who are discouraged, help the weak, be patient with everybody. ¹⁵Don't let anyone pay back wrong for wrong, but always be

6 Ps 94:1
8 Ez 36:27
37:14
5
8 14 59:17

eager to help one another and everybody.

¹⁶Always be happy. ¹⁷Never stop praying. ¹⁸Whatever happens, thank God, because that is what God in Christ Jesus wants you to do.

¹⁹Don't put out the fire of the Spirit. ²⁰Don't despise God's Word when anyone speaks it. ²¹But test everything and cling to what is good. ²²*Keep away from every kind of evil.*

²³The God of peace make you holy in every way and keep your spirit and life and body sound and without a fault when our Lord Jesus Christ comes. ²⁴You can depend on Him who calls you—He will do it.

²⁵My fellow Christians, pray for us.

²⁶Greet all the Christians with a holy kiss.

²⁷I order you by the Lord to read this letter to all the Christians.

²⁸The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

THESSALONIANS

1 PAUL, SILAS, AND TIMOTHY to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: ²Blessing to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Look to God in Suffering

³We always have to thank God for you, my fellow Christians. It is the right thing to do because your faith is growing wonderfully and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing, ⁴so much so that we're boasting about you in God's churches how you endure and trust no matter how much you're persecuted and made to suffer. ⁵It shows how God judges righteously: He means to make you worthy of His kingdom, for which you are suffering; ⁶it really is just for God to pay back with suffering those who make you suffer ⁷and to give relief to you who suffer and to us when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels ⁸*in a blaze of fire, to take vengeance on those who don't know God and on those who will not obey the good news of our Lord Jesus.* ⁹They will be punished by being taken away from the Lord and from the glory of His power to be destroyed eternally ¹⁰when He comes on that Day to be glorified in His holy people and admired by all who believed (you did believe the truth we told you). ¹¹With this in mind we're always praying for you that our God will make you worthy of His calling and by His power accomplish every good thing you

decide to do and every work of faith, ¹²*so as to glorify the name of our Lord Jesus among you, and you in Him, according to the love of our God and Lord Jesus Christ.*

The Man of Sin

2 Our Lord Jesus Christ is coming, and we'll be gathered to meet Him. But we ask you, fellow Christians, ²not to lose your heads so quickly or get alarmed either by a "spirit" message or by any word or letter that seemed to come from us, saying "The day of the Lord has already come!" ³Don't let anybody deceive you in any way. First there must be a revolt, and the man of sin must be revealed, who is doomed to destruction, ⁴who opposes and sets himself above anyone who is called God or anything we worship, so that he sits in God's temple and proclaims *he is God.*

⁵Don't you remember I told you this when I was still with you? ⁶And now you know what's holding him back so that he will be revealed when his time comes. ⁷This wicked thing is already working secretly, but only till he who is now holding it back gets out of the way. ⁸Then the wicked one will be revealed, and the Lord Jesus will destroy him with the breath of His mouth and wipe him out by coming and showing Himself. ⁹The coming of this wicked one is the work of the devil, who uses every kind of false power, miracle, and wonder, ¹⁰and every wicked way to deceive those who are perishing because they refused

1
8 Is 66 15
Ps 79 6
Jer 10 25
Is 66 4
9 Is 2 10
19 21
10 Is 2 11 17
Is 49 3
Ps 68 25
12 Is 66 5
2
4 Dn 11 26
Ez 28 2
8 Job 4 9
Is 11 4

Corinth, A.D. 50

to love the truth and be saved. "That is why God sends them a power to deceive them so they will believe the lie "and all will be condemned who did not believe the truth but delighted in wrong.

God Has Chosen You

"But we always have to thank God for you, my fellow Christians, whom *the Lord loves*, because in the beginning God chose you to be made holy by the Spirit, to believe the truth, and so to be saved. "For this purpose He called you by the good news we tell; He wants you to have the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Stand then, fellow Christians, and cling to the instructions we gave you when we spoke to you or wrote to you.

"Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who loved us and by His love gave us an everlasting comfort and a good hope, "inwardly comfort and strengthen you to do and say everything that is good.

Pray for Us

3 Finally, my fellow Christians, pray for us that the Lord's Word will run well and win glory as it did among you "and we'll be rescued from wrong-minded and wicked people. Not everybody has faith.

"But the Lord is faithful. He will strengthen you and protect you against the evil one. "We are certain in the Lord you are doing and will be doing what we order you to do. "And may the Lord lead you to realize how God loves you and how patiently Christ suffered.

Work

"Now we order you, fellow Christians, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to keep away from any Christian who refuses to live and work as we instructed you. "You know how you should imitate us. We were not idle when we were with you "and took no free meals from anyone but worked hard and struggled day and night in order not to burden any of you. "Not as though we didn't have a right to get support. No, we wanted to give you an example to imitate. "And while we were with you, we gave you the order, "If anyone doesn't want to work, he shouldn't eat."

"We hear that some of you are living a lazy life, not doing any work, but being busybodies. "Such people we order and encourage by the Lord Jesus Christ to work quietly and eat their own bread. "And you, fellow Christians, don't get tired of doing good.

"If anyone will not listen to what we say in this letter, mark him, and don't have anything to do with him, so he will feel ashamed. "Don't treat him like an enemy, but warn him like a brother.

Farewell

"The Lord of peace always give you peace in every way. The Lord be with you all.

"I'm writing this greeting with my own—that is, Paul's—hand. By this you can recognize every letter: this is my handwriting.

"The undeserved love of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all!

TIMOTHY

1 PAUL, APOSTLE OF CHRIST JESUS by the order of God, our Savior, and Christ Jesus, our Hope, to Timothy, my real son by faith: Blessing, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Teaching the Law

When I was going to Macedonia, I urged you to stay in Ephesus. I wanted you to order certain men not to teach anything different and not to busy themselves with stories and endless records of ancestors, that provide speculations but no divine training in faith.

The goal of our instruction is love flowing from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from a sincere faith. Certain people have failed to find this and have turned to silly talk. They want to be teachers of the Law but don't understand what they say or the things they so confidently express.

But we know the Law is good if it is used as it was meant to be used. If we keep in mind that the Law is not meant for a righteous man but for those who break the Law and rebel against it, the ungodly and sinners, those who live unholy lives and insult holy things, those who kill their fathers or mothers, murderers, men who sin sexually with women or with other men, slave dealers, those who lie or swear to lies—and anything else that is contrary to sound teaching. This is according to the good news of the glory of God, the Blessed, that was entrusted to me.

God Was Merciful to Me

I thank Christ Jesus, our Lord, whose power has been in me. He thought I could be trusted and appointed me to do His work although I used to slander, persecute, and shamefully mistreat Him. But He was merciful to me because, when I didn't believe, I didn't know what I was doing. Our Lord poured His undeserved kindness on me, bringing faith and love in Christ Jesus.

We can trust this statement and accept it absolutely: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. I am the worst of them, but God was merciful to me so that Jesus Christ would first show in me all His long-suffering and make me an example to those who are going to believe in Him and live forever. To the everlasting King, the immortal, invisible, and only God, be honor and glory forever. Amen.

Fight and Pray

I'm giving you these instructions, my son Timothy, according to the prophecies made earlier about you. In the spirit of those prophecies fight a good fight with faith and a good conscience. Some refused to listen to their conscience and suffered shipwreck in their faith. Among them are Hymenæus and Alexander, whom I turned over to the devil to teach them not to slander holy things.

2 I urge you, as most important of all, to ask, pray, plead, and give

thanks for all people, ²for kings and all who are over us, so that we may live quietly and peacefully and be godly and noble in every way. ³This is good and pleases God our Savior. ⁴who wants all people to be saved and to come to know the truth.

⁵There is one God, and One who brings God and men together, the Man Christ Jesus, ⁶who gave Himself as a ransom to free all people, and this was announced at the right times. ⁷For this purpose I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I'm telling the truth and not lying) to teach the non-Jews to believe the truth.

⁸So I want the men to pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, not in a mood of anger or argument.

Women

⁹Women should dress in decent clothes, modestly and properly, without braiding their hair, without gold, pearls, or expensive dresses ¹⁰but as it is proper for women who promise to worship God with good works.

¹¹A woman should learn in silence, completely submitting herself. ¹²I don't let a woman teach and have authority over a man; she should keep silent. ¹³The reason is that Adam was formed first, then Eve. ¹⁴And Adam wasn't deceived; the woman was deceived and so fell into sin. ¹⁵But women, having children, will be saved if they live in faith, love, and holiness, and use good judgment.

Church Workers

3 You can depend on this: If anyone sets his heart on being a pastor, he wants to do a noble kind of work. ²Now, a pastor must be

blameless, the husband of one wife, not drinking too much wine, a man of good judgment and fine behavior, kind to guests, able to teach, ³no drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not one who loves money. ⁴He should manage his own family well and have his children obey him as he treats them very seriously. ⁵If anyone doesn't know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church? ⁶He should not be a person who has just been won, or he may feel proud and so be condemned with the devil. ⁷The people outside the church must speak well of him, or he may fall into disgrace and the devil's snare.

⁸In the same way the helpers in the church should be serious, sincere in speech, not drinking a lot of wine, not greedy. ⁹With a clear conscience they should keep the hidden truth they believe. ¹⁰They too should first be tested; then if no fault is found in them, they should serve. ¹¹In the same way the wives should be serious, not slandering, not drinking too much wine, but trustworthy in every way. ¹²A church worker should be the husband of one wife and should manage his children and his home well. ¹³When they have served well, they get a good standing and can talk very confidently of their faith in Christ Jesus.

We Bring the Truth

¹I hope to come to you soon but am writing you this ²so that if I'm delayed you know how people should behave in God's family, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and support of the truth.

10It must be admitted: Deep is the mystery of our faith!

He appeared in flesh,
became righteous in spirit,
was seen by angels,
was preached among nations,
was believed in the world,
was taken up in glory.

Danger Ahead

4 The Spirit says clearly that in later times some will turn away from the faith as they listen to spirits who deceive and to what devils teach ²and are taken in by the hypocrisy of liars branded in their consciences as the devil's slaves, ³who order people not to marry and to keep away from foods that God created to be eaten with thanks by those who believe and know the truth. ⁴Everything God created is good. We shouldn't reject any of it but take it and thank God for it. ⁵because the Word of God and prayer make it holy.

How to Serve Christ

⁶Point these things out to our fellow Christians, and you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, nourished by the words of the faith and of the sound teaching you have followed. ⁷Don't have anything to do with unholy stories such as old women tell. Train yourself for a godly life. ⁸Training the body helps a little, but godliness helps in every way, having a promise of life here and hereafter ⁹(you can trust His Word and accept it absolutely); ¹⁰that is what we work and struggle for, because our hope is in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.

¹¹Order them to do these things, and keep on teaching.

¹²Don't let anyone look down on

you because you're young, but be an example to those who believe, in speech, behavior, love, faith, and purity. ¹³Till I come, take care of the public reading, encouragement, and teaching. ¹⁴Don't neglect the gift you have which was given you by prophecy when the elders laid their hands on you. ¹⁵Practice these things, continue in them, so that everybody can see your progress. ¹⁶Watch yourself and your teaching. Keep right on in these things. If you do that, you will save yourself and those who hear you.

5 Don't be harsh with an older man, but encourage him like a father, young men like brothers, ²older women like mothers, younger women like sisters, keeping yourself altogether pure.

Take Care of Widows

³Treat with respect widows who are all alone. ⁴If any widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn as their first duty to respect their own family and repay their parents, because that pleases God. ⁵A widow who is all alone and forsaken trusts the Lord and keeps on praying day and night. ⁶But one who lives for pleasure is dead while she lives.

⁷Order them to do these things so that they can't be criticized. ⁸If anyone doesn't take care of his own relatives, especially his family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. ⁹Put a widow on your list if she isn't under sixty, if she was faithful to her husband, ¹⁰if people tell about the good she has done, if she raised children, welcomed strangers, washed the feet of holy people, helped the suffering, and was busy doing every kind of good work. ¹¹But don't put younger

widows on the list. When they feel vigorous and turn against Christ, they want to marry ¹²and so are guilty of breaking the pledge they made in the beginning. ¹³At the same time they learn to be idle and go around in the homes. And they're not only idle but gossiping and meddling, saying things they shouldn't say.

¹⁴So I want younger women to marry, have children, manage their homes, and give the enemy no chance to slander them. ¹⁵Some have already left us to follow the devil. ¹⁶If any believing woman has widows, she should help them and not let them be a burden to the church, so that the church may help those widows who are all alone.

¹⁷Pastors who lead well should be considered worthy of double honor, especially if their work is preaching and teaching. ¹⁸because the Bible says: *When an ox is treading out the grain, don't muzzle him,* and "a worker deserves his pay."^a

¹⁹Don't accept an accusation against a pastor unless *it is supported by two or three witnesses.* ²⁰Those who keep on sinning, correct before everybody in order to make the others afraid.

²¹I solemnly call on you before God and Christ Jesus and the chosen angels to keep these things without a prejudice and without a preference for anyone in anything you do.

²²Don't be in a hurry to ordain anyone. Don't share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

²³Don't drink water only, but use a little wine for your stomach because you are often sick.

²⁴Anybody can see the sins of some people as these sins go ahead

of them to judgment, but the sins of others follow them there. ²⁵And so anybody can also see good works, and even when they can't be seen, they can't stay hidden.

Slaves and Masters

6 All who are under the yoke of slavery should think of their masters as men who deserve every respect, so that God's name and what we teach isn't slandered. ⁷If you have masters who believe, don't think less of them because they are fellow Christians, but serve them all the better because those who get the benefit of your work are believers and dear to you.

Religion and Contentment

Teach and urge them to do these things. ²If anyone teaches anything else and will not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and godly teaching, ³he is proud and doesn't know anything; he has a morbid craving for debates and arguments, which produce jealousy, quarreling, insults, evil suspicions, ⁴continued wrangling of people whose minds are corrupt, who have lost the truth and think religion is a way to make money.

⁵Of course, there's a big profit in religion if we're satisfied. ⁶We didn't bring anything into the world, and we can't take anything out. ⁷If we have food and clothing, we should be satisfied.

⁸But people who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires that drown them in destruction and ruin. ⁹Love of money is a root of all evils, and some people, eager to get rich, have wandered away from

¹⁸ 01:25.4
¹⁹ 01:19.15

^aMatt. 10:10

the faith and pierced themselves with much pain.

Fight the Good Fight

¹¹But you, man of God, flee from these things. Be eager to be righteous, godly, full of faith and love, able to endure, gentle. ¹²Fight the good fight of faith, take hold of the everlasting life to which you were called when you made a good confession before many witnesses.

¹³I order you before God, from whom comes all life, and before Christ Jesus, who testified before Pontius Pilate and made a good confession, ¹⁴that you do what you are ordered, without spot or blame, till our Lord Jesus Christ appears. ¹⁵At His own right time God will show Him to us—He, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings

and Lord of lords, ¹⁶who alone cannot die, who lives in a light to which no one can come near, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To Him be honor and power forever. Amen.

¹⁷Tell those who are rich in this world not to feel proud and not to trust anything as uncertain as riches but to trust God, who richly gives us everything to enjoy. ¹⁸Tell them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be glad to give and share, ¹⁹and so to store up for themselves a treasure, a good foundation for the future, and to take hold of the life that is real.

²⁰Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Turn away from empty, unholy talk and contradictory statements of what is falsely called knowledge. ²¹Some claim to have it and have lost their faith.

God's love be with you all!

TIMOTHY

1 PAUL, APOSTLE OF CHRIST JESUS, by God's will because God promised life in Christ Jesus. ²to Timothy, my dear son—God the Father and Christ Jesus, our Lord, give you blessing, mercy, and peace!

³I thank God—whom I, like my fathers, serve with a clear conscience—when I remember you in my prayers, as I never fail to do day and night. ⁴Remembering your tears, I long to see you and so to be perfectly happy. ⁵I recall how sincere your faith was; just as it lived in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice before you, so I am convinced it is in you too.

Stir Up God's Gift

⁶That is why I remind you to stir into a flame God's gift that is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷God didn't give us a cowardly Spirit but a Spirit of power and love and good judgment. ⁸So don't be ashamed to tell about our Lord, and don't be ashamed of me, His prisoner, but with God's power to back us, join me in suffering for the good news. ⁹He saved us and called us to be holy, not because we did anything, but because He planned a gift of His grace and gave it to us in Christ Jesus before the world began: ¹⁰it has now come to light by the coming of our Savior Christ Jesus. He took away the power of death and by the good news brought into the light the life that can't be destroyed. ¹¹To tell about it, I was appointed a preacher, apostle, and teacher.

¹²That is why I suffer as I do, but I'm not ashamed, because I know Him whom I trust, and I'm sure He can keep for that day what I have entrusted to Him.

¹³With a faith and a love in Christ Jesus keep what you heard me say as an example of sound teaching. ¹⁴With the help of the Holy Spirit living in us, guard the good thing entrusted to you.

Onesiphorus

¹⁵You know how everybody in the province of Asia deserted me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes.

¹⁶The Lord be merciful to the family of Onesiphorus because he often cheered me up. He didn't feel ashamed of my being a prisoner, ¹⁷but coming to Rome, he searched hard for me and found me. ¹⁸May the Lord let him find mercy from the Lord on that day. And you know very well all he did to help me in Ephesus.

Be a Good Soldier

2 You, my son, let God's love in Christ Jesus make you strong, ²and what you heard me say before many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others.

³Share hardships with me like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴If you're in the army, you don't get tangled up with the ways of making a living; you want to please him who made you a soldier. ⁵If you enter a contest, you win a prize only if you

compete according to the rules. "If you work the ground, you should be the first to get what grows on it. Try to understand what I say, because the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

"Keep in mind Jesus Christ risen from the dead, a descendant of David—this is the good news I tell. "For this I'm suffering and am even chained like a criminal. But God's Word isn't chained. "That's why I can endure anything for the chosen people to have them get salvation in Christ Jesus and everlasting glory. "You can depend on this: If we have died with Him, we'll live with Him. "If we endure, we'll rule with Him. If we disown Him, He'll disown us. "If we're disloyal, he stays loyal because He cannot be untrue to Himself.

"Remind them of these things and warn them before the Lord not to fight about words; it doesn't do any good but only ruins those who are listening.

"Do your best to come before God as one whom He approves, a worker who doesn't have to feel ashamed as he teaches the Word of truth in the right way. "Keep away from empty, unholy talk, because such people get to be more and more ungodly, "and their talk will spread like a cancer. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, "who have lost the truth by saying the resurrection has already taken place. They're upsetting some people's faith.

"But there stands God's solid foundation, and it has this seal: *The Lord has chosen those who belong to Him*, and: "Everyone who *calls on the Lord's name* must give up doing wrong."

"In a big house there are not only things of gold and silver but also of

wood and clay. Some are used in a noble way and some are not. "Now if anyone will cleanse himself from bad ways, he'll be ready for a noble purpose, purified, useful to the owner, and prepared to do any good work.

"Flee from the lusts of young people, try to be righteous, faithful, loving, peaceful with people who with pure hearts call on the Lord. "Don't have anything to do with foolish and unintelligent arguments; you know they breed quarrels. "A Lord's servant must not quarrel but be kind to everyone. He should be a good teacher, ready to suffer wrong, "and gentle in correcting those who oppose him. Perhaps God will change their hearts and lead them to know the truth. "Then they'll escape the snare of the devil, who trapped them to do what he wants, and they'll come to their senses.

The Last Days

3 Understand this, that in the last days there will come times of trouble. People will love themselves and money. They'll brag and be proud. They'll blaspheme. They'll disobey parents. They'll be ungrateful and unholy, "without love, never forgiving an enemy slandering. They'll be without control, wild, with no love for what is good. They'll be treacherous, reckless, proud. They'll love pleasure and not God. They'll have the essence of godliness but refuse to let it be a power. Keep away from such people. "Some of them get into homes and captivate weak women loaded with sins, driven by all kinds of desires, "always learning and never able to understand the truth. "Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed

⁷
19 ^{16,5}
14 ^{28,13}

Moses, so they oppose the truth. Their minds are corrupt, and their faith is no good. ⁹But they won't get very far; like Jannes and Jambres, they will be seen by everybody to be the plain fools they are.

Teach the Truth

¹⁰But you have followed closely my teaching, way of living, and purpose, my faith, patience, love, and endurance. ¹¹my persecutions and sufferings, the things that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. The Lord rescued me from everything. ¹²All who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

¹³But bad men and swindlers will get worse as they cheat and are cheated. ¹⁴But you stay with what you've learned and found to be true. You know from whom you learned it ¹⁵and how since you were a little child you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise and save you through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, showing what is wrong, improving and training in right living ¹⁷so that a man of God is ready and equipped for every good work.

4 Before God and Christ Jesus, who is going to judge the living and the dead, I solemnly call on you—in view of His coming and ruling over us— ²preach the Word, keep at it at the right time and the wrong time, correct, rebuke, encourage, being very patient and thorough in your teaching.

³A time will come when people will not listen to sound teaching but, craving to hear something different, will get more and more teachers

whom they like. ⁴They will refuse to listen to the truth and will turn to fictions.

⁵But you, keep a clear head in everything, endure hardship, do your work of telling the good news, and everything else you should do as a pastor.

The Lord Will Deliver Me

⁶I'm now being sacrificed, and it's time for me to leave. ⁷I fought the good fight, I ran the race, I kept the faith. ⁸Now there is waiting for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that day, and not only me but all who love to see Him come again.

⁹Do your best to come to me soon. ¹⁰Demas fell in love with this world, deserted me, and went to Thessalonica. Crescens went to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. ¹¹Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he's a good help to me in my work. ¹²I sent Tychicus to Ephesus.

¹³When you come, bring the warm coat I left with Carpus in Troas, and the scrolls, especially the parchments.

¹⁴Alexander the metalworker did me a lot of wrong. *The Lord will pay him back for what he did.* ¹⁵Be on your guard against him, because he was very much opposed to what we said.

¹⁶The first time I had to defend myself nobody came to help me, but everybody deserted me—may it not be held against them. ¹⁷But the Lord stood by me and gave me the strength to finish my preaching so that all the non-jews would hear it. *I was rescued from the lion's mouth.* ¹⁸The Lord will rescue me from all the evil that is done and will save

¹⁴ Pr 62:12.
¹⁷ Pr 24:12.
¹⁷ Pr 22:21.
Dn 6:20-27

me and take me to His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever. Amen.

Greetings

¹⁹Greet Prisca and Aquila and the family of Onesiphorus. ²⁰Erastus stayed in Corinth. I left Trophimus

sick in Miletus. ²¹Do your best to get here before the winter. Eubulus and Pudens and Linus and Claudia, and all the fellow Christians greet you.

²²The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit! God's love be with you all!

PAUL
WRITES TO
TITUS

1 PAUL, SERVANT OF GOD and apostle of Jesus Christ—sent to help God’s chosen people to believe and know the truth which promotes godliness. ²hoping, as we do, for everlasting life, which God, who never lies, promised ages ago ³and at His own right times revealed in His Word by the preaching entrusted to me by an order of God our Savior— ⁴to Titus, my real son by the faith we share: May God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior bless you and give you peace!

Appoint Good Pastors

¹I left you behind in Crete to make the improvements still needed and to appoint pastors in every town as I directed you— ²someone who is blameless, who has one wife, and believing children not accused of wild living or disobedient. ³As a manager appointed by God, a pastor should be blameless. He shouldn’t do as he pleases, get angry easily, drink too much, be quick to strike anyone, or be greedy. ⁴He should welcome guests, love anything good, use good judgment, live right and holy. He should control himself. ⁵He should cling to the Word, which he can depend on, just as he was taught, so that by sound teaching he can encourage people and correct those who oppose him.

Correct Your Opponents

¹There are many who can’t be controlled, who talk foolishly and

deceive, especially the Jews. ²They must be silenced. They are ruining whole families by teaching what they must not teach, only to make money in such a shameful way.

³One of their own men, their own prophet, said, “Men of Crete are always liars, savage animals, lazy bellies.”^a ⁴That statement is true. For that reason correct them sharply so that they may be sound in their faith ⁵instead of listening to Jewish myths or orders given by men who reject the truth. ⁶Everything is pure to those who are pure. But nothing is pure to the evil-minded who don’t believe—their minds and consciences are unclean. ⁷They openly claim to know God but deny Him by what they do. They’re abominable, disobedient, and not fit to do anything good.

Special Instructions

2 But you tell people what is right according to sound teaching. ²Tell older men: Be sober, serious, sensible, and sound in faith, love, and endurance.

³In the same way tell older women: Behave as holy women should behave. Don’t slander. Don’t be slaves to much wine. Teach what is good, ⁴in order to train young women to love their husbands and their children, ⁵to use good judgment and be pure, to keep house, to be good, to submit to their husbands,

^aThis may have been said by Epimenides about 500 B.C.

so that people don't slander God's Word.

⁶In the same way urge the young men to use good judgment. ⁷In everything be an example of good works. Don't let anything corrupt your teaching. But be noble, ⁸and give a sound message that can't be condemned, so that anyone who opposes us will feel foolish because he can't say anything bad about us.

⁹Tell slaves: Obey your masters in everything, please them, and don't talk back. ¹⁰Don't steal, but show you can be trusted in every way, so that in everything you show the beauty of the teaching of God, who saves us.

Jesus Is Coming

¹¹God has shown His grace. It brings salvation to all people. ¹²and trains us to say no to ungodliness and worldly lusts, to use good judgment, and to live right and godly in this world. ¹³as we look for the blessed One who is our hope, for our great God and Savior Christ Jesus to show Himself in glory. ¹⁴He gave Himself as *a payment* for us *to free us from all wickedness* and cleanse us *to be His own people*, eager to do good works.

¹⁵Talk and urge these things, and correct with full authority—nobody should ignore you.

3 Remind people to submit to governments and authorities, to obey, to be ready to do any good work, ²not to insult anyone or fight, but to yield and show themselves perfectly gentle to everyone.

What God Did for Us

¹Once we too were foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to many kinds of passions and pleasures. We

lived in wickedness and jealousy, being hated and hating one another.

²But when God our Savior showed how kind He is and how He loves us, ³He saved us, not because of any good works we did but because He was merciful. He saved us by the washing in which the Holy Spirit gives us a new birth and a new life. ⁴He poured a rich measure of this Spirit on us through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁵to justify us by a gift of his undeserved love so that we might become heirs in keeping with the hope of everlasting life. ⁶You can depend on this statement.

And I want you to insist on these things so that those who believe in God have their minds on being busy with good works. This is good, and it helps other people.

⁷But keep away from foolish arguments, lists of ancestors, quarreling, and fighting about the Law. These help nobody and are worthless. ⁸A man who chooses to be different in his teaching wars once and a second time, and they don't have anything more to do with him. ⁹because you know such a man is set in his wrong way and is a sinner who condemns himself.

Farewell

¹²When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, hurry to come to me at Nicopolis; I've decided to stay there for the winter. ¹³Do your best to help Zenas the lawyer and Apollonius to get on their way; they should have everything they need.

¹⁴Our people should learn to be busy with good works to help needs and not waste their lives.

¹⁵All who are here with me send greetings. Greet those who love us as fellow believers.

God's love be with you all!

²
¹⁴ Pt. 130 B
⁸ Ex. 19:5
⁹ Dt. 14:2

PAUL

WRITES TO

PHILEMON

1 PAUL, A PRISONER OF CHRIST JESUS, and Timothy, my fellow worker, to Philemon, our dear fellow worker, ²Apphia, our fellow Christian, Archippus, our fellow soldier, and to the church that meets at your home: ³May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ bless you and give you peace!

⁴I'm always thanking my God when I mention you in my prayers, ⁵because I hear how you believe in the Lord Jesus and love Him and all the holy people, ⁶so that, knowing every good thing you have in Christ, you vigorously share your faith. ⁷Your love delighted and encouraged me very much because you, my fellow Christian, have refreshed the hearts of our holy people.

⁸For that reason, although I feel bold enough in Christ to order you to do what is right, ⁹I am moved by love just to urge you. As Paul, an old man and now a prisoner of Christ Jesus, ¹⁰I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I have been in chains. ¹¹Once he was useless to you, but now he's quite useful^a to you and me.

¹²I'm sending him back to you—and my heart goes with him. ¹³I would have liked to keep him with me and have him serve me in your place while I'm in chains for the

good news, ¹⁴but I don't want to do anything without your approval. I don't want you to be kind because you must but because you want to be. ¹⁵Perhaps Onesimus left you for a while only to be yours again forever, ¹⁶no longer a slave but more than a slave, a dear fellow Christian, especially to me, but how much more to you, as a man and as a Christian.

¹⁷Now if you can think of me as your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. ¹⁸If he cheated you or owes you anything, charge it to me. ¹⁹I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand—I'll pay it back. I don't want to mention that you owe me more than that—your own self. ²⁰Yes, my fellow Christian, I want you to be useful to me in the Lord. Refresh my heart in Christ. ²¹As I write you, I'm sure you'll do this. I know you'll do even more than I ask.

²²One thing more: Have a guest room ready for me, because I hope by the prayers of all of you to be given back to you.

²³Greetings to you from Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, ²⁴and from my fellow workers: Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke.

²⁵The love of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirits. Amen.

^aOnesimus means "useful"

THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS

1 At many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers long ago by the prophets, ²but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He made the heir of everything and by whom He made the world. ³He who shines with God's glory and is the Copy of His Being sustains everything by His mighty Word. He made a cleansing from sins, *sat down at the right* of the Majesty in heaven, ⁴and became as much greater than angels as the name He has is better than theirs.

⁵To which of the angels did God ever say:

*You are My Son,
today I have begotten You?*

Or again:

*I will be His Father,
and He will be My Son?*

⁶And when He again will bring the firstborn Son into the world, He says:

All of God's angels should worship Him.

⁷He says of the angels:
*He makes His angels winds
and His servants fiery flames.*

⁸But to the Son He says:

*Your throne, O God, is forever,
and You rule Your kingdom
with a scepter of righteousness.*

⁹*You have loved right and hated wrong.*

*That is why God, Your God, has
put You
above Your companions
by anointing You with the oil
of joy.*

¹⁰And:

Lord, in the beginning You laid

*the foundation of the earth,
and Your hands made the
heavens!*

¹¹*They will perish.*

but You continue.

*They will all get old like a
garment,*

¹²*You will roll them up like a
blanket.*

*and like a garment they will be
changed.*

*But You are the same,
and Your years will never end.*

¹³To which of the angels did He ever say: *Sit at My right till I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet?* ¹⁴Aren't all angels spirits that serve Him and are sent to help those who are going to be saved?

Don't Neglect Your Salvation

2 That is why we should listen all the more carefully to what we have been told, or we may drift away. ²If what God said through angels was valid, and every transgression and disobedience got a just punishment, ³how can we escape if we neglect a salvation as great as this? First the Lord spoke of it, and then those who heard Him guaranteed its truth to us, ⁴while God added His testimony by supernatural proofs, wonders, different kinds of miracles, and by giving the Holy Spirit as He wanted to give Him.

Lord of Everything

⁵He didn't put the coming world that we're talking about under the control of angels. ⁶But somewhere someone has declared:

*Perhaps Greece or Asia Minor
Before A.D. 70.*

1
3 Ps 110 1
5 Ps 2 7
2 Sm 7 14
6 Dt 32 43
Ps 97 7
7 Ps 104 4
8-9 Ps 45 6-7
10-12 Ps 102
25-27
18 50 9
51 6
13 Ps 110 1

What is man that You should think of him?

Or a son of man that You should come to help him?

You make Him lower than the angels for a little while,

then crown Him with glory and honor

and make Him Ruler over what Your hands have made

and put everything under His feet.

Now, when He put everything under His feet, He left nothing outside His control.

Jesus Died for Us

As it is, we do not yet see everything put under Him. ⁹But we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because He suffered death in order by God's grace to taste death for everyone. ¹⁰It fitted Him well for whom and by whom everything exists that in bringing many sons to glory He should make the One who gives them salvation perfect through suffering.

¹¹He who makes men holy and those who are made holy all have one Father. That is why He is not ashamed to call them *brothers*. ¹²He says:

I will tell My brothers Your name, in the congregation I will sing Your praise.

¹³And again: *I will trust Him.* And again: *Here am I and the children God has given Me.*

¹⁴Now since all these children have flesh and blood, He in the same way took on flesh and blood in order to die and so take away all the powers of him who had the power of

death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵and to free those who, terrified by death, had to be slaves all their lives. ¹⁶It is clear He didn't come to help angels but *Abraham's descendants*. ¹⁷And so in every way He had to become like His brothers to be merciful and faithful as high priest before God and pay for the sins^a of the people. ¹⁸Because He Himself suffered when He was tested, He can help others when they're tested.

Greater than Moses

3 And so, fellow Christians—you're holy, and heaven called you as it called us—look at Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest whom we confess, ²being faithful to Him who appointed Him, just as *Moses was faithful in God's whole family*. ³He deserves greater glory than Moses, as the builder of a house is honored more than the house. ⁴Every house is built by someone, but He who built everything is God.

⁵Now, *Moses was faithful in God's whole family* as a servant who was to testify of what would be said later, ⁶but Christ was faithful as the Son in charge of *God's family*. We are His family if to the end we continue unshaken in our courage and in feeling proud of our hope.

Don't Close Your Minds

⁷And so, as the Holy Spirit says: *Today, if you hear Him speak, don't close your minds as it happened when the people provoked Me at the time they tested Me in the desert, where your fathers put Me to a test when for forty years they saw what I could do.* ⁸That was why *I was angry with those people, and I said: "In their hearts*

^aJesus wipes out our sins by His blood and so changes God's anger to love.

²
6-9 Ps 84:6
11-12 Ps 22:22
13 Ps 18:2
2 Sm 22:3
Is 8:17
Is 8:18
14-16 Is 41:8-9
³
2:6 Nm 12:7
7:18 Nm 14:22
Ps 55:7-11
Nm 14:29

they're always going wrong and haven't learned My ways." "So, because I was angry, I swore they will never come to My place of rest!

¹²See to it, fellow Christians, that none of you has a wicked, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. ¹³Yes, encourage one another every day, as long as you can say today, to keep sin from deceiving anyone of you with its pleasure and closing your mind to the truth. ¹⁴We share in Christ if we only keep our first confidence unshaken to the end.

¹⁵When it says: *Today, if you hear Him speak, don't close your minds as it happened when the people provoked Me*— ¹⁶who were those that heard Him and yet provoked Him? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? ¹⁷With whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned and whose bodies dropped dead in the desert?

¹⁸To whom did He swear they would not come to His place of rest if not to those who disobeyed? ¹⁹So we see that they couldn't come there because they didn't believe.

4 We should be fearful then. While we still have the promise of coming to His place of rest, someone of you may be judged to have missed it. ²The good news came to us as it came to them, but the message they heard didn't help them because those who heard it didn't believe it and let it influence them.

There Is a Rest for Us

¹We who have believed go to a rest, since He has said: *So I swore in My anger they will never come to My place of rest.* And yet God finished His work when He made the world, ⁴because in one place

He said about the seventh day: *On the seventh day God rested from all He had done.* ³And here too He says: *They will never come to My place of rest.* ⁶Now, it is still true that some will go to His rest, and those who once heard the good news didn't go to it because they disobeyed; ⁷so He sets another day—today—when long afterwards He says in David's words, already quoted: *Today if you hear Him speak, don't close your minds.* ¹¹Joshua had given them rest, God wouldn't later have spoken of another day. ⁹So there is still a sabbath of rest for God's people. ¹⁰since anyone who goes to his rest, finds rest after his work as God did after His.

¹¹Let us then do our best to come to that rest so that no one may disobey and fall like those people.

The Living Word

¹²God's Word lives and is active. It cuts better than any two-edged sword. It pierces till it divides soul and spirit, joints and marrow. And it can judge thoughts and purposes of the heart. ¹³No creature can hide from Him. Everything is naked and helpless before the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

Our High Priest

¹Now that we have a great High Priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus, God's Son, let us cling to what we confess. ³We have a High Priest who can sympathize with our weaknesses. He was tempted in every way just as we are, only without sin. ⁶So let us come boldly to God's throne of grace to get mercy and find love to help us when we need it.

4
3 Nm 14:23
Ps 95:7-11
4 Gn 2:2
5-10 Nm
14:23
Ps 95:7-11
10 Gn 2:2
11 Nm 14:22
Ps 95:11

5 Any high priest selected from men is appointed to represent them before God and to bring gifts and sacrifices for sins. ²He can be gentle with ignorant and erring people because he too is troubled with weakness ³and for that reason must bring sacrifices for sins for himself just as he does for the people.

⁴No one takes the honor of this office, but God calls a man as He called Aaron. ⁵So Christ didn't take the glory of being a high priest but was given it by Him who said to Him:

*You are My Son,
today I have begotten You.*

⁶And so He said in another place: *You are like Melchizedek a priest forever.*

⁷In His humble life on earth Jesus came to Him who could save Him from death and prayed and pleaded, crying loud with tears, and because He feared God, He was heard. ⁸Although Jesus is the Son, He found out from what He suffered what it means to obey. ⁹And when He was finished, He became One who gives *everlasting salvation* to all who obey Him, ¹⁰being proclaimed by God a high *priest like Melchizedek*.

More than the ABC's

¹¹We have much to say about this, but it's difficult to explain because you have become too dull to understand. ¹²At a time when you should be teachers you need someone to teach you the ABC's of God's Word again. It has come to this that you need milk again instead of solid food. ¹³Anyone who lives on milk, being a baby, doesn't have enough experience to talk of what is right. ¹⁴But solid food is for grown-up people, whose senses are

trained by practice to tell good from bad.

6 Let us leave behind the ABC of Christ and not lay again a foundation of repentance from dead works, faith in God, ²teaching about baptisms, laying on hands, raising the dead, and everlasting judgment. But let us go on to be mature. ³We will do this if God lets us.

⁴When those who once had the light and tasted the gift from heaven, who had the Holy Spirit just as others did ⁵and tasted how good God's Word is and the powers of the coming world— ⁶when those fall away, it is impossible to bring them back to a new repentance because they to their own undoing again crucify God's Son and hold Him up for mockery. ⁷When *ground* drinks the rain that often falls on it and *produces plants* that can be used by those for whom it is worked, it is blessed by God. ⁸But if *it produces thorns and thistles*, it is worthless. A *curse* hangs over it, and finally it will be burned.

⁹Although we say this, we are convinced that for you, dear friends, there are better things that mean salvation. ¹⁰God is righteous to remember your work and the love you showed for Him as you helped His holy people and still help them. ¹¹But we want every one of you to show the same zeal to make certain of your hope till the end, ¹²and not get lazy but be like those who by believing and being patient are getting what is promised.

¹³God promised Abraham, and since He had no one greater to swear by, He *swore by Himself* ¹⁴and said: *I will certainly bless you and make you many people.* ¹⁵And so, after

5
5 Ps 27
6 Ps 110:4
9 Is 45:17
10 Ps 110:4
6
7 Gn 1:11-12
8 Gn 2:17-18
13 14 Gn 22:16-17

waiting patiently, Abraham got what God promised.

¹⁶People swear by Someone greater to guarantee what they say and to silence anyone who opposes them. ¹⁷So God, wanting to make it perfectly clear, to those who would get His promise, that He can't change His plan, bound Himself with an oath ¹⁸so that we who have fled to Him would have two unchangeable things, in which God cannot lie, to give us a strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. ¹⁹We have this hope like an anchor for our lives, sure and strong and *reaching behind the curtain*, ²⁰where Jesus has gone for us, ahead of us, having become *like Melchizedek a high priest forever*.

A Priest Forever

7 This *Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of the Most High God, met Abraham coming back from defeating the kings, and he blessed Abraham. ²And Abraham gave him a tenth of everything.* His name, in the first place, means *king of righteousness*, but then he is also *king of Salem*, that is, *king of peace*. ³He is without father, mother, or line of ancestors. His life has no beginning or end. Like God's Son he continues *a priest forever*.

⁴See how great he was! *Abraham*, the father of the people, *gave him a tenth* from the best of the spoils. ⁵And the Law orders those descendants of Levi who become priests to take a tenth from the people, that is, from other Israelites, although they, too, have descended from Abraham. ⁶But this man, who was outside their line of descent, took *a tenth* from *Abraham* and *blessed him* who had the promises.

'Nobody can deny the higher one blesses the lower.

⁸And here those who take a tenth are people who die, but there we are assured it is one who lives. ⁹And we may say that Levi, who takes a tenth, in *Abraham gave a tenth*, ¹⁰since he was in the body of his ancestor when *Melchizedek* met him.

¹¹Levi's descendants were the priests; on this basis the people got the Law. Now, if the priests who descended from Levi could have given us something perfect, why did another *priest* still need to come who is *like Melchizedek* and said to be different from Aaron? ¹²When a different person is made priest, the Law also has to be changed. ¹³The One here spoken of belongs to a different tribe, which never had a priest serving at the altar.

¹⁴Everybody knows our Lord came from Judah, but Moses said nothing about priests in this tribe. ¹⁵That point is much clearer still when we see a different *Priest* coming *like Melchizedek*, ¹⁶not appointed according to a Law that says he must be someone's descendant but by the power of a life that can't be destroyed. ¹⁷We are assured: *You are like Melchizedek a Priest forever*. ¹⁸The earlier rule is canceled because it is weak and can't help us. ¹⁹The Law made nothing perfect, but the coming of a better hope did—it brings us close to God.

²⁰When those men were made priests, there was no oath. ²¹But when Jesus was appointed, God swore as He said to Him (*The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind*): *You are a Priest forever*. Swearing to it ²²made the agreement Jesus guarantees so much the better.

19 Lv 16:2, 12
20 Ps 110:4
7
1-2 Gn 14:
17:20
3 Ps 110:4
4-10 Gn 14
17:20
11-28 Ps 2:7

²¹Once many were made priests because death didn't let them continue as priests. ²⁴But because Jesus lives forever, He will *always* be the *Priest*. ²⁵And so He can forever save those who come to God by Him, because He always lives to pray for them.

²⁶Here is the High Priest we needed—holy, innocent, spotless, separated from sinners, and risen higher than the heavens, ²⁷who doesn't need to bring sacrifices every day like those high priests, first for His own sins, then for the sins of the people. He did this only once when He sacrificed Himself. ²⁸The Law appointed weak men to be high priests, but when God speaks with *an oath* later than the Law, He appoints the *Son*, who was made perfect forever.

A Better Covenant

8 Now, this is my main point. We have such a High Priest, and He *sat down at the right* of the throne of the Majesty in heaven ²to serve as priest in the holy place and in the real *tabernacle set up by the Lord* and not by men. ³As every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices, this One too had to bring some sacrifice.

⁴If He were on earth, He wouldn't even be a priest, because there are priests who offer the gifts demanded by the Law. ⁵They serve a copy and a shadow of what is in heaven, as God told Moses when he was going to make the tabernacle: "*Be careful to make all of it like the pattern you were shown on the mountain.*"

⁶Now, the priestly work that Jesus was given to do is as much better as the covenant of which He is the Mediator is a better one because God has based it on better promises. ⁷If

that first covenant had been without a fault, nobody would have wanted a second one. ⁸But God is finding fault with them when He says: "*See! The time is coming,*" says the Lord, "*when I will set up a new covenant with the people of Israel and the people of Judah,*" not like the covenant I made with their fathers *when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they have not been loyal to My covenant. And so I turned away from them,*" says the Lord. ¹⁰"*The covenant I will make with the people of Israel after those days,*" says the Lord, "*is this: I will put My laws into their minds and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they will be My people.*" ¹¹No more will anyone teach his fellow citizen or his brother and say, "*Know the Lord!*" They will all know Me from the least to the greatest of them, ¹²because I will forgive their wrongs and not remember their sins anymore." ¹³By saying a new covenant He made the first one old. When He treats it as old and it is getting old, it is ready to vanish.

The Tabernacle

9 The first covenant had its regulations for worship and the earthly holy place. ²A tabernacle was set up. In the first part were the lampstand, the table, and the bread laid before God; this is called the holy place. ³Behind the second curtain was the part of the tabernacle called the most holy place ⁴with the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant, completely covered with gold. In the ark were the golden jar containing the manna, Aaron's rod that had budded, and the tablets on which the covenant was written. ⁵Above it were the

26 Ps 110:4
8
1 Ps 110:1
2 Nm 24:5-6
5 Ex 25:40;
25:9, 40;
26:30, 27:8
8:13 Jer 31:
31-34

angels of glory overshadowing the Atonement Cover on which the blood was sprinkled.—I can't tell about these in detail now.

⁹But that is how it was arranged. The priests are always going into the first part of the tabernacle to serve God, ¹⁰but only the high priest goes into the second part once a year with blood he offers for himself and for the sins the people have done in ignorance. ¹¹And so the Holy Spirit clearly tells us that the way into the real holy place had not yet been shown as long as the outer part of the tabernacle was still standing.

¹²This is a picture of the time we live in. Gifts and sacrifices are brought which can't make the worshiper feel perfect in his conscience ¹³but deal only with gifts of food and drink and various baptisms, which are regulations for the body imposed till the time when things would be set right.

Jesus' Blood

¹⁴But Christ came as a High Priest of the good things that have come: He went through that greater and more perfect tabernacle not made by human hands (that is, not a part of our created world). ¹⁵And He didn't use the blood of goats and calves but through His own blood He entered only once into the Holy of Holies and paid a price that frees us forever. ¹⁶Now, sprinkling the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a calf on unclean people makes them outwardly holy and clean. ¹⁷How much more will the blood of Christ, who by His everlasting spirit offered Himself without a spot to God, wash our consciences clean from dead works to worship the living God?

¹⁸And He is the Mediator of a new covenant. By dying He paid the ransom to free people from the sins

under the first covenant, and those who are called are to get the everlasting inheritance promised them. ¹⁹Where there is a will, it must be shown that the one who made it died, ²⁰since a will takes effect only when a person is dead. It is not in force as long as the one who made it is still living. ²¹That is why the first covenant was also dedicated with blood. ²²When Moses had told all the people every commandment of the Law, he *took the blood of calves and goats and some water, scarlet wool, and hyssop and sprinkled the scroll and all the people.* ²³*"This is the blood of the covenant,"* he said, *"that God has ordered you to keep."* ²⁴In the same way he sprinkled blood on the tabernacle and on everything used in the worship. ²⁵According to the Law almost everything is cleansed by blood, and if no blood is poured out, no sins are forgiven.

One Perfect Sacrifice

²⁶Now, the copies of the things in heaven had to be cleansed by these sacrifices, but the heavenly things themselves needed better sacrifices. ²⁷Christ didn't go into a holy place made by human hands and just a copy of the real thing but into heaven itself, now to appear before God for us. ²⁸And not to sacrifice Himself over and over again like that high priest going every year into the holy place with blood that is not his own. ²⁹Otherwise He would have had to suffer many times since the world was made. But as it is, He appeared only once at the end of the ages to get rid of sin by His sacrifice. ³⁰And as people are appointed to die once and after that the judgment, ³¹so Christ also was sacrificed once to take away the sins

5 L v 16-7
19:20 E x 24:8
28 15 53:12

of many people. but those who eagerly look for Him will see Him again, without sin, when He comes to save them.

10 The Law, having only a dim outline of the good things in the future and not their substance, can never by the same sacrifices, repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who come. ¹Otherwise wouldn't they have stopped bringing sacrifices? Once cleansed, the worshipers would no longer be aware of any sins. ²No, year after year these sacrifices reminded people of their sins. ³The blood of bulls and goats can't take away sins.

⁴That is why He says when He comes into the world: *You didn't like sacrifice and offering, but You prepared a body for Me. ⁵Burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin didn't please You. ⁶Then I said: "I have come (the writing in the scroll of the book tells about Me). I'm here to do what You want, O God."* ⁷First He says: *You didn't like and weren't pleased with sacrifices, offerings, burnt offerings, and sacrifices for sin* which are offered according to the Law. ⁸Then He says: *I have come and am here to do what You want.* He takes away the first to set up the second. ⁹*Doing God's will, Jesus Christ sacrificed His body only once and so made us holy.*

¹⁰Every other priest stands and serves day after day, and over and over again brings the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹¹But He made one sacrifice for sins, good forever, *sat down at the right of God.* ¹²and since then is waiting for His enemies to be made a footstool for His feet. ¹³By one sacrifice He forever made perfect those who are made holy.

¹⁴The Holy Spirit assures us of this. First He says: ¹⁵"*This is the covenant I will make with them after those days.*" says the Lord: *"I will put My laws on their hearts and write them on their minds."*

¹⁶Then: *"I will not remember their sins and their wrongs anymore."*

¹⁷Now, where sins are forgiven, there is no more sacrificing for sin.

¹⁸Fellow Christians, with the blood of Jesus we can now boldly go into the holy place ¹⁹by the new, living way He opened for us through the curtain, the way of His body, ²⁰and we have a *great Priest* in charge of *God's family.* ²¹Let us then come near God, sincere in our hearts and convinced in our faith, because our hearts were sprinkled to take away our guilty feelings, and our bodies were washed with clean water. ²²Let us cling to the confession of our hope and not waver in it. We can trust Him who gave us His promise.

Give Up Sin

²³And let us consider how we can stimulate one another to love and to do good works. ²⁴Let us not stay away from our worship services, as some are regularly doing, but let us encourage one another, all the more because you see the day coming nearer.

²⁵If we choose to go on sinning after we have learned the truth, there is no more sacrifice for our sins, ²⁶only a terrible waiting for judgment and a fire that will be eager to devour the enemies. ²⁷Anyone who violates the Law of Moses dies without pity on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁸How much worse a punishment do you think he will deserve who tramples on God's Son, treats as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that made him holy, and insults the Spirit of

⁵⁻¹⁰ Ps 40
⁶⁻⁸
¹²⁻¹³ Ps
^{110:1}
¹⁶⁻¹⁷ Jer
^{31:33-34}
²¹ Zch 6
¹¹⁻¹³
²⁷⁻²⁸ Mt 26:11
²⁸ Dt 17:6
²⁹ Ex 24:8

grace? ²⁰We know Him who said: *I have the right to punish; I will pay back*, and again: *The Lord will judge His people*. ²¹It is terrible to fall into the hands of the living God.

Endure

²²Remember those early days, how after you received the light you successfully came through a hard and painful struggle. ²³Mocked and mistreated, you were made a public show, or you shared the life of those who were treated that way. ²⁴You sympathized with the prisoners, and when you were robbed of your property, you took it cheerfully because you knew you have something better that is permanent.

²⁵Then don't lose your courage. There's a great reward for it. ²⁶You need endurance to do what God wants and so to get what He promised. ²⁷*Soon, very soon, He who is coming will come and will not delay*. ²⁸*and by faith My righteous one will live. If he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him*. ²⁹Now, we're not those who *shrink back* and so are lost, but we have *faith* and so are saved.

Faith

11 Faith is being sure of the things we hope for, being convinced of the things we can't see. ¹The men of long ago won approval for their faith.

²By faith we know God made the world by His Word so that what we see wasn't made of what can be seen.

³By faith *Abel* brought to God a better sacrifice than Cain and was declared to be righteous. *God* approved *his offerings*. He died, but by his faith he is still speaking to us.

⁴By faith *Enoch* was taken away without dying *and couldn't be*

found, because God had taken him. We are assured *he pleased God* before he was taken. ⁵But you can't *please God* without faith. If you come to God, you must believe He exists and will always reward those who search for Him.

⁶By faith *Noah*, when he was warned about the things nobody could foresee, respected God and built an ark to save his family, and by such a faith he condemned the world and got the righteousness that is to be had by faith.

⁷By faith *Abraham* obeyed when he was called to *leave home* and go to a place he would get as his own, and he *left* without knowing where he was going. ⁸By faith he *lived as a stranger* in the promised land, as though it belonged to someone else, and lived in tents with *Isaac* and *Jacob*, who had the same promise he had. ⁹He was looking for the city with foundations, the one God built and made. ¹⁰By faith *Sarah*, even though she was too old, got the strength to have a child because she believed she could trust Him who had promised. ¹¹And so, although he was as good as dead, one man had *many descendants, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore that nobody can count*.

¹²All these died in faith without getting what was promised. But they saw it far ahead and welcomed it, and they confessed they were *strangers who had no permanent home* on earth. ¹³Those who talk that way show they're looking for a country of their own. ¹⁴If their hearts had been in the country they left, they could have found an opportunity to go back. ¹⁵Instead, they were longing for a better country—I mean heaven. That is

26 Or 32
25-26
Ps 135:14
27 In 26:28
27-28 Heb 2
3-4
11
4 Gn 4:4
5-6 Ga 5:26
6 23:4
47:9
12 Gn 15:5
22:17
32:12
13 Gn 12:1
4 23:4
47:9

why God is not ashamed to be called their God, because He has prepared a city for them.

¹⁷By faith *Abraham*, when he was *tested*, offered *Isaac*. Yes, this man, who received the promises ¹⁸and was told: *Isaac's children will be called your descendants*, was sacrificing *his only son*. ¹⁹Thinking, "God can even raise him from the dead." And in a way he did get him back from the dead.

²⁰By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future. ²¹By faith a dying Jacob blessed each of Joseph's sons and *worshiped leaning on the top of his staff*. ²²By faith Joseph, when his end was near, remembered how the Israelites would leave Egypt and gave directions for his burial.

²³By faith, when Moses was born, his parents *hid him three months* because *they saw he was a fine baby* and were not afraid of the king's order. ²⁴By faith *Moses*, when he *grew up*, refused to be called a son of Pharaoh's daughter ²⁵and preferred being mistreated with God's people to enjoying the short-lived pleasures of sin. ²⁶He considered the *abuse suffered by Christ* greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to the reward.

²⁷By faith he left Egypt without fearing the king's anger. He persisted as one who was constantly seeing Him who can't be seen. ²⁸By faith he celebrated the *Passover* and put the *blood* on the doorposts to keep him who *destroyed* the firstborn from touching his people. ²⁹By faith they went through the Red Sea as if it were dry land. The Egyptians tried it too, but were drowned.

³⁰By faith the walls of Jericho fell when the people marched around

them seven days. ³¹By faith the prostitute Rahab welcomed the spies as friends and didn't perish with her disobedient people.

³²And what more should I say? There will not be time enough for me to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets, ³³who by faith conquered kingdoms, did righteous works, got what was promised, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴put out raging fires, escaped death by the sword, found strength when weak, proved to be mighty in battle, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵Women got their dead back alive. Some were tortured; they refused to be freed, in order to rise to a better life. ³⁶Others suffered mocking and scourging and were even put in chains and in prison. ³⁷They were stoned, tempted, sawed in half, murdered with a sword. They went around in sheepskins and goat-skins, needy, oppressed, mistreated. ³⁸The world wasn't worthy of them as they wandered around in deserts and in the hills, in caves and holes in the ground.

³⁹By faith all these won approval but didn't get what was promised. ⁴⁰God provided something better for us in order to have them reach their goal with us.

Run the Race

12 Now then, with all these witnesses around us like a cloud, let us get rid of every burden and the sin we easily fall into and with endurance run the race laid out before us, ²looking to Jesus, who gives us our faith from start to finish. For the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross, thinking nothing of its shame, and *sat down at the right* of God's throne.

¹⁷ Gn 22:1-2
10:12
¹⁸ Gn 21:12
²¹ Gn 47:31
²³ Ex 2:2
²⁴ Ex 2:11
²⁶ Ps 69:9
89:50-51
²⁸ Ec 12:12-13
² Ps 110:1

Think of how sinners opposed Him and He endured it. It will help you not to get tired and give up. 'In your struggle against sin you haven't yet resisted till blood has flowed.⁵ And you have forgotten the encouragement spoken to you as sons:

*My son, don't think lightly of the Lord's training or give up when He corrects you. *The Lord corrects whom He loves, and He whips everyone He accepts as His son.*

What you endure is to correct you. God is treating you as His sons. Is there a son whom his father doesn't correct? *All sons are corrected; if you're not corrected, you're no sons but bastards. *Furthermore, our natural fathers used to correct us, and we respected them. Shouldn't we much more submit to the Father of spirits and live? *They corrected us for a short time as it seemed best to them. But He corrects us for our good, to have us share His holiness. *While we're being corrected, it always seems unpleasant and painful. But after we've been trained, correction gives us the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

¹²And so, *if your hands are letting go, take a firm hold; if you feel weak in your knees, stand firm; and march on without wavering.* Then a cripple will not be turned away but be made well.

¹⁴*Try hard to live in peace* with everybody and to be holy. Without holiness nobody will see the Lord. ¹⁵See to it that no one loses God's love, *that no root with bitter fruit grows up to trouble you* and so defiles all of you, ¹⁶that nobody lives in sexual sin or is unholy like Esau, who for one meal sold his

rights as the firstborn. ¹⁷You know that later, when he wanted to get the blessing, he was rejected. He had no chance to change his mind although he begged for it with tears.

You Have Come to God

¹⁸*You didn't come to anything you could touch, to a blazing fire, darkness, gloom, a storm, the blast of a trumpet, or the speaking of a voice.* Those who heard that begged to be told no more, ²⁰because they couldn't endure the order that was given: *Even an animal, if it touches the mountain, must be stoned.* ²¹And the sight was so terrible Moses said, *"I am terrified and trembling."*

²²No, you have come to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. Here are tens of thousands of angels, ²³the whole festival gathering and church of God's firstborn people with their names written in heaven. Here is the Judge and God of all. Here are the spirits of the righteous who have been perfected. ²⁴And here is Jesus, who gave us a new covenant with God, and the sprinkled blood that has better things to tell than Abel.

²⁵See that you don't refuse to listen to Him who is speaking. If the others didn't escape when they refused to listen to Him warning them on earth, much less will we if we turn away from Him who warns us from heaven. ²⁶Then His voice shook the earth. But now He has promised: *Once more I will shake not only the earth but also heaven.* ²⁷The words *once more* show clearly He will take away what is shaken, seeing He made it, leaving what isn't shaken as permanent. ²⁸Since we have received a kingdom that can't be shaken, let us thank God and so

5-6 Pr 3:
11-12;
Job 5:17
12 Is 35:2;
Ps 4:25
14 Ps 34:14
15 Dt 28:18
16 Gn 25:
23-24
18-20 Ex 18:
12-13, 16;
Dt 4:11
21 Dt 9:19
25-28 Hag 2:6

worship in a way that pleases Him, with fear and awe. ¹⁹because our *God is a consuming fire.*

Live as Christians

13 Christians, keep on loving one another. ¹Don't neglect to welcome guests. This is how some without knowing it had angels as their guests. ²Remember those in prison as if you were in chains with them, and those who are mistreated as if you could feel it.

³Everybody should think highly of marriage and keep married life pure, because God will judge those who sin sexually whether single or married.

⁴Don't be greedy. Be satisfied with what you have, because He said: *I will never leave you or desert you.* ⁵And so we have the courage to say: *The Lord is my Help. I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?*

Follow Your Teachers

¹Remember your leaders who told you God's Word. Consider how their lives ended, and imitate their faith.

²Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

³Don't get carried away with different kinds of strange teachings. It is good to be inwardly strengthened by God's grace, not by foods, which haven't helped those who make so much of them in their lives. ⁴We have an altar, and those who still worship at the Jewish tabernacle have no right to eat from this altar.

⁵The high priest *brings the blood of animals into the holy place* for sin, but the bodies of those animals are *burned outside the camp.*

⁶And so Jesus suffered outside the

gate to make the people holy by His own blood. ⁷Then let us go out to join Him *outside the camp* and bear the abuse He suffered. ⁸You see, we don't have a permanent city here but look for the one that's coming. ⁹Through Jesus let us always *bring to God a sacrifice of praise*, that is, *the fruit of our lips*, praising His name. ¹⁰And don't forget to do good and to share; such sacrifices please God.

¹¹Your leaders, who have to give an account, watch over you. Obey them and submit to them so that they may be happy in their work and not groaning, because that isn't good for you.

¹²Pray for us as we're sure we have a good conscience and want to live right in every way. ¹³I urge you the more earnestly to do this that I may be brought back to you sooner.

Farewell

¹⁴The God of peace *brought back* from the dead our Lord Jesus, who by His *blood made an everlasting covenant* to become the great *Shepherd of the sheep*— ¹⁵may He give you every good thing you need, to do what He wants you to do, working in us through Jesus Christ what pleases Him. To Him be glory forever. Amen.

¹⁶I urge you, fellow Christians, listen patiently to what I say to encourage you, because I've written you a short letter. ¹⁷You should know that Timothy, our fellow worker, is free again. If he comes here soon, he and I will see you.

¹⁸Greet all your leaders and all the holy people. The Christians from Italy greet you.

¹⁹God's love be with all of you.

29 Dt 4 24
9 3
13
5 Dt 31 6 8
Joshua 1 5
1 Ch 28 20
6 Ps 56 4 11
118 6
11 13 Ex
29 14
Le 4 12 21
8 17 9 11
16 27
Nm 19 7 5
15 Ps 50 14
23 Mos
14 2
20 H 55 3
63 11 12
Jer 32 40
50 5
Ez 16 60
37 26
Zch 9 11

THE LETTER OF JAMES

1 JAMES, SERVANT OF GOD and the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes living scattered in the world: Greetings.

Cheer Up

²When you're tested in different ways, my fellow Christians, consider it a pure joy ³because you know the testing of your faith stirs up your power to endure. ⁴Then let endurance finish its work so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

⁵If you lack wisdom, ask God, who gives to everyone with an open hand and doesn't scold, and He will give it to you. ⁶You should ask with faith and have no doubts. Anyone who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷Such a man should not expect to get anything from the Lord. ⁸He's half-hearted—wavering in everything he does.

⁹A lowly Christian should feel proud of his high position, ¹⁰and a rich man of his lowliness, because he will pass away *like a flower in the grass*. ¹¹The sun comes up with a burning heat and *dries up the grass; the flower in it drops off*, and its beauty is gone. That's how the rich man will fade away in what he undertakes.

Our Desires Tempt Us

¹²*Blessed is the man who endures patiently* when he is tested. When he passes the test, *he will get the crown of life* God promised those who love Him. ¹³When you're

tempted, don't say, "God is tempting me." God can't be tempted to do wrong, and He doesn't tempt anyone. ¹⁴Everyone's own desire tempts him, draws him away, and tries to trap him. ¹⁵When desire conceives, it gives birth to sin, and when sin grows up, it gives birth to death.

God's Children

¹⁶Don't make a mistake, my dear Christian friends. ¹⁷Every gift is good, and everything given is perfect—it comes down from above, from the Father of lights, who doesn't, like the sun and the moon, move or by changing cast a shadow.

¹⁸As He wanted it, He gave birth to us by the Word of truth so we would be the first and best of His creatures.

¹⁹My dear fellow Christians, you should know this. Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to talk, slow to get angry. ²⁰An angry man doesn't do what's right before God. ²¹So get rid of everything filthy and every breaking out of wickedness, and with a gentle spirit welcome the Word that's planted in you and can save your souls.

²²Always do what the Word says: don't merely listen to it and so deceive yourselves. ²³If anyone listens to the Word but doesn't do what it says, he's like a man who in a mirror sees the face he was born with. ²⁴He looks at himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what he looked like. ²⁵But if you look into God's perfect Word, which makes us free, and are loyal to it, if

1
10-11 Is
40 6-8
12-13 Dn
12-12
Zec 6:14

Jerusalem, perhaps A.D. 61

you don't merely listen and forget but do what it says, you'll be happy as you do it. ²⁸Someone may think he's religious, but if he doesn't control his tongue, he's deceiving himself—his religion is worthless. ²⁹Your way of worshiping is pure and stainless before God the Father if you look after orphans and widows in their troubles and keep yourself unspotted by the world.

Don't Prefer the Rich

2 My fellow Christians, believing as you do in Jesus Christ, our Lord of glory, don't prefer one person to another. ³If a man wearing gold rings and fine clothes comes into your meeting and a poor man in dirty clothes also comes in and you give special attention to the one wearing fine clothes and say, "Please take this seat," but you say to the poor man, "Stand there," or "Sit here by my footstool"—haven't you contradicted yourselves and become men who are wrong in their judgment? ⁴Listen, my dear fellow Christians, didn't God choose those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and inherit the kingdom He promised those who love Him? ⁵But you have insulted the poor man. Don't the rich oppress you and drag you into court? ⁶Don't they slander the beautiful name by which you were called the Lord's own? ⁷If you really do everything the royal law demands, as it is written: *Love your neighbor like yourself*, you're doing right. ⁸But if you prefer one to another, you're sinning, and the Law convicts you of sin.

Keep the Whole Law

⁹If you keep the whole Law but fail in one point, you're guilty of breaking all of it. ¹⁰The One who said: *Don't commit adultery*, also said: *Don't murder*. If you don't commit adultery but you murder, you're a lawbreaker. ¹¹Talk and act as people who are going to be judged by the Law that brings liberty. ¹²Anyone who shows no mercy will be judged without mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Faith Is Active

¹³What good does it do, my fellow Christians, if you say you have faith but don't have any works? Can such a faith save you? ¹⁴If a Christian man or woman doesn't have clothes or daily food and one of you tells them, "Good-bye, keep warm, and eat heartily," but you don't give them what the body needs, what good does it do? ¹⁵So faith by itself, if it doesn't have any works, is dead.

¹⁶But somebody will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Prove to me you have faith without any works, and by my works I'll prove to you I have faith. ¹⁷You believe there is *one God*. That's fine! The devils believe it too—and shudder.

¹⁸Do you want proof, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is dead? ¹⁹Didn't our father Abraham get to be righteous^a on the basis of works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ²⁰You see his faith was active with works and by works reached its goal. ²¹And what is written came true: *Abraham believed God and so was counted righteous* and was called *God's friend*. ²²You see a man gets to be

2
8 Lv 19:18
11 Ex 20
13-14
Dt 5:17-18
19 Dt 6:4
Zch 14:9
Mt 2:10
21 Gn 22:2, 9
23 Gn 15:6
14:41 B
7 Ch 20:7

^a See note at Rom 3:20

righteous on the basis of his works and not by faith alone. ²⁵The same is true of the prostitute Rahab. Didn't she get to be righteous on the basis of works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them away on a different road? ²⁶Just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead.

Control Your Tongue

3 Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow Christians, because you know we who teach will be judged more severely.

¹All of us sin much. If anyone doesn't sin in what he says, he's a perfect man who can control his whole body. ²If we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we direct their whole bodies. ³Look at the ships—so big and driven by strong winds; but a very small rudder steers a ship anywhere the pilot wants it to go. ⁴So the tongue is a small organ but can boast of big things.

You know how just a spark will set a large forest on fire. ⁵The tongue is a fire, a world of wrong! Set among the parts of our body, the tongue soils the whole body and enflames the course of life as it gets its fire from hell. ⁶A human being can tame and has tamed all kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and creatures in the sea. ⁷But nobody can tame the tongue—a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

⁸We praise the Lord and Father with our tongue and with it curse other people, who once were *made like God*. ⁹Praise and cursing come from the same mouth. We mustn't do that, my fellow Christians. ¹⁰Does a spring from the same opening pour fresh and bitter water? ¹¹My fellow Christians, can

a fig tree produce olives? Or a grapevine figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

Wisdom from Above

¹²Is anyone of you wise and intelligent? In a gentle spirit of wisdom show by a good life what you can do. ¹³But if you feel a bitter jealousy and a selfish ambition in your hearts, don't brag and lie against the truth. ¹⁴Such wisdom doesn't come from above, but from this earth, from this life, and from the devil. ¹⁵Where there is such jealousy and selfishness, there is confusion and every kind of evil.

¹⁶The wisdom that comes from above is first of all pure, then peaceful, gentle, willing to obey, full of mercy and good works, without doubts or hypocrisy. ¹⁷When we work for peace, we sow in peace a seed that produces righteousness.

Don't Love the World

4 Why is there fighting and quarreling among you? Isn't it because your cravings for pleasure are fighting in your bodies? ²You want something but don't get it, and so you kill. And you try to get something, but you can't lay your hands on it, and so you quarrel and fight. You don't get things, because you don't ask for them. ³Or you ask for something but don't get it because you want it for a wrong purpose—to spend it on your pleasures.

⁴Adulterous people, don't you know that to love the world is to hate God? If you want to be a friend of the world, you make yourself an enemy of God. ⁵Or do you think the statement means nothing: "The Spirit whom He caused to live in us yearns for us even with jealousy"?

⁹ *Gen 1:27.*
⁵¹

"But He gives a greater blessing. And so it says: God opposes the proud but is gracious to the humble. Then submit to God. Resist the devil and he will run away from you. Come close to God, and He will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you doubters. Be miserable, mourn, and cry. Turn your laughter into mourning and your joy into gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will honor you.

Don't Talk Against One Another

"Stop talking against one another, my fellow Christians. Anyone who talks against his fellow Christian or condemns him talks against the Law and condemns the Law. If you condemn the Law, you're not doing what it says, but you're being its judge. There's only one Lawgiver and Judge. He can save and destroy. And who are you to judge your neighbor?

"If the Lord Is Willing"

"Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we'll go into this city, stay there a year, do business, and make money." You don't know about tomorrow. What is your life? You're a mist, seen for a little while, then vanishing. You should say: "If the Lord is willing, we'll live and do this or that." But instead you brag and boast. All such boasting is wrong.

"If you know what's right but don't do it, you're sinning.

Woe to the Rich

5 Come now, you rich people, cry and howl over the miseries that are coming to you. Your riches are

rotten, your clothes are eaten by moths, your gold and silver are tarnished, and their tarnish will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have piled up treasures in these last days. But now the wages you never paid the men who reaped your fields cry out. And the groans of those who cut the grain have come to the ears of the Lord of armies. You have lived here on earth in luxuries and pleasures. You have fattened yourselves for the day of slaughter. You have condemned and murdered the righteous man—he doesn't resist you.

Be Patient

"Be patient, fellow Christians, till the Lord comes. See how the farmer looks for the precious crop on the ground and waits patiently for it to get the fall and the spring rains. You, too, be patient, and keep your courage, because the Lord will soon be here. Don't blame your troubles on one another, fellow Christians, or you will be judged. You know, the Judge is standing at the door.

"As your example of patiently suffering wrong, fellow Christians, take the prophets who spoke in the Lord's name. Remember, we call those happy who endured. You heard how Job endured, and you saw how the Lord finally treated him because the Lord is tenderhearted and merciful.

Don't Swear

"Above all things, my fellow Christians, don't swear by heaven or by the earth or any other oath, but let your yes be just yes and your no be no, or you will be condemned for it.

4
6 Pr. 3:34
5
3 Ps. 21:9
Pr. 16:27
4 Mt. 3:5
Ez. 2:23
3:9
Lv. 19:13
Ps. 10:6
2 Sm. 22:7
Is. 5:9
5 Jer. 12:3
7 Dt. 11:14
11 Dn. 12:12
Ez. 34:6
Ps. 86:15
103:8
111:4
112:4
145:8
Joel 2:13
Jonah 4:2
Neh. 9:17
31:7 Cn.
30:9

The Power of Prayer

¹³Is anyone of you suffering? Pray! Are you happy? Sing a song of praise! ¹⁴Is anyone of you sick? Call the elders of the church to pray over you, pouring on oil in the Lord's name. ¹⁵And if you believe, your prayer will make the sick person well. The Lord will make him healthy, and if he feels guilty of sins, he will be forgiven. ¹⁶Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another to be healed.

A good man can do much by praying vigorously. ¹⁷Elijah was a

man just like us, and he prayed earnestly there should be no rain, and no rain fell on the ground for three years and six months. ¹⁸Then he prayed again, and heaven sent rain, and the ground produced its crops.

Bring Back the Lost

¹⁹My fellow Christians, if one of you wanders away from the truth and someone brings him back, ²⁰you should know that whoever brings a sinner back from his wrong way will save his soul from death and *cover many sins*.

^{20 Pr. 10:12}

THE FIRST LETTER OF PETER

1 PETER, APOSTLE OF JESUS CHRIST, to the chosen people living scattered as strangers in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, the province of Asia, and Bithynia. ²chosen long ago by God the Father to be made holy by the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be *sprinkled with His blood*: God give *you more and more* grace and peace!

Christ Saves You

Let us praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who by raising Jesus Christ from the dead has in His great mercy given us a new birth so that we live and hope ⁴for an inheritance that isn't destroyed or defiled and never fades away, as it is kept for you in heaven. ⁵And you by believing are protected by God's power till you come to the salvation that is waiting to be revealed at the end of time. ⁶This delights you, although now for a little while you may have had to suffer various trials. ⁷Gold is tested by fire, and your faith, when it is tested, should be found to be much more precious than gold, which perishes. This is how you will have praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ appears again.

⁸You never saw Him, but you love Him. You don't see Him now, but you believe in Him. And a joy, unspeakable and wonderful, fills you with delight ⁹as you get what by faith you're looking for—your salvation.

¹⁰The prophets, who long ago wrote about what God's grace would

do for you, made a thorough search to learn all about this salvation. ¹¹They tried to find out whom and what time the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing out when He exactly predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. ¹²God told them they were not serving themselves but you in these things. And now the Holy Spirit, sent from heaven, had men, telling you the good news, announce to you these things the angels long to look into.

Be Holy

¹³Now, then, get mentally ready for action, keep a clear head, and feel perfectly sure of what God's love will give you when Jesus Christ appears. ¹⁴Being children who know how to obey, don't live according to your lusts as you once did when you didn't know any better. ¹⁵But get to be holy in all your ways, like the Holy One who called you. ¹⁶It is written: *Be holy, because I am holy*. ¹⁷And if you call on Him as your *Father*, who judges each one according to what he has done, without preferring one to another, live reverently as long as you are strangers here. ¹⁸knowing *you were freed* from the worthless life you inherited from your fathers, *not by a payment of silver or gold*, which perish. ¹⁹but by the precious blood of Christ, the Lamb without a fault or a spot. ²⁰Appointed before the world was made, He was revealed in the last period of time to help you. ²¹And through Him you

1
2 Ex 24:6 B.
Lv 16:14
15 Dn 6:25
16 Lv 11
44-45 19:2
20 7:26
17 Ps 89:26
18 Is 52:3

Rome, A.D. 62

believe God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory; and so your faith and hope rest in God.

The Living Word

²²Now that by obeying the truth you purified yourselves to love sincerely as brothers, love one another with a pure heart and intensely. ²³You were born again, not by a seed that perishes but one that cannot perish, *God's ever-living Word*.

²⁴All people are like grass, and all their glory like the flower in the grass.

The grass withers, and the flower drops off,

²⁵but the Lord's Word lives forever.

This Word is the good news you have been told.

2 Then get rid of every kind of wickedness and deceit, hypocrisy, jealousy, and every kind of slander, and like newborn babies, thirst for the pure milk of the Word so that you'll grow till you're saved. ³Surely you have tasted that the Lord is good.

The Living Stone

⁴Come to Him. He is the living Stone whom men rejected but God selected as precious. ⁵And let yourselves be built as living stones into a spiritual temple, to be holy priests who bring spiritual sacrifices that God gladly accepts through Jesus Christ.

⁶The Bible says: *I am laying in Zion a Cornerstone, chosen and precious, and if you believe in Him, you'll never be disappointed.* He is precious to you who believe, but to those who do not believe *He is the Stone which, rejected by the builders, has become the Cornerstone,*

a Stone they stumble over and a Rock they fall over. When they disobey the Word, they stumble over it; that's the end appointed for them.

God's People

⁹But you are a chosen people, priests of a King, a holy nation, a people saved to be His own and to tell of the wonderful deeds of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. ¹⁰Once you were no people, but now you are God's people. Once you had received no mercy, but now you have received mercy.

¹¹Dear friends, I urge you, as guests and strangers in this world: Refuse to do what the body wants, because its appetites fight against the soul. ¹²Live a noble life among the people of the world, that instead of accusing you of doing wrong, they may see the good you do and glorify God when He visits them.

Submit to Authorities

¹³Submit to every human authority to please the Lord: to the emperor as one who is over you, ¹⁴or to governors as men whom he sent to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. ¹⁵God wants you to silence ignorant and foolish people by doing right. ¹⁶Act as free men, and don't use your freedom as an excuse to do wrong, but be God's slaves. ¹⁷Honor everyone, love your fellow Christians. *Fear God; honor the emperor.*

¹⁸Servants, submit to your masters, showing every respect, not only when they're good and kind but also when they're unfair.

Suffer Patiently

¹⁹It is a fine thing if, moved by your conscience to please God, you suffer

23 On 6:26.
12:7
24 25 18 40
6-9
2
3 Ps 24:8
4 Is 28:16
6-7 Is 28:16
7 Ps 118:22
8 Is 6:14
9 Ex 19:5-6
15 42:12
43:20-21
D1:7:6
14:2
10 Hos 1:6
8-10.
2:1 23
11 Gn 23:4
Lv 25:22
Ph 39:12
1 Ch 29:12
12 Is 10:3
17 Pr 24:21

patiently when wronged. ²⁰What credit is it to you if you sin and patiently take a beating for it? But if you suffer for doing good and take it patiently, God is pleased with you.

²¹This is what you were called for, seeing that Christ also suffered for you and left you an example so that you'll follow in His steps. ²²He never sinned or was found to be deceiving when He spoke. ²³When others abused Him, He didn't abuse them; when He suffered, He didn't threaten but left it in the hands of Him who judges fairly. ²⁴He carried our sins in His body to the cross so that we'll die to sin and live for righteousness. His wounds have healed you. ²⁵You were like lost sheep, but now you've come back to the Shepherd who takes care of you.

Wives and Husbands

3 Similarly, you married women, submit to your husbands. Then even if some of them refuse to listen to the Word, you will win them, without talking about it, by the way you wives live, ²when they see how you fear God and are pure in your lives.

³Your beauty should not be anything outward—braiding the hair, putting on gold ornaments and dresses— ⁴but the person you are in your heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit; this is very precious to God. ⁵And this is how long ago the holy women who trusted God used to make themselves beautiful: They submitted to their husbands, ⁶like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him lord. You are her daughters if you do good and let nothing terrify you.

⁷In the same way, you husbands, live with your wives with under-

standing; they are weaker than you are. Honor them as sharing the gift of life with you—so that nothing will interfere with your prayers.

When You Are Wronged

⁸Finally, all of you, live in harmony, be sympathetic, love your fellow Christians, be tenderhearted and humble. ⁹Don't pay back evil for evil, insult for insult, but bless others instead. That is what you were called to do to get a blessing.

¹⁰If you want to love life and enjoy happy days, stop speaking evil or saying anything to deceive.

¹¹Turn away from wrong and do good.

¹²Be eager for peace and go after it.

¹³The Lord watches the righteous and hears their prayer,

but the Lord is against those who do wrong.

¹⁴Who will harm you if you're eager to do good? ¹⁵But even if you suffer because you're righteous, you are happy. Never let others terrify or trouble you. ¹⁶But make Christ the holy Lord in your hearts. And always be ready to answer anyone who asks you to explain the hope you have, but be gentle and respectful. ¹⁷Keep a good conscience so that those who slander your good life in Christ will feel ashamed of their slander. ¹⁸It is better, if God wants it that way, to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.

The Righteous One Died

¹⁹Christ died once for our sins, the Righteous One for the guilty, to bring us to God. He was killed in His body but made alive in His spirit. ²⁰In this spirit He also went and preached to the spirits kept in

22 Ps 32 2
49 53 9
Eph 3 13
24 18 53 4 12
24 25 15 53
5-6
Ez 34 5
3
6 Gn 18 12
Pr 3 25
10 12 Ps 34
12-16
14-15 15 8
12 13

prison ²⁰who disobeyed long ago in the days of Noah when God waited patiently while the ark was being built, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved by water. ²¹In the same also, baptism now saves you—not by washing dirt from the body but by promising God to keep one's conscience clear—by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone to heaven and is at the right of God, where angels, rulers, and powers have been put under Him.

You Have Given Up Sin

4 Now since Christ has suffered for us in His body, you, too, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, that if you have suffered in your body, you have given up sin ²and don't follow human desires anymore but do what God wants as long as you live in this world. ³You spent enough time in the past doing what the world likes to do, when you lived in unbridled immorality, lusts, drunkenness, wild celebrations, drinking parties, and the abominable worship of idols. ⁴They're surprised now you don't plunge into the same flood of wild living with them, and they slander you. ⁵They will have to give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶The dead also once heard the good news, so that they will be judged as human beings in their earthly life, but then will live like God by the Spirit.

Love Ferently

⁷The end of everything is near. So be sensible and keep your heads clear for your prayers. ⁸Above all, continue to love one another fervently, because *love covers many sins*. ⁹Welcome one another as

guests without grumbling. ¹⁰Serve one another, each with the gift he received, as good managers of the various gifts of God. ¹¹If you speak, say what God says. If you serve, do it with the strength God gives you so that in every way you glorify God through Jesus Christ. His is the glory and the power forever! Amen.

You Share Christ's Sufferings

¹²Dear friends, don't be surprised that you're being tested by a fiery trial as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³But as you share Christ's sufferings, be happy so that you will also enjoy the delights when His glory will be revealed. ¹⁴If you're insulted now for the name of Christ, you're happy because the Spirit of glory and power, *the Spirit of God, is resting on you*.

¹⁵Of course, none of you should suffer as a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or one who meddles in the affairs of others. ¹⁶But if you suffer for being a Christian, don't feel ashamed, but praise God with that name. ¹⁷It is time for the judgment to *start in God's temple*. But if it is starting with us, how will it end for those who refuse to listen to God's good news?

"If it is hard for a righteous person to be saved, what will happen to the ungodly and the sinner?"

¹⁸So you, too, who suffer as God wants you to suffer, entrust yourselves to Him—you can trust Him who created you—and keep on doing good.

To the Pastors

5 I appeal to you pastors, I who also am a pastor. I saw Christ suffer, and I share in the glory that is

4
8 Pr 10:12
14 Is 11:2
17 Ec 9:6
18 Pr 11:31

to be revealed. ⁸Be shepherds of God's flock that is with you, watching over it, not because you must but willingly, as God would have you do it; ⁹not greedily but eagerly; not lording it over the people entrusted to you but being examples to the flock. ¹⁰And when the Head Shepherd appears, you will win the unfading garland of glory.

Humble Yourselves

¹In a similar way, you young people, submit to those who are older.

All of you, put humility on as an apron before one another because *God opposes the proud but is gracious to the humble.* ²Humble yourselves, then, under God's mighty hand so that He may honor you when His time comes.

Watch

Throw all your worry on Him

because *He* takes care of you. ³Keep a clear head and watch! Your enemy, the devil, is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. ⁴Be strong in your faith and resist him, knowing that your fellow Christians in the world are paying the same price of suffering. ⁵After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who called you in Christ Jesus to His everlasting glory, will make you perfect, firm, and strong. ⁶He has the power forever. Amen.

Farewell!

⁷With the help of Silas, whom I consider a faithful fellow Christian, I'm writing you this short letter to encourage you and testify this is God's true love. Stand firm in it.

⁸Your sister church in Babylon,^a chosen by God, greets you; and so does Mark, my son. Greet one another with a kiss of love. ⁹Peace to all of you who are in Christ!

⁵
5 Pr. J 34
7 Ps 55:22

^aBy "Babylon" Peter seems to mean Rome

THE SECOND LETTER OF PETER

1 SIMON PETER, SERVANT AND APOSTLE OF JESUS CHRIST, to the people who by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ were given a faith as precious as ours: ²As you know God and our Lord Jesus, may you enjoy more and more of His grace and peace.

Grow

¹By His glory and might He once gave us very great and precious promises and now has called us. When we got to know Him, His divine power gave us everything for life and godliness ²to help you escape the corruption that lust brought into the world and to share the divine nature.

³In view of that, try very hard to add to your faith moral power, to moral power knowledge, ⁴to knowledge self-control, to self-control endurance, to endurance godliness, ⁵to godliness brotherly kindness, to brotherly kindness love. ⁶If you have these and they grow more and more, they keep you from being useless and unproductive in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁷But if anyone doesn't have these, he's blind, shortsighted, and has forgotten that his old sins were washed away.

⁸Be all the more eager, then, fellow Christians, to make sure you're God's called and chosen ones. If you do this, you will never fail. ⁹Then with rich gifts you will be welcomed into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

¹⁰And so I'm always going to remind you of this, although you already know it and are well grounded in the truth you have. ¹¹I think it's right, as long as I'm in the tent of this body, to refresh your memory ¹²because I know I'm soon going to lay aside my tent; our Lord Jesus Christ has told me. ¹³And I'll do my best to make it possible for you to remember these things at any time after I'm gone.

God's Word

¹⁴We didn't follow any clever myths when we told you about the power of our Lord Jesus Christ and His coming. No, with our own eyes we saw His majesty. ¹⁵God the Father gave Him honor and glory when from His wonderful glory He said to Him: *"This is My Son whom I love and with whom I am delighted."* ¹⁶We heard that voice speak to Him from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

¹⁷And we have a more sure word of prophecy. Please look to it as to a light shining in a gloomy place till the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. ¹⁸Understand this first, that no one can explain any written Word of God as he likes. ¹⁹because it never was the will of a human being that brought us God's Word, but the Holy Spirit moved holy men to say what God told them.

Men Who Teach Lies

2 But there were also men who preached lies among the people.

Perhaps Rome. A.D. 62

¹
² 2 Th 4:25
³ 17 Ph 2:7
⁴ 2 Sm 7:14
⁵ 18 42:1
⁶ 19 14:12

just as there will also be among you those who teach lies. They will secretly bring in their own destructive teachings. Denying the Lord who has bought them, they quickly destroy themselves. ²And many will follow their immoral ways and *cause* people to *slander* the way of truth. ³In their greed they will talk dishonestly to you to make a profit. A just punishment has long been getting ready for them, and destruction has been watching for them.

⁴God didn't spare angels who sinned but put them into the gloomy dungeons of hell to be kept for judgment. ⁵And He didn't spare the ancient world but protected Noah, who preached righteousness, and seven others when He brought a flood on a world of ungodly people. ⁶And He condemned the towns of Sodom and Gomorrah, destroyed them by burning them to ashes, and made them a warning to those who are going to be ungodly, ⁷but He rescued righteous Lot, whom the wicked people vexed with their immoral life. ⁸(Seeing and hearing the wicked things they did, this righteous man tortured his righteous soul day after day as he lived among them.) ⁹The Lord knows how to rescue godly people when they are tested and to keep the wicked under punishment for the day of judgment. ¹⁰especially those who go lusting after sinful flesh to defile themselves and who despise the Lord.

Bold and headstrong men, without trembling they slander beings of glory. ¹¹whom even angels, although they're greater in strength and power, don't condemn and abuse before the Lord. ¹²But like unthinking animals that are born to be physical, to be caught and killed,

they slander what they don't understand, and like animals they will be destroyed— ¹³and so lose what they hoped to gain by their wrongdoing.

Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are spots and faults! They enjoy deceiving you while they feast with you. ¹⁴They have eyes only for an adulterous woman and are restlessly looking for sin. They try to trap weak souls.

Their hearts are trained to be greedy. Cursed people! ¹⁵Leaving the right way, they've gone wrong. They've gone the way of Balaam, Beor's son, who loved the reward he would get for doing wrong. ¹⁶But he was shown how wrong he was: A speechless donkey spoke with a human voice and didn't let the prophet go on in his crazy way.

¹⁷They are dried-up springs, fogs driven by a storm. Dark gloom is reserved for them. ¹⁸By talking high-sounding nonsense and using physical cravings they set traps baited with lusts for the people who are just escaping from those who live in error. ¹⁹Promising them freedom, they are themselves slaves of corruption—anyone is a slave of that which defeated him.

²⁰If by knowing the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ they escaped the world's corruptions but are again entangled and conquered by them, these people are worse off in the end than they were before. ²¹It would have been better for them never to have known the right way than to learn it and then turn their backs on the holy commandment that was given them. ²²The proverb is true that tells what happened to them: *A dog goes back to what he has*

2
2 Pt 26:11

vomited up, and a sow that has washed goes back to roll in the mud.

The World Will Be Destroyed

3 Dear friends, this is now the second letter I'm writing you. In both of them I stir up your pure minds by reminding you to think of what the holy prophets predicted and what the Lord and Savior ordered through your apostles.

First of all you should know that in the last days mockers, following their own impulses, will come mocking: "He promised to come. What has happened? From the time the fathers went to their rest everything has stayed as it was since the world was first created."

When they insist on this, they forget that long ago God's Word made the sky and formed the earth out of water and with water. Then this water also flooded the world and destroyed it. And the same Word has preserved the present heavens and the earth for the fire and keeps them for the day when the ungodly will be judged and destroyed.

Don't forget, dear friends, with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord isn't slow to do what He promised, as some people think. He is patient with you and doesn't want any to perish but wants them all to turn from sin to Him.

The Lord's day will come like a thief. On that day the heavens will pass away with a roar, the elements will be destroyed by heat—with the earth; and what was done on it will be shown.

Since all these things will be destroyed in this way, think how holy and godly you should live. Waiting for and speeding the coming of God's day that will destroy the heavens with fire and melt the elements with heat. But according to His promise we expect new heavens and a new earth where righteousness lives. With this to look forward to, dear friends, do your best to have Him find you without a spot or a fault and at peace.

Believe that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul wrote you according to the wisdom given him. He talks about this in all his letters. Some things in them are hard to understand, and those who are ignorant and not well grounded misinterpret them as they do the rest of the Bible, and so they destroy themselves.

Now you, dear friends, are warned. Be on your guard, and don't let men without principles sweep you off your feet by their error. But grow in God's grace and in knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory now and forever. Amen.

3
8 Ph 90 4
13 15 65 17
16 22

JOHN

1 IT WAS THERE FROM THE BEGINNING, we heard It, we saw It with our eyes, we looked at It, and our hands touched It—we're writing about the Word of Life. ²That Life showed itself and we saw It, and now we testify and tell you about the everlasting Life that was with the Father and showed itself to us. ³We saw and heard It, and we tell you about It so that you too will have It in fellowship with us. Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. ⁴We're writing this so that our joy may be complete.

⁵This is what we heard Him tell us and we're telling you: God is Light, and there is nothing dark in Him. ⁶If we say we share what He has but live in the dark, we're lying and not living the truth.

Jesus' Blood

⁷If we live in the light as He is in the light, we have it in fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, washes us clean from every sin. ⁸If we say we don't have any sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth isn't in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, we can depend on Him to do what is right—He will forgive our sins and wash away every wrong. ¹⁰If we say we haven't sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us.

2 My children, I'm writing this to you to keep you from sinning. If anyone sins, we have One to plead for us with the Father—Jesus Christ,

who is righteous. ²He has paid for our sins,^a and not for ours only but for the whole world.

Live and Love

³We're sure we know Him if we do what He orders us to do. ⁴Anyone who says, "I know Him," but doesn't do what He orders is a liar and doesn't have the truth. ⁵But if you do what He says, God's love has in you really accomplished what He wants. That's how we know we're in Him. ⁶If you say, "I live in Him," you should live just as He lived.

⁷Dear friends, I'm not writing you a new commandment but an old one that you had from the beginning. This old commandment is the Word you've heard. ⁸On the other hand, I'm writing you a new commandment, one that is real in Him and in you. I know this because the darkness is passing away and the real light is already shining.

⁹Anyone who says, "I am in the light," but hates his brother is still in the dark. ¹⁰If you love your brother, you live in the light, and there's nothing in you to offend anyone. ¹¹Anyone who hates his brother is in the dark and walks in the dark and doesn't know where he's going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

Don't Love the World

¹²I'm writing you, children, because your sins are forgiven for His sake. ¹³I'm writing you, fathers,

^aBy His sacrifice Jesus wipes out our sins and changes God's anger to love.

because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I'm writing you, young men, because you have conquered the evil one. I'm writing you, children, because you know the Father. ¹⁴I'm writing you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I'm writing you, young men, because you're strong. God's Word lives in you, and you conquered the evil one.

¹⁵Don't love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, he doesn't love the Father, ¹⁶because everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vain display of property—doesn't come from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷And the world with its lust is passing away. But if you do what God wants, you live forever.

¹⁸Children, it is the last hour. You heard an antichrist is coming, and now many antichrists have come. That is how we know it is the last hour. ¹⁹They left us, but they never really belonged to us. If they had been a part of us, they would have stayed with us. But they left, to show that not all belong to us.

You Have the Son

²⁰The Holy One has anointed you, and now all of you know. ²¹I'm writing you, not as though you don't know the truth but because you know it and no lie comes from the truth.

²²Who is such a liar as he who denies Jesus is the promised Savior? He is the antichrist because he denies the Father and the Son. ²³Anyone who denies the Son doesn't have the Father. If you confess the Son, you also have the Father. ²⁴Keep in you what you have heard from the beginning. If

what you have heard from the beginning stays in you, you will live in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵And this is what He promised us—everlasting life!

²⁶I'm writing you about those who are trying to lead you astray. ²⁷He anointed you, and that anointing stays in you, and you don't need anyone to teach you. But as His anointing teaches you everything—and it is real and no lie—as He has taught you, live in Him.

²⁸And now, children, live in Him so that when He appears we may be bold and not shrink from Him in shame when He comes.

God's Children

²⁹If you know He is righteous, you know that everyone who does right is His child.

3 See how the Father has loved us—we are called God's children, and that's what we are. The world doesn't know us, because it didn't get to know Him. ²Dear friends, we are now God's children, but it hasn't yet been shown what we're going to be. We know that when it will be shown, we'll be like Him because we'll see Him as He is. ³And everyone who trusts Him for this purifies himself as He is pure.

⁴Everyone who sins breaks the Law. Sin is breaking the Law. ⁵And you know He appeared in order to take away our sins. There is no sin in Him. ⁶Anyone who stays in Him doesn't sin. Anyone who sins hasn't seen or known Him. ⁷Children, don't let anybody deceive you. Whoever does right is righteous as He is righteous.

⁸Anyone who lives in sin is the devil's child because the devil has been sinning from the beginning.

God's Son appeared in order to undo the devil's works. "Everyone who is God's child refuses to sin, because God's new life is in him, and he cannot sin, because he is God's child. "You can see who are God's children and who are the devil's children: Anyone who doesn't do right or love his brother isn't God's child.

Love One Another

"This is the message you have heard from the beginning: Love one another. "Don't be like Cain. He was a son of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because he did wrong and his brother did right. "Don't be surprised, fellow Christians, if the world hates you.

"We know we have come from death into life, because we love our fellow Christians. Anyone who doesn't love stays dead. "Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has everlasting life remaining in him.

"This is how we learned what love is: He gave His life for us. We too should give our lives for our fellow Christians. "If anyone has this world's goods and sees his fellow Christian in need but shuts his heart against him, how can he still be loving God? "Children, let us not love only in words or in talk, but let us put our love into action and make it real.

"This is how we'll know we're born of the truth and will reassure ourselves before Him: "Whenever our conscience condemns us, God is greater than our conscience and knows everything. "Dear friends, if our conscience doesn't condemn us, we can talk boldly to God "and get from Him anything we ask because

we obey His orders and do what pleases Him. "He orders us to believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and to love one another as He has ordered us to do. "Anyone who does what He orders lives in God and God in him. And this is how we know He lives in us: by the Spirit whom He has given us.

False Prophets

4 Dear friends, don't believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see if they are from God. Many false prophets have gone out into the world. "This is how you can recognize God's Spirit: Every spirit who confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. "And any spirit who doesn't confess this Jesus isn't from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist which you heard is coming, and here it is already in the world.

"Children, you are God's family, and you have won a victory over these men because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. "These men belong to the world. That is why they speak the thoughts of the world, and the world listens to them. "We are God's children. Anyone who knows God listens to us. Anyone who is not God's child will not listen to us. In this way we can tell what is the spirit of truth and what is the spirit of error.

God's Love in Us

"Dear friends, let us love one another because love comes from God and everyone who loves is God's child and knows God. "He who doesn't love hasn't learned to know God, because God is Love. "God has shown us His love by sending His only-begotten Son into

the world for us to live through Him. ¹⁰This is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to pay for our sins. ¹¹Dear friends, if that's how God loved us, then we should love one another. ¹²Nobody has ever seen God. If we love one another, God lives in us, and His love has accomplished in us what He wants. ¹³This is how we know we live in Him and He in us: He has given us some of His Spirit.

¹⁴We have seen and can tell the truth that the Father sent His Son to save the world. ¹⁵If you confess Jesus is God's Son, God lives in you and you in God. ¹⁶And we have come to know and believe the love God has for us. God is Love, and if you live in love, you live in God, and God lives in you.

¹⁷His love has accomplished what He wants when we can look ahead confidently to the day of judgment because we are what He is in this world. ¹⁸Such love isn't terrified, but the finest love throws out terror. We are terrified by punishment, and if we're terrified, our love isn't at its best.

¹⁹We love because He first loved us. ²⁰If anyone says, "I love God," but hates his brother, he's a liar. If anyone doesn't love his brother whom he has seen, he can't love God whom he hasn't seen. ²¹And this is

the order He gave us: If you love God, love your brother.

5 Everyone who believes Jesus is the promised Savior is God's child. And everyone who loves the Father loves the Father's child. ²We know we love God's children when we love God and do what He orders us to do. ³Loving God means we do what He orders. And what He orders is no burden.

God's Life in Us

⁴Every child of God conquers the world. Our faith is the victory over the world. ⁵Who conquers the world but he who believes Jesus is God's Son?

⁶This is He who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. Not by water only but by water and blood. And the Spirit is telling the truth because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷There are three who bring us the truth:^b ⁸the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three have one purpose.

⁹If we accept the testimony of men, God's testimony is greater because God's testimony is the truth He told about His Son. ¹⁰If you believe in God's Son, you have in you the testimony of the truth. Anyone who will not believe God has made Him a liar because he hasn't believed the truth God told about His Son.

^bOur oldest manuscripts lack vv. 7b-8a: "in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one. And there are three testifying on earth." Early in the 16th century an editor translated these words from Latin manuscripts and inserted them in his Greek New Testament. Erasmus took them from this Greek New Testament and inserted them in the third edition (1522) of his Greek New Testament. Luther used the text prepared by Erasmus. But even though the inserted words taught the Trinity, Luther ruled them out and never had them in his translation. In 1550 Bugenhagen objected to these words "on account of the truth." In 1574 Feyerabend, a printer, added them to Luther's text, and in 1596 they appeared in the Wittenberg copies.

"He told us this truth that God has given us everlasting life and this life is in His Son. ¹²If you have the Son, you have life. If you don't have God's Son, you don't have life. ¹³I'm writing you this so that you who believe in the name of God's Son will know you have everlasting life.

¹⁴We feel sure of Him that if we ask for anything according to His will, He listens to us. ¹⁵And if we know He listens to us whatever we ask, we know we get what we ask Him for. ¹⁶If anyone sees His brother sinning but the sin isn't deadly, he should pray, and God will give him life for those who sin if the sin isn't

deadly. There is a sin that's deadly; I don't tell you to pray for it. ¹⁷Every kind of wrong is sin, but there is a sin that isn't deadly.

¹⁸We know that no child of God goes on sinning, but God's Son protects him, and the evil one doesn't touch him. ¹⁹We know we're God's children, and the whole world is in the power of the evil one.

²⁰We know God's Son came and gave us the understanding to know Him who is real, and we are in Him who is real, in His Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and everlasting life. ²¹Children, keep away from idols.

JOHN

THE PASTOR TO THE CHOSEN LADY and her children, whom I love in the truth, and not I alone but all who know the truth, ²because the truth lives in us and will be with us forever— ³God the Father and Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will give us love, mercy, and peace as we are in the truth and in love.

⁴I was very happy to find some of your children living in the truth as the Father has ordered us. ⁵And now I ask you, lady (I'm not writing you a new commandment but one we've had from the beginning): Let us love one another. ⁶Love means that we live according to His commandments. The commandment as you have heard it from the beginning is: Live in love.

⁷Many deceivers have gone out into the world. They don't confess

Jesus Christ as One who comes in the flesh. That is the mark of the deceiver and the antichrist. ⁸Watch yourselves so you will not lose what you worked for but will get your full reward.

⁹Anyone who goes too far and doesn't stay with what Christ has taught doesn't have God. If you stay with what He taught, you have the Father and the Son. ¹⁰If anyone comes to you and doesn't teach this, don't take him into your home or greet him. ¹¹If you greet him, you share the wicked things he does.

¹²While I have much to write you, I don't want to do it with paper and ink, but I hope to come to you and tell you face to face so that you may be very happy.

¹³The children of your sister, whom God has chosen, greet you.

JOHN

THE PASTOR TO MY DEAR GAIUS, whom I love in truth.

²Dear friend, I pray that you're doing well in every way and are also healthy, just as your soul is doing well. ³I was delighted when some Christians came and told me about the truth you have—how you live in it. ⁴Nothing gives me greater joy than to hear that my children live in the truth.

⁵Dear friend, you're loyal in whatever you do for the fellow Christians even though they're strangers. ⁶They have publicly told the church about your love. Please help them on their way as it is right before God. ⁷because they went out for Jesus, taking nothing from the people of the world. ⁸We should help such people in order to work with them for the truth.

⁹I wrote something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to be their

leader, won't listen to us. ¹⁰So, if I come, I'll bring up what he's doing when he talks such wicked nonsense about us. Not satisfied with that, he also will not welcome the fellow Christians as guests and stops those who want to welcome them and tries to put them out of the church.

¹¹Dear friend, don't imitate what is wrong but what is right. If you do right, you're God's child. Anyone who does wrong hasn't seen God.

¹²Everybody speaks well of Demetrius, and so does the truth itself. We also speak well of him, and you know we tell the truth.

¹³I have much to write you, but I don't want to do it with pen and ink. ¹⁴I hope to see you very soon and talk to you face to face.

¹⁵Peace to you! The friends here send you their greetings. Greet each of our friends by name.

JUDE

JUDE, SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST and brother of James, to you who have been called, who are loved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ: *May more and more mercy, peace, and love be yours.*

Fight for the Faith

¹While I've been very eager to write you, dear friends, about the salvation we share, it's now necessary that I write you and urge you to fight for the faith once entrusted to the holy people.

²There have sneaked in among you some men—some time ago it was written they must be condemned this way—ungodly persons who turn the love our God has for us into unbridled lust and disown our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ.

³You already know it all, but I want to remind you how the Lord saved His people from Egypt but afterwards destroyed those who didn't believe. ⁴And the angels who didn't keep their position of authority but left their home He put in everlasting chains and gloom to be kept for the judgment of the great day— ⁵just like Sodom and Gomorrah and the towns around them, who for their sexual sins and unnatural vice have suffered their punishment and lie before us as a warning of everlasting fire.

⁶Yet in the same way these men with their dreams defile the body, reject the Lord, and slander beings of glory. ⁷When *the archangel Michael* was debating with the devil and arguing about Moses' body, he

didn't dare to condemn and abuse him but said, "*The Lord rebuke you!*" ¹⁰But whatever beings these men don't understand they slander, and whatever they know by instinct like unthinking animals they use to destroy themselves. ¹¹Woe to them! They've gone the way of Cain. For a profit they've rushed into the error of Balaam. They've rebelled like Korah and perished.

¹²They're a blot on your love meals, where they banquet together without fear. They're shepherds who take care of themselves; clouds driven along by the winds without giving rain; trees that in late fall have no fruit but are torn up by the roots and so are twice dead; ¹³wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars for whom dark gloom is reserved forever.

¹⁴Enoch, the sixth after Adam, prophesied about them. "The Lord has come with ten thousands of His holy ones," he said, ¹⁵"to bring judgment on all of them and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodliness they've done and of all the defiant things ungodly sinners have said against Him."

¹⁶They grumble, complain about their lot, follow their lusts, brag, and flatter people to take advantage of them.

¹⁷But you, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ predicted. ¹⁸"In the last time," they told you, "there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly lusts." ¹⁹They're causing divi-

² Dn 4:1
⁶ 25
⁹ Dn 10:13
²¹ 12:1

sions. They're worldly because they don't have the Spirit.

Build Yourselves Up

²⁰But you, dear friends, building yourselves up on your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹keep yourselves in God's love, as you look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to give you everlasting life.

²²Some people are in doubt—pity them. ²³*snatch them from the fire,*

and save them. Pity others with fear as you hate even their clothes spotted by their flesh.

²⁴To Him who is able to keep you from falling and have you stand without a fault and with great joy before His glory, ²⁵to the only God, who saves us through Jesus Christ our Lord—to Him be glory, majesty, power, and authority—as it was from everlasting, so be it now and forever. Amen.

REVELATION

1 THIS IS A REVELATION FROM JESUS CHRIST which God gave Him to show His servants *what must soon happen*; and by way of symbols sent the message through His angel to His servant John. And so John tells the truth about everything he saw, of what God said and to which Jesus Christ testified. *'Blessed are you who read and you who hear this prophecy as you keep what is written here—because the time is near.*

To the Seven Churches

'John to the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from Him who is and was and is coming, from the seven spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the Witness whom we can trust, the First of the dead to live again, and the One who rules over the kings of the world.

To Him who loves us and by His blood has freed us from our sins and has made us a kingdom and priests serving His God and Father—to Him be glory and power forever. Amen. *'Look, He is coming in the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even the men who pierced Him, and all the people on earth will mourn over Him. So it will be. Amen. "I am the A and the Z," says the Lord God, who is and was and is coming, the Almighty.*^a

¹I, John, your fellow Christian, who in Jesus share with you suffering and ruling and enduring, was on the island called Patmos for

speaking God's Word and the truth told by Jesus. ¹⁰I came under the Spirit's power on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying: "What you see write on a scroll and send it to the seven churches in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea."

¹¹I turned to see who was talking to me. And when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands and among the lampstands *Someone like the Son of Man. He wore a robe reaching down to his feet, with a golden belt around His breast. His head and hair were white like white wool, like snow, His eyes like flames of fire, His feet like white-glowing bronze refined in a furnace, and His voice like the sound of many waters.* ¹⁶In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp, double-edged sword, and His face was like the sun when it shines very brightly.

¹⁷When I saw Him, I fell down at His feet like a dead man. Then He laid His right hand on me. "Don't be afraid," He said, "I am the First and the Last," and the One who is living. I died, but now you see I am living forever and have the keys of death and hell. ¹⁹Write what you have seen, what is now, and what is going to happen later. ²⁰The hidden meaning of the seven stars you saw in My right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The

1
1 Is 48:5
Dn 2:29-30
45
4 Ex 3:14
Ps 118:26
Is 40:10
Hab 2:3
Zch 14:10
Mt 3:1
Dn 7:13
9:26
5 Ps 89:37
Jer 42:5
Ps 89:27
Is 40:2
6 Ex 19:6
Is 61:6
Dn 7:18
22:27
7 Dn 7:13
Zch 12:10
12:14
8 Ex 3:14
Ps 118:26
Is 40:10
Hab 2:3
Mt 3:1
Dn 7:13
9:26
12-15 Ez 1:24
9:2, 3, 11
43:2
Dn 7:9, 12
10:5-6
16 Jd 5:31
17 Is 44:2, 6
48:12
19-20 Is 48:6

^aThe Septuagint, the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament, translates "the Lord of armies" with "the Lord Almighty" exactly 100 times.

seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

2 "Write to the angel of the church in Ephesus:

"He who holds the seven stars in His right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands says:

"I know what you have done, how hard you have worked, how you have endured, and that you can't tolerate wicked people, and you have tested those who call themselves apostles but are none and found them to be liars. "You have endurance, you have borne trouble for Me and aren't tired out.

"But I hold it against you that your love isn't what it was at first. "Remember from what you have fallen, and be sorry, and do as you did at first, or else if you aren't sorry, I will come to you and take your lampstand from its place.

"But you have one thing. You hate what the Nicolaitans are doing, and I hate it too.

"You have ears; then listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. Be victorious, and I will let you eat from the tree of life that stands in God's Paradise.'

"And write to the angel of the church in Smyrna:

"The First and the Last, who died and became alive, says:

"I know how you have to suffer and how poor you are (but you're rich!) and the slander of those who say they are Jews when they're not but are the devil's synagog. "Don't be afraid of what you're going to suffer. You see, the devil is going to put some of you in prison. This is to test you, and you will have to suffer for ten days. Be faithful till you die, and I will give you the crown of life.

"You have ears; then listen to

what the Spirit says to the churches. Be victorious, and the second death will not hurt you.'

"And write to the angel of the church in Pergamum:

"He who holds the sharp, double-edged sword says:

"I know where you live. The devil is there on his throne. But you cling to My name and didn't deny your faith in Me even in the days of Antipas, My loyal witness, who was killed among you—you have the devil living there!

"But I have a few things against you because you have men there who hold what Balaam taught. He taught Balak how to trap the people of Israel to get them to eat food sacrificed to idols and sin sexually. "So you too have some who hold what the Nicolaitans teach. "Be sorry then, or else I will come to you quickly and fight them with the sword in My mouth.

"You have ears; then listen to what the Spirit says to the churches. Be victorious, and I will give you some of the hidden manna, and I will give you a white stone, and on the white stone is written a new name that is known only to him who gets it.'

"And write to the angel of the church at Thyatira:

"God's Son, whose eyes are like flames of fire and whose feet are like white-glowing bronze, says:

"I know what you're doing and your love and faith and service and endurance and that lately you've done more than at first.

"But I hold it against you that you let the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, teach My servants and mislead them to sin sexually and to eat food sacrificed to idols. "And I gave her time to

2
7 Gn 2:9;
3:22, 24;
Ez 21:8
8:16-44; 48:12
10 Dn 1:12, 14
14 Nm 25:1-2
21:16
17 19-50:5;
62:2
65:15
18 Dn 10:6
20 Nm 25:1-2
31:16

change, but she refuses to turn from her sexual sins. ²²Now I'm throwing her on a bed and will make those who live in sexual sin with her suffer much if they will not turn away from what she's doing. ²³And I will kill her children. Then all the churches will know I am the One who searches *minds and hearts*, and *I will give each of you according to what you have done*.

²⁴"But I say to the rest of you in Thyatira, all who don't hold this teaching and haven't learned "Satan's deep things," as they call them: I'm putting no other burden on you. ²⁵Only cling to what you have till I come.

²⁶"Be victorious and continue to do My works till the end, and *I will give you power over the nations*, ²⁷just as I received it from My Father, and you *will rule them with an iron rod, shattering them like pottery*. ²⁸And I will give you the morning star.

²⁹"You have ears; then listen to what the Spirit says to the churches."

3 "And write to the angel of the church in Sardis:

"He who has God's seven spirits and the seven stars says:

"I know what you're doing, that people say you're living—but you're dead. ²Wake up and strengthen the rest that are dying. I have found that your works are not finished before My God. ³So remember how you once accepted and listened to the truth. Take it to heart and repent. If you don't wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know when I'm coming to you.

"But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes, and they will walk with me in white garments because they deserve it. ⁵Be victorious and that's

how you will be dressed—in white garments—and I will not *erase your name from the book of life* but will confess your name before My Father and before His angels.

⁶"You have ears; then listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.

⁷"And write to the angel of the church in Philadelphia:

"This is He who is holy and true, who has *the key of David*. *When He opens a door, nobody will shut it, when He shuts a door, nobody will open it*. He says: "I know what you're doing. See, I have opened before you a door nobody can shut. Although you have only a little strength, you have kept My Word and not denied Me.

⁹"There are those of Satan's synagog who say they're Jews when they're not but are lying. I'll make them *come and bow down at your feet and learn that I have loved you*. ¹⁰Because you have waited patiently for Me as you were told, I will keep you safe when the time of testing comes for the whole world, to test those living on the earth. ¹¹I am coming soon. Cling to what you have and don't let anybody take your crown.

¹²"Be victorious, and I will make you a pillar in the temple of My God, and you will never leave it again. I will write on you the name of My God and *the name of the city of My God—the new Jerusalem coming down from My God in heaven—and My new name*.

¹³"You have ears; then listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.

¹⁴"And write to the angel of the church in Laodicea:

"The Amen, *the Witness who is faithful and true, the Origin of God's creation*, says:

¹⁵"I know what you're doing, tha-

23 Ps 7:8
26:2
Jer 11:20
17:10
20:12
Ps 62:12
Ps 24:12
26-27 Ps 2:8-9
3
5 Ex 32:22-23
Ps 69:28
7 Job 12:14
Is 22:22
9 Ps 22:27
86:9
Is 45:14
49:23
60:14
66:23
Jer 16:19
Is 43:4
12 Ez 48:35
Is 56:5
62:2
65:15
14 Ps 89:37
Jer 42:5
Ps 8:22-23

you aren't cold or hot. I wish you were cold or hot. ¹⁸But now that you are lukewarm and not hot or cold, I'm going to spit you out of My mouth.

¹⁹“You say, *“I am rich and wealthy and don't need anything,”* and you don't know you're miserable, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked. ²⁰So I advise you to buy from Me—gold, purified in fire, to make you rich; white clothes to put on, to keep your shameful nakedness from showing; salve to put on your eyes to help you see. ²¹*“I correct and discipline all whom I love.* Be eagerly concerned then, and repent.

²⁰“See, I'm standing *at the door and knocking.* If you will listen to My voice and *open* the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with Me.

²¹“Be victorious, and I will have you sit with Me on My throne, as I have won the victory and have sat down with My Father on His throne.

²²“You have ears; then listen to what the Spirit says to the churches.”

Around the Throne

4 After this I saw a door opened in heaven, and there was the *voice* I had heard at first speaking to me like *a trumpet.* It said, *“Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this.”*

¹Just then I came under the Spirit's power. *I saw* a throne standing in heaven and *Someone sitting on the throne.* ²The *One who sat* there looked like jasper and carnelian, and *a rainbow around* the throne looked like an emerald. ³Around the throne I saw twenty-four other thrones, and on these thrones sat twenty-four elders dressed in white clothes, with golden crowns on their

heads. ⁴From the throne *came flashes of lightning, rumblings,* and peals of thunder. Seven flaming torches were burning in front of the throne; these are God's seven spirits. ⁵In front of the throne there was also something like a sea of glass, like crystal. Around the throne, *in the middle* of each side of the throne, *were four living beings.* *They had eyes everywhere,* in front and behind. ⁶*The first living being was like a lion, the second like a young bull, the third had a human face, and the fourth was like a flying eagle.* ⁷And each of the four living beings *had six wings, and everywhere, all around and under, they had eyes.* And day and night without stopping they were saying: *Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is coming.* ⁸And whenever the living beings *give glory and honor and thanks to Him who is sitting on the throne and living forever,* ⁹the twenty-four elders *bow down before Him who is sitting on the throne and worship Him who lives forever,* throwing down their crowns before the throne and saying: ¹⁰“Our Lord and God, You deserve to receive glory and honor and power because You created everything and Your will caused them to be created and to be.”

The Scroll with Seven Seals

5 In the right hand of *Him who sat on the throne* I saw *a scroll, written on both sides and sealed with seven seals.* ²And I saw a mighty angel, calling out loud, “Who can open the scroll and break the seals on it?”

³But no one in heaven, on earth, or under the earth could open the scroll and look into it. ⁴And I cried

17 Hos 12:8
19 Pr 3:12
20 Song 5:2

4

1 Ex 19:16,
24; Is 48:6,
Dn 2:28-
30, 45

2-3 1 K 22:19

Ps 47:9

Is 6:1;

2 Ch 16:16

Ex 1:26-28

5 Ex 19:16,

Ex 1:13

6 Ex 1:5, 18;

10:12

7 Ex 1:10;

8 Is 6:2-3;

Ex 1:18;

10:12

Ex 3:14;

11:8, 26;

10:40-10;

Hab 2:3;

Mt 3:1,

Dn 7:13,

5:26

9 Dn 4:34,

6:26, 12:7;

1 K 22:19;

Ps 47:9;

Is 6:1;

2 Ch 18:18

10 Ps 22:27,

86:9;

Is 45:14,

49:23;

50:14,

56:23;

Jer 16:19;

1 K 22:19;

Ps 47:9;

Is 6:1;

2 Ch 18:18

Dn 4:34,

6:26,

12:7

5

1 K 22:19;

Ps 47:9;

Is 6:1;

2 Ch 18:18

Is 29:11;

Ex 2:9-10

bitterly because no one was found who could open the scroll and look into it.

⁹Then one of the elders said to me, "Don't cry! You see, the *Lion* from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has won a victory, and He can open the scroll and its seven seals."

¹⁰Between the throne (with the four living beings) and the elders I saw a *Lamb* standing as though it had been *slaughtered*. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are God's seven spirits that are sent *all over the world*. ¹¹He went and took the scroll from the right hand of Him who sat *on the throne*. ¹²When He had taken the scroll, the four living beings and the twenty-four elders bowed down before the Lamb, each holding a lyre and golden bowls full of *incense* (which are the *prayers* of the holy people). ¹³And they sang a new song: "You are qualified to take the scroll and open the seals on it because You were sacrificed and with Your blood You bought them from every *tribe, language, people, and nation* to be God's own ¹⁴and made them a *kingdom* and *priests* of our God, and they will rule as *kings over the earth*."

¹⁵As I saw this, I heard around the throne (with the four living beings and the elders) the voices of many angels, numbering *ten thousands of ten thousands and thousands of thousands*, ¹⁶who called out loud: "The *Lamb* who was *sacrificed* deserves to get power and wealth, wisdom and strength, honor, glory, and praise."

¹⁷Then I heard every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth, and on the sea, and all that are in them saying: "To *Him who sits on the throne* and to the *Lamb* be praise

and honor, glory and might forever!"

¹⁸The four living beings said, "Amen!" And the elders *bowed down and worshiped*.

6 I saw when the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living beings call with a voice like thunder "Come!" ²And there I saw a *white horse*, and its rider had a bow. He was given a crown and rode off as a conqueror to conquer.

³When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living being call, "Come!" ⁴And another *horse* came out, fiery *red*, and its rider was given the power to take away peace from the earth and to have people slaughter one another, and he was given a big sword.

⁵When He opened the third seal I heard the third living being call "Come!" And there I saw a *black horse*, and its rider had a scale in his hand. ⁶I heard a voice that seemed to come from the middle of the four living beings saying: "A quart of wheat for a day's pay, and three quarts of barley for a day's pay, but don't damage the oil and the wine."

⁷When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the fourth living being call, "Come!" ⁸And there I saw a pale-green horse, and its rider's name was *Death*, and *Hell* came close behind, and they were given power over a fourth of the earth, to *kill people with sword, famine, and plague*, and by the *animals* on the earth.

⁹When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been killed for God's Word and the truth they were telling. ¹⁰They called out loud "Master, holy and true, *how long* will You wait before You judge the people on the earth and *punish* them

5 Gn 49:9-10
Is 11:1, 10
Jer 23:5
6 Is 53:7
Zech 4:10
7 1 K 22:19
Ps 47:9
Is 6:1
2 Ch 18:18
8 Ps 141:2
9 Ps 33:3
Dn 3:4
7:14
10 Ex 19:6
Is 61:6
11 Dn 7:10
12 Is 53:7
13 1 K 22:19
Ps 47:9
Is 6:1
2 Ch 18:18
14 Ps 22:27
86:9
Is 45:14
49:23
60:14
66:23
Jer 15:19
6
2-5 Zech 6:1-3
8 Jer 14:12
15:2, 21:7
Ez 5:12
14:21
Hos 13:14
10 Ps 79:5
Dl 32:43
2 K 9:7

for killing us?" "Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait quietly a little longer till all their fellow servants and fellow Christians were present who were to be killed as they had been.

"When He opened the sixth seal, I saw a great earthquake, and the sun turned black like coarse cloth of hair, the full moon became like blood. "the stars fell from the sky to the earth like figs dropping from a fig tree shaken by a strong wind, "the sky vanished like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved from its place. "The kings of the earth, the great men, the tribunes, the rich, the powerful, and every slave and free man hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains. "calling to the mountains and rocks. "Fall on us and hide us from Him who sits on the throne and from the anger of the Lamb. "because the great day of their anger has come, and who can stand before it?"

Saved!

7 After that I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth to keep any of them from blowing on land or sea or against any tree.

"Then I saw another angel coming up from the east with the seal of the living God, and he called out loud to the four angels who had been given power to damage land and sea. "Don't damage land, sea, or trees," he said, "till we have put the seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God." "And I heard the number of those who were sealed: "144,000." They were from every tribe of the

people of Israel. "There were sealed—

12,000 from the tribe of Judah,
12,000 from the tribe of Reuben,
12,000 from the tribe of Gad,
"12,000 from the tribe of Asher,
12,000 from the tribe of Naphtali,
12,000 from the tribe of Manasseh,
"12,000 from the tribe of Simeon,
12,000 from the tribe of Levi,
12,000 from the tribe of Issachar,
"12,000 from the tribe of Zebulun,
12,000 from the tribe of Joseph,
12,000 from the tribe of Benjamin.

"After that I saw a large crowd that nobody could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language standing before the throne and before the Lamb, wearing white robes, with palms in their hands. "And they called out loud: "We are saved by our God who sits on the throne and by the Lamb!"

"All the angels stood around the throne, around the elders and the four living beings, and bowed down before the throne, with their faces on the ground, worshiped God. "and said: "Amen! Praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, power, strength be to our God forever! Amen."

"Then one of the elders turned to me and asked, "These people dressed in white robes—who are they and where did they come from?"

"And I answered him, "My lord, you know."

Then he told me, "They are the people who have come through great suffering, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. "That is why they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple, and He who sits on the throne will spread His tent over them. "They will never be hungry

12-14 Is 13:10,
34:4,
Ez 32:7-8,
Joel 2:
30-31
15 Ps 2:2
15-18 Is 2:10,
19, 31;
Jer 4:29,
Hos 10:8
16 1 K 22:19,
Ps 47:9;
Is 6:1,
2 Ch 18:18
17 Ps 76:8,
Joel 2:11,
31; Nah 1:6,
Zph 1:14-
15, Mt 3:2,
4:5
7
1 Jer 49:36,
Ez 7:2,
37:9;
Dn 7:2,
Zch 6:5
2 Ez 9:4, 6
3 Dn 3:4,
7:14
10 1 K 22:19,
Ps 47:9;
Is 6:1,
2 Ch 18:18
11 Ez 19:16,
Ez 1:13,
14 Gn 49:11,
Ez 12:5, 7
15 1 K 22:19,
Ps 47:9,
Is 6:1,
2 Ch 18:18

or thirsty again, and the sun or any heat will never burn them, "because the Lamb before the throne will be their Shepherd and will lead them to springs of the water of life. And God will wipe every tear from their eyes."

Prayer like Incense

8 When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

"And I saw the seven angels standing before God, and they were given seven trumpets.

"Another angel, with a golden censer, came and stood at the altar, and He was given much incense to add to the prayers of all the holy people as he put it on the golden altar in front of the throne. "From the angel's hand the smoke of the incense went up before God with the prayers of the holy people.

Fire and Death

"Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and poured it on the earth, and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.

"The seven angels who had the seven trumpets got ready to blow them.

"The first blew his trumpet, and there came hail and fire mixed with blood which were poured on the earth. And a third of the earth was burned up, a third of the trees, and all the green grass.

"The second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a big burning mountain was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea turned to blood. "a third of the creatures living in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.

"Then the third angel blew his trumpet, and a big star, flaming like a torch, fell from the sky, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. "That star was called Wormwood. Then a third of the waters turned to wormwood, and many people died from the water because it had turned bitter.

"Then the fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them turned dark, and there was no light for a third of the day and for a third of the night.

"Then I saw and heard an eagle flying in the middle of the sky. He called out loud: "Woe, woe, woe to those living on earth, because the other three angels are still going to blow their trumpets."

The First Woe

9 Then the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. He was given the key to the shaft of the abyss. "He opened the shaft of the abyss, and smoke went up from the shaft like the smoke from a big furnace, and it darkened the sun and the air.

"Out of the smoke came grasshoppers on the earth, and they were given power like the power of earthly scorpions. "But they were told not to harm the grass on the earth or any green plant or tree, only the people who don't have God's seal on their foreheads. "They were not allowed to kill these, only to torture them for five months, and the torture was like that of a scorpion when it stings a person. "In those days people will look for death and not find it; they will long to die, and death will flee from them. "The

16-17 Ps 132
2: 127-8
Is 40:1-2
Jer 2:12
Ex 30:23
17 Is 25:8
9
3 Amos 5:1
2-4 Ps 141:2
5 Lk 10:12
Ex 18:16
7 Ex 9:23-25
8 Ex 30:22
9 Jer 51:25
Ex 7:20-21
10 Is 14:12
Dan 8:10
12 Ex 32:3-4
1
1 Is 14:12
Dan 8:10
2 Gen 19:24
Ex 18:16
Amos 2:10
3 Ex 16:12
4 Ex 24, 6
6 Job 32:1

grasshoppers were *like horses* armed for battle. On their heads there seemed to be crowns that looked like gold. Their faces were like human faces. ^aThey had hair like women and *teeth like lions*. ^bTheir breasts were like iron breastplates, and the noise of their wings was *like the roar of chariots* with many horses *rushing into battle*. ^cThey had tails like scorpions, with stings, and their tails had the power to hurt people for five months. ^dThe king who was over them was the angel of the bottomless pit. The Jews call him Abaddon,^b but in Greek he is called Apollyon.^b

^eThe first woe is past. There are two more woes still coming.

The Second Woe

^fThe sixth angel blew his trumpet, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God ^gsay to the sixth angel who had the trumpet: "Free the four angels who are held bound at *the big river Euphrates*." ^hAnd the four angels who had been held ready for that hour, day, month, and year were set free to kill a third of the people.

ⁱI heard how many soldiers there were on horses; there were two hundred million. ^jIn my vision I saw how the horses and their riders looked. Their breastplates were red like fire, blue like bluebells, and yellow like sulfur. The horses had heads like lions, and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and sulfur. ^kThese three plagues—the fire, smoke, and sulfur coming out of their mouths—killed a third of the people. ^lThe power of the horses was in their mouths and in their tails. Their tails were like snakes,

having heads with which they wounded people.

^mBut the rest of the people, whom these plagues hadn't killed, weren't sorry and didn't turn from *what their hands had made* or give up worshiping devils and *idols of gold, silver, copper, stone, and wood, that can't see or hear* or walk. ⁿAnd they were not sorry for their murders, their *magic arts*, their *sexual vice*, and their stealing.

The Scroll

10 I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven. He was robed in a cloud, and there was a rainbow over his head. His face was like the sun, and his feet were like pillars of fire. ^oIn his hand he held a little scroll unrolled. He set his right foot on the sea, and his left on the land. ^pThen he shouted loud like a lion roaring. When he shouted, the seven thunders spoke with voices of their own. ^qWhen the seven thunders had spoken, I was going to write it down. But I heard someone say from heaven: ^r"*Keep secret* what the seven thunders have said, and don't write it down."

^sThen the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land ^traised his right hand to heaven ^uand swore by Him who lives forever, who created heaven and what's in it, *the earth and what's in it, and the sea and what's in it*: "There will be no more delay. ^vbut the time comes for the seventh angel to blow his trumpet, and *God's secret purpose* as he told it to His servants, the prophets, is carried out."

^wThen he who had spoken to me

7-9 Joel 2
8-5, 16
14 Gn 15:18;
Dt 1:7;
11:24;
Joshua 1:4
20 Dt 4:28;
Ps 115:4;
135:15-17;
Is 2:8, 20;
17:8;
Jer 1:16;
Dn 5:4, 23
21 2 K 9:22
10
4 Dn 8:26;
12:4, 9
5-6 Gn 14:19
Ex 20:11;
Dt 32:40;
Ps 146:6;
Dn 4:34;
6:26, 12:7;
Neh 9:6
7 Dt 20:27;
Amos 3:7;
Zch 1:6

^bThe Destroyer

from heaven spoke to me again. "Go," he said, "take the scroll that lies unrolled in the hand of the angel standing on the sea and on the land."

"I went to the angel and told him, 'Give me the little scroll.'

"Take it," he said to me, "and eat all of it, and it will be bitter in your stomach, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey."

"I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it, and it was sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, it was bitter in my stomach.

"Then they told me, 'You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages, and kings.'"

Two Preachers

11 Then I was given a measuring stick like a rod. "Go," he said, "and measure God's temple and the altar, and count those who worship there. Omit the court outside the temple, and don't measure it, because it is given to the non-jewish people, who will trample on the holy city for forty-two months. I will let my two witnesses, dressed in sackcloth, speak God's Word for 1,260 days.

"These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the Lord of the earth. And if anyone wants to hurt them, fire comes out of their mouths and consumes their enemies, that is how anyone who wants to hurt them must be killed. They have the power to shut up the sky and keep rain from falling during the days when they are speaking God's Word and the power over waters to turn them into blood and to strike the earth with any plague as often as they want to.

"When they finish testifying, the animal coming up out of the abyss will fight with them, conquer them, and kill them. And their dead bodies will lie on the street of the great city, which is called Sodom and Egypt, to show what kind of city it is. Here their Lord also was crucified. And some of the peoples, tribes, languages, and nations will look at their dead bodies for three and a half days and not let anybody bury them. The people living on the earth will be delighted over them and will celebrate and send gifts to one another because these two prophets tormented the people living on the earth.

"After three and a half days a breath of life from God went into them, and they got up on their feet, and those who watched them were terrified. They heard someone calling loud to them from heaven, 'Come up here.' And they went up to heaven in a cloud while their enemies watched them. Just then there was a big earthquake, a tenth of the city fell, and seven thousand people were killed by the earthquake. The rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven."

"The second woe is past. The third woe will soon be here.

The Third Woe

"The seventh angel blew his trumpet. Then there were loud voices in heaven, saying: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will be King forever."

"Then the twenty-four elders who were sitting on their thrones before God bowed down on their faces and worshiped God, saying: "Lord God Almighty, You are now, and You were. We thank You for taking

9-10 Ex 2:
 R-R 3:1-3
 11 Dn 3:4,7-14
 11
 2 Ia 63:18;
 2 Zch 12:3
 4 Zch 4:3,
 11-12, 14
 5 2 Sm 32:9;
 2 R 1:10, 12;
 Ia 25:11;
 Jer 5:14
 6 Ex 7:17, 21;
 1 Sm 4:8;
 1 R 17:1
 7 Dn 7:3, 21
 9 Dn 3:4, 7:14
 11 Ex 37:5, 10;
 Gn 15:12
 13 Ex 38:
 19-20;
 Dn 2:19
 15 Ex 15:18;
 Ps 2:2,
 10:16;
 22:28;
 1 Sm 12:3,
 Ob 21;
 MI 4:7;
 Dn 2:44
 16 Ps 22:27;
 Mt 9:
 Ia 45:14;
 49:22;
 60:14;
 66:22;
 Jer 15:19
 17 Ex 3:14

Your great power and *becoming King*. ¹⁸*The nations got angry*, but Your anger has come, and so has the time to judge the dead, to reward *Your servants, the prophets*, and the holy people, *little and great, who fear Your name*, and to destroy those who are destroying the earth."

¹⁹Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the *ark of His covenant* was seen in His temple, and there were *flashes of lightning, rumblings*, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.

The Woman's Son and the Dragon

12 A great sign was seen in the sky: a woman with the sun for her garment, the moon under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars on her head. ²She was going to have a Child, and she cried out *in pain* and agony to give birth.

³Another sign was seen in the sky: There was a large fiery dragon *with seven heads and ten horns* and with seven crowns on his heads. ⁴His tail swept away a third of the stars in the sky and hurled them to the earth. Then the dragon stood in front of the woman who was going to have a Child, to devour her Child as soon as it was born.

⁵She gave birth to a Son, a Boy, who is to rule all the nations with an iron rod. Her Child was snatched away and brought to God and to His throne. ⁶The woman fled into the desert, where God has prepared a place for her and she is to be fed for 1,260 days.

⁷Then war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought, ⁸but they couldn't win, and *couldn't be found anywhere in heaven anymore*. ⁹So the

great dragon was thrown out. The old *snake*, called *Devil* and *Satan*, who *deceives* the whole world, was hurled to the earth, and his angels were hurled down with him.

¹⁰Then I heard someone calling out loud in heaven: "Now has come the salvation, power, and kingdom of our God and the rule of His Christ, because he who accused our fellow Christians day and night before our God has been thrown out. ¹¹But they conquered him on account of the blood of the Lamb and the truth they spoke and didn't love their life but were willing to die. ¹²For this be glad, you heavens, and you who live in them. Woe to the earth and the sea—the devil has come down to you and is very angry because he knows he has only a little time left."

The Devil and the Church

¹³When the dragon saw he had been hurled to the earth, he persecuted the woman who had given birth to the Boy. ¹⁴The woman was given two wings of the big eagle to fly to her place in the desert, away from the snake, where she is fed for *three and a half years*. ¹⁵Then the snake poured from his mouth a stream of water after the woman to sweep her away. ¹⁶But the earth helped the woman; it opened its mouth and swallowed the stream that the dragon poured from his mouth.

¹⁷The dragon was angry with the woman and went away to fight with her other children, those who do what God has ordered and keep on speaking the truth told by Jesus. ¹⁸He stopped on the sandy shore of the sea.

13 Then I saw an animal coming up out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, and

17-18 Ps 99:1
18 Amos 3:7;
Zch 1:6;
Dn 9:5, 10;
Ps 115:13
19 1 K 8:1; 6;
Ex 9:23;
19:18
12
2 1a 86:7;
Mt 4:10
3 Dn 7:7;
20, 24
4 Dn 8:10
5 1a 86:7;
Jas 20:15;
Ps 28:9
6 Dn 2:35
9 Gn 3:13;
15;
2ch 3:1
11 Ex 12:5, 7
12 1a 44:22;
48:13
14 Dn 7:25;
12,7
15
1 Dn 7:3, 7;
20, 24

on his horns were ten crowns, and on his heads were blasphemous names. ²The beast I saw was like a leopard and had feet like a bear and a mouth like a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. ³One of his heads seemed to have received a deadly wound, but his deadly wound had been healed.

The whole world was amazed as it followed the beast 'and worshiped the dragon because he had given power to the beast, and it worshiped the beast. "Is there anyone like the beast?" they asked. "And is there anyone who can fight with him?"

⁴He was allowed to talk big and blasphemous things and was given authority to act for forty-two months. ⁵He opened his mouth to slander God, His name, His home, and those who live in it in heaven. ⁶He was allowed to fight with the holy people and to conquer them and was given authority over every tribe, people, language, and nation. ⁷Everybody who lives on earth will worship him—everybody whose name isn't written in the book of life of the Lamb who was sacrificed before history began.

⁸You have ears; then listen. ⁹If anyone is to be taken prisoner, he'll be taken prisoner. If anyone kills with a sword, he must be killed by a sword. Here is where the holy people will need to endure and trust.

¹¹Then I saw another beast come up out of the ground, and he had two horns like a lamb but talked like a dragon. ¹²He is acting for the first beast with all his authority. He makes the earth and those living on it worship the first beast, whose deadly wound has been healed.

¹¹He also does great miracles, even makes fire come down from the sky to the ground before people. ¹⁴He deceives those who live on the earth because of the wonders he is allowed to do for the beast, and he tells those who live on the earth to make a statue for the beast that was wounded by a sword and yet lived. ¹⁵He was allowed to put a spirit into the beast's statue so that the beast's statue could talk, and to have all who would not worship the beast's statue killed. ¹⁶He forces all, great and small, rich and poor, free and slave to be branded on their right hands or on their foreheads. ¹⁷and only he who has the brand the beast's name or the number of its name—can buy or sell.

¹⁸Here we need to be wise. If you can understand, figure out the beast's number, because it is a man's number. His number is 666.

The New Song

14 Then I saw the Lamb standing on Mount Zion and with Him 144,000 people who had His name and His Father's name written on their foreheads.

²And I heard a sound from heaven like the noise of many waters and of loud thunder. The sound I heard was also like the singing of musicians playing on their lyres. ³They were singing a new song before the throne, before the four living beings and the elders. And only the 144,000 who had been bought from the earth could learn the song.

⁴These are the men who have not soiled themselves with women; they are pure. They follow the Lamb wherever He goes. They were bought as the first ones among men to belong to God and the Lamb.

2 Dn 7:4-6
5-7 Dn 7
8, 21, 11, 36
7 Dn 3:4, 7, 14
8 Ez 32:
32-33,
Ps 69:28,
139:16,
Is 4:3,
Mt 2:16,
Dn 12:1,
Ex 12:6, 21,
Lv 1:17,
Is 53:7,
Jer 11:19
10 Jer 15:2
15 Dn 3:5-6
14
2 Ez 1:24,
43:2
3 Ps 33:3,
40:3, 96:1,
98:1,
144:9,
149:1,
Is 42:10

They've never been known to tell a lie. They're without a fault.

The Angel with the Good News

"I saw another angel flying high in midair with everlasting good news to tell those living on the earth, every nation, tribe, language, and people. "Fear God and give Him glory," he called out loud; "the time has come for Him to judge. And worship Him who made heaven, the earth, the sea, and springs of water."

Babylon Has Fallen

"A second angel followed him. "She has fallen!" he said. "The great Babylon has fallen—she who made all the nations drink of the wine of her immoral passion."

"A third angel followed them. "If anyone worships the animal and his statue," he called out loud, "and is branded on his forehead or on his hand, "he must also drink of the wine of God's anger, poured out unmixed into the cup of His punishment, and must be tortured by fire and sulfur before the holy angels and before the Lamb. "The smoke of their torture goes up forever. There's no rest day and night for those who worship the animal and his statue and for anyone branded with his name."

"Here the holy people need to stand their ground as they keep on doing what God orders and trusting in Jesus.

"Then I heard someone say from heaven: "Write, blessed are the dead who are dying in the Lord!"

"Certainly," says the Spirit, "let them rest from their hard work; what they have done goes along with them."

Swing the Sickle

"Then I saw a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One who was like the Son of Man, with a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand. "And another angel came out of the temple, calling out loud to Him who sat on the cloud: "Swing Your sickle and reap, because the time has come to cut the grain. The crop on the earth is very ripe." "And the One who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth, and its grain was cut.

"Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. "And another angel came from the altar with power over fire. He called out loud to the one with the sharp sickle: "Swing your sharp sickle and gather the bunches of grapes from the vine of the earth, because the grapes on it are ripe."

"The angel swung his sickle on the earth and gathered the grapes from the vine of the earth and threw them into the great winepress of God's anger. "The grapes were trodden in the winepress outside the city, and the blood flowed from the winepress till for two hundred miles it came up to the horse's bridles.

Seven Plagues

15 Then I saw in heaven another sign, great and wonderful: seven angels with seven plagues; the last plagues, since with them God in His anger has finished what He intends to do.

"And I saw what looked like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and standing on the glassy sea were those who had come away victorious from the animal, its statue, and the number of its name. They were holding God's lyres and singing

5 Ps 32:2.
14 53:9.
Eph 3:13.
6 Gn 3:4, 7, 14.
7 Gn 14:19.
22, Ex 20.
11, Ps 146.
5, Num 9:5.
8 Is 21:9.
Jer 25:15.
50:2, 51:7.
6, Dn 4:30.
9 Dn 3:5-6.
10 Ps 75:6.
14 51:17.
Jer 25:15.
10-11 Gn 19.
24, Is 24:10.
11 Dn 3:5-6.
14 Dn 7:13.
15 Jom 3:13.
Jer 51:33.
16-19 Jl 3:13.
19-20 Is 63.
2-3.
15.
1 Lv 26:21.

the song of Moses, God's servant, and the song of the Lamb:

Great and wonderful are Your works, Lord God Almighty.

Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the ages.

'Is there anyone, Lord, who will not fear and glorify Your name? You alone are holy.

All the nations will come and worship You,

because they have seen Your righteous acts.

⁵After this I saw the temple of the *tabernacle containing God's Word* in heaven opened, ⁶and the seven angels with the *seven plagues* came out of the temple. They wore clean, shining linen and golden belts fastened around their breasts. ⁷Then one of the four living beings gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the anger of God, *who lives forever.* ⁸*God's glory and power filled the temple with smoke, and nobody could go into the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were over.*

16 Then I heard *someone from the temple* call out loud to the seven angels: "Go, *pour out the seven bowls of God's anger on the earth.*"

¹The *first* went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and *bad and painful sores came on the people* who had the brand of the animal and *worshiped its statue.*

²The *second* poured out his bowl into the sea, and *it turned to blood* like that of a dead man, and every living thing in the sea *died.*

³The *third* poured out his bowl into the *rivers* and the springs of water, and *they turned to blood.*

⁴I heard the angel of the water say: "O *holy One, You are* and *Yo were. You are just in judging th way; they have poured out th blood* of holy people and prophet and *You gave them blood to drink, they deserve."*

⁵I heard the altar answer: "Ye *Lord God Almighty, Your judgments are true and just."*

⁶The *fourth* poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to burn people. ⁷When they were badly burned, they blasphemed the name of God, who controlled these plagues, and their hearts didn't turn to give Him glory.

⁸The *fifth* poured out his bowl on the animal's throne, and i kingdom *turned dark.* People gnawed their tongues in anguish; ⁹*he cursed the God of heaven* for the pains and their sores but weren't sorry for what they had done.

¹⁰The *sixth* poured out his bowl on the *big Euphrates river.* Then *the water in it dried up,* to prepare the road for the kings *from the east.*

¹¹Then I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the dragon's mouth, the animal's mouth, and the false prophet's^c mouth. ¹²The were spirits of devils, doing miracles. They went out to the kings of the whole world to gather them for war on the great day of the Almighty God.—

¹³"See, I am coming like a thief. Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes, so he will not have to go naked and let others see his shameful parts."—

¹⁴The spirits gathered the kings to the place the Jews call Armageddon.

¹⁵Then the *seventh* poured out his bowl over the air, and someo

3 Ex 15:1,
Joa 14:7;
Ex 34:10;
Dt 32:4;
Ps 111:7,
139:14;
Ps 145:17
4 Jer 10:7;
Mt 1:11;
Ps 22:27;
86:9;
Is 66:23
5 Ex 30:21;
Nm 1:50;
52:9,15;
10:11, 17:7;
8:18;2;
2 Ch 24:6
7 Dn 4:34;
Ez 26:12,7;
10:11, 17:7
8 Ex 40:34-
35:1, K 8
10:11, 16:6
1:4, Ez 44
4:1, Lv 26:23
16
1 Is 66:6;
Ps 69:24;
Jer 10:25;
Zph 3:8
2 Es 9:10;
Dt 28:35;
Dn 3:5-6
3-4 Ex 7:17;
19:21;
Ps 78:44
5 Ex 3:14;
Ps 119:137;
145:17
6 Ps 79:3;
Is 49:26
7 Ps 15:9
10 Ex 10:22
11 Dn 2:19
12 Is 44:
27, Jer 50:
38, Is 41:
2, 25

^cThe second animal, 13:11-18; 19:20; 20:10

called out loud from the throne in the temple: "It is done!" ¹⁸There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, and peals of thunder, and a big earthquake. *There never was such an earthquake since there were people on earth.* ¹⁹The great city split into three parts, and the other cities of the nations fell. And God remembered to give the great *Babylon the cup of the wine of His fierce anger.* ²⁰Every island vanished, and the mountains couldn't be seen anymore. ²¹*Huge hailstones* weighing about a hundred pounds fell from the sky on people, and they blasphemed God for the plague of hail, so *terrible* was that plague.

The Woman and the Animal

17 One of the seven angels who held the seven bowls came and told me: "Come, I will show you how the great prostitute who sits by *many waters* is judged. ²*The kings of the earth lived in sexual sin* with her, and *the people on earth got drunk on the wine of her sexual vice.*"

"He took me in spirit to a desert. There I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet *animal* covered with blasphemous names, and it *had* seven heads and *ten horns.* "The woman wore purple and scarlet and ornaments of gold, jewels, and pearls. In her hand she held a *golden cup* full of the abominations and the unclean things of her sexual vice, ⁵and on her forehead was written a name with a hidden meaning: *THE GREAT BABYLON, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.* ⁶I saw the woman was drunk with the blood of the holy people and the blood of the

witnesses of Jesus. And I was very much surprised to see her.

"Why are you surprised?" the angel asked me. "I'll tell you the hidden meaning of the woman and of the *animal* she rides *that has* the seven heads and the *ten horns.* ⁸*The animal* you saw once was but is no more, and it will *come up from* the abyss and go to its destruction. And the people living on the earth whose names since the world was made have not been *written in the book of life* will be surprised to see the animal—it was and is no more and will come again.

⁹"Here is something for an intelligent person to think about. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman is sitting. ¹⁰They are also seven kings: five have fallen, one is ruling now, the other hasn't come yet, and when he comes, he must stay a little while. ¹¹The animal that was and is no more is the eighth king; he comes from the seven and goes to his destruction.

¹²"*The ten horns* you saw are *ten kings* who have not yet started to rule but for an hour get authority as kings with the animal. ¹³They have one purpose and give their power and authority to the animal. ¹⁴They will go to war against the Lamb, but the Lamb, and the called, chosen, and faithful people with Him, will conquer them because He is *the Lord of lords and the King of kings.*

¹⁵"The waters you saw where the prostitute was sitting," he told me, "are *peoples, crowds, nations, and languages.* ¹⁶*The ten horns* you saw and the animal will hate the prostitute, lay her waste, strip her, devour her flesh, and burn her with fire. ¹⁷God has put it into their hearts to do what He has decided, to carry out one purpose, and to give

17 1k 6:6-6
18 1k 15:16
Dn 12:1
19 1k 21:9
Jer 25:15-50:2
51:7-8
Dn 4:30
Ps 75:9
1k 51:17
21 Ex 9:24
17
1 Jer 51:13
2 1k 23:17
Jer 51:7
3 Dn 7:7
20:24
4 Jer 51:7
5 Dn 4:30
7 Dn 7:7
20:24
8 Dn 7:3, 5a
32:32-33
Ps 69:28
73:16
1k 6:2
Mt 3:16
Dn 12:1
12 Dn 7:7
20:24
14 Dn 10:17
Dn 2:47
15 Dn 3:4
7:14
16 Dn 7:7
20:24

whose treasures have made every-one rich

who had a ship on the sea.

In one hour she's been laid waste.

²⁰Be happy over her, heaven, holy people, apostles and prophets,

because God has punished her for you.

²¹Then a mighty angel lifted up a stone like a large millstone, threw it into the sea, and said: "With such violence will Babylon, the great city, be hurled down and never be found again. ²²Singing with lyres and the playing of musical instruments, of flutes and trumpets, will never be heard in you again. No skilled worker will ever be found in you again. The sound of a millstone will never be heard in you again. ²³The light of a lamp will never shine in you again. The voices of a groom and a bride will never be heard in you again. Your merchants were the great men of the world, but your magic deceived all the nations, and there was found in you the blood of prophets and holy ones, of all who had been slaughtered on the earth.

Praise the Lord!

19 After that I heard what sounded like a large crowd in heaven calling out: "*Praise the Lord!* Salvation, glory, and power belong to our God because His judgments are true and just and He has sentenced the great prostitute who corrupted the world with her sexual vice and has punished her for the blood of His servants."

¹Again they called: "*Praise the Lord! The smoke goes up from her forever.*"

⁴And the twenty-four elders and the four living beings bowed down

and worshiped God, sitting on the throne. They answered: "*So be it! Praise the Lord!*"

⁵Then a voice came from the throne and said: "*Praise our God, all His servants, you who fear Him, small and great.*"

The Lamb's Wedding

⁶Then I heard what sounded like the voices of a large crowd and the noise of many waters and loud peals of thunder, saying: "*Praise the Lord! The Lord our God, the Almighty, is King. Let us rejoice and be delighted* and give Him glory because the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His bride has prepared herself. ⁷She has been permitted to put on dazzling and pure linen. Her fine linen is the righteous living of the holy people."

⁸Then he said to me: "Write: Happy are those who are invited to the Lamb's wedding dinner. These," he told me, "are God's true words."

⁹I bowed down at his feet to worship him. "Be careful! Don't do that!" he told me. "I'm a fellow servant of yours and of your fellow Christians who are speaking the truth told by Jesus. Worship God. The truth Jesus told is the Spirit's Word."

The King of Kings

¹⁰Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse, and its Rider is called Faithful and True. He is righteous when He judges and goes to battle. ¹¹His eyes are flames of fire, on His head are many crowns, and there's a name written on Him, but only He knows what it is. ¹²He wears a garment dipped in blood and is called the Word of God. ¹³Heaven's armies, dressed in pure, white linen, have been follow-

20 Dt 32:43;
Is 44:23;
Jer 51:48;
21-22 Jer 51;
63:60; 61;
26:12-13;
Dn 4:30
23 Jer 7:34;
16:9;
25:10;
Is 23:8
19
1 Ps 104:35
2 Ps 119:9;
119:137;
Dl 32:43;
2 K 9:7
3 Is 34:10
4 Ps 22:27;
86:9;
Is 45:14;
49:23;
60:14;
66:23;
Jer 16:19;
1 K 22:19;
Ps 47:9;
Is 6:1;
2 Ch 18:18
Ps 106:48
5 Ps 22:23;
115:13;
134:1;
135:1
6 Dn 10:5-6;
Ez 1:24;
43:2;
Ps 93:4;
104:35;
93:1;
97:1;
99:1
7 Ps 118:24
10 Ps 22:27
86:9;
Is 45:14;
49:23;
60:14;
66:23;
Jer 16:19
11 Ez 1:1;
Ps 96:13;
Is 11:4-5
12 Dn 10:6

ing Him on white horses. "A sharp sword comes out of His mouth to strike down the nations, and He will rule them with an iron rod and will tread the winepress of the fierce anger of Almighty God. "On His garment and on His thigh He has a name written:

KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS!

"Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he called out loud to all the birds flying in midair: "Come together for God's great banquet, "to eat the bodies of kings, generals, warriors, of horses and their riders, of all people, free and slave, small and great."

"Then I saw the animal and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to fight against the Rider on the horse and His army. "And the animal was captured and with it the false prophet who for it had done the miracles by which he deceived those who had received the animal's brand and worshiped its statue. Both were thrown into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. "And the sword that came out of the mouth of the Rider on the horse killed the rest, and all the birds gorged themselves on their bodies.

The Devil's Last Battle

20 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven with the key to the bottomless pit in his hand, and a big chain. "He took the dragon, the old snake, that is, the devil or Satan, bound him for a thousand years, "threw him into the bottomless pit, and locked and sealed it over him to keep him from deceiving the nations any more till the thousand years are over. After that he must be set free for a little while.

"Then I saw thrones, and those

who sat on them were *giver authority to judge*. I also saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for speaking the truth told by Jesus and God's Word. They had not *worshiped the animal and its statue* and were not branded on their foreheads and hands. *They lived and ruled with Christ a thousand years.*"The rest of the dead didn't live until the thousand years were over. This is the first resurrection.

"Happy and holy are those who share in the first resurrection; the second death has no power over them, but they will be *priests of God* and of Christ and will rule with Him during the thousand years.

"When the thousand years are over, the devil will be freed from his prison "and will come out to deceive the nations in all parts of the world—that is, *Gog and Magog*—to gather them for battle; they will be a many as the sand by the sea.

"So they came up, *spreading over the earth*, and surrounded the camp of the holy people and the city H- loves. But *fire came down from heaven and consumed them*. "And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of *fire and sulfur*, where the animal and the false prophet are, and they will be tortured day and night forever.

The Judgment

"Then I saw a great white throne and Him sitting on it from whom the earth and the sky fled so far *they couldn't be found anywhere*.

"Then I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and *books were opened*. Another book also was opened—it was *the book of life*. And the dead were judged *according to what they had done* as it was written in the

15 in 11:4.
 Ps 29:9.
 Joel 3:13.
 Is 63:2-3.
 Lam 1:15.
 Ez 10:17.
 Dan 2:47.
 17-18 Ez 30:4.
 17-20.
 19 Ps 2:2.
 20 Dan 3:5-6.
 Is 30:33.
 20.
 2 Cor 3:1, 13.
 Zech 3:1.
 4 Dan 7:8.
 22, 27.
 Dan 3:5-6.
 6 in 6:15.
 8 Ez 30:2.
 9 Matt 1:8.
 9 2 Tim 2:26.
 2 K 1:10, 12.
 Jer 5:14.
 10 Dan 12:24.
 11 1 K 22:19.
 Ps 47:5.
 Is 6:1.
 2 Ch 30:18.
 Ps 114:7.
 Dan 2:25.
 12 Dan 7:9.
 Ez 32.
 20-22.
 Ps 68:28.
 130:10.
 Is 4:3.
 Matt 2:10.
 Dan 12:1.

books. "The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and the grave gave up the dead that were in them, and each one was judged according to what he had done.

"Then death and the grave were thrown into the fiery lake. The fiery lake is the second death. "And if anyone wasn't found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the fiery lake.

The New Jerusalem

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, because the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. And there was no longer any sea. "And I saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down from God in heaven, dressed as a bride, ready to meet her husband.

"And I heard a loud voice from the throne say: "Look! God's home is among the people, and He will live with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them. "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death, and there will be no more grief or crying or pain, because the first things have passed away."

"Look! I am making everything new," said He who sat on the throne. And He added: "Write this because these words are true and you can trust them." "Then He said to me: "It is done! I am A and Z, the Beginning and the End. To anyone who is thirsty I will give water, that costs nothing, from the spring of the water of life. "Be victorious, and you will have these things, and I will be your God, and you will be My son.

"But cowardly, untrustworthy, and abominable people, and those

who murder, sin sexually, practice witchcraft, and worship idols, and all liars will find themselves in the lake burning with fire and sulfur; this is the second death."

"Then came one of those seven angels with the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues. "Come," He said to me, "I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife."

"He carried me in spirit on a large and high mountain and showed me the holy city of Jerusalem coming down from God in heaven. "It has God's glory and a brilliance like a very precious stone, like jasper that is clear as crystal. "It has a large, high wall with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates are written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. "There are three gates on the east side, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. "And the wall of the city has twelve foundation stones, and on them are the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

"The angel who was talking to me had a golden measuring rod to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. "The city is square—it is as wide as it is long. He measured the city with the rod—it is fifteen hundred miles.^d Its length, breadth, and height are the same. "Then he measured its wall; it is seventy-two yards as people measure—and angels too.

"Its wall is made of jasper, but the city is of gold as pure as clear glass. "The foundations of the city wall are made beautiful with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation stone is jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the

12-13 Pg 28-4
62:12
15 Ex 32
32-33;
Ps 69:28;
139:16;
Is 4:3;
Mt 3:16;
Dn 12:1
21
1 Is 65:17;
66:22
2 Is 52:1;
Is 61:10
3 Ex 37:27;
Zch 2:10;
Is 7:14;
8:8, 10
4 Is 25:8
5 Is 43:19;
1 K 22:19;
Ps 47:9;
Is 6:1,
2 Ch 18:18
6 Is 55:1;
Zch 14:8
7 2 Sm 7:14;
Zch 8:8;
8 Is 30:33
9 Lv 26:21
10 Is 52:1;
Ez 40:2
11 Is 58:8;
60:1-2, 19
12-13 Ex 28;
21; Ez 48;
31-35
15 Ez 40:3, 5
16 Ez 43:16
19 Is 54:11

^dThis seems to be the length of one side.

fourth emerald, ²⁰the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. ²¹The twelve gates are twelve pearls; each gate is made of one pearl. The street of the city is of gold as pure as clear glass.

²²But I didn't see any temple in it, because the *Lord God, the Almighty*, and the Lamb are its temple. ²³And the city doesn't need any sun or moon to give it light, because *God's glory is its light*, and the Lamb is its lamp. ²⁴*The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.* ²⁵*Its gates will never be shut any day, because there will be no night there.* ²⁶People will bring the glory and wealth of the nations into it. ²⁷But *nothing unclean will ever come into it, or anyone who does anything abominable or tells lies, only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

22 Then he showed me a river of the *water of life*, bright as crystal, *flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb* ²and down the middle of the street of the city. *On each side of the river is a tree of life, producing twelve kinds of fruit, for each month its own fruit; and the leaves of the tree are to heal the nations.* ³*There will no longer be anything that is cursed.*

The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city. His servants will worship Him ⁴and see Him, and His name will be on their foreheads. ⁵*There will be no more night*, and they will not need any light of a lamp or of the sun, because *the Lord God will shine on them, and they will be kings forever.*

I Am Coming Soon.

⁶"You can trust these words," he told me; "they are true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent His angel to show His servants *what must happen soon.* ⁷Remember, *I am coming soon!* Blessed is he who keeps what the prophecy of this book tells him."

"I, John, heard and saw these things, and when I had heard and seen them, I *bowed down to worship* at the feet of the angel who showed them to me.

⁹"Be careful! Don't do that!" he told me. "I'm a fellow servant of yours and of the other Christians, the prophets, and those who keep what this book says. Worship God.

¹⁰"*Don't keep secret* what the prophecy of *this book* tells you," he said to me, "because the *time* is near when it will come true. ¹¹Let the *wrongdoer still do wrong*, the filthy one still be filthy, and let the righteous one still do right and the holy one still be holy."

¹²"Yes, *I am coming soon and will have my reward with me to pay everyone according to what he has done.* ¹³I am A and Z, *the first and the last*, the Beginning and the End. "Blessed are those who wash their robes so that they have the right to *the tree of life* and go through the gates into the city. ¹⁵Outside are the dogs and people who do witchcraft, sin sexually, murder, worship idols, and everyone who loves lies and tells them.

¹⁶"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to tell you these truths for the churches. I am *David's Descendant* and the bright morning Star."

¹⁷"Come!" say the Spirit and the bride. If you hear this, say, "Come!" *If you are thirsty, come.* If you want

23 Is 60:19
24-25 Is 60:
3, 5, 11
25 Zch 14:7
27 Is 52:1;
Es 32:32;
33; Ps 68:
28; 139:16;
Is 4:3;
Mi 3:10;
Dn 12:1
22
1 Ex 47:1, 12;
Joel 3:18;
Zch 14:8
2 Gn 2:9;
3:22, 24;
Ex 47:7, 12
3 Zch 14:11
4 Ps 17:15;
42:2
5 Zch 14:7;
Is 60:19;
Dn 7:18;
22, 27
6 Is 48:6;
Dn 2:28-
30; 45:
7 Is 40:10;
8 Ps 22:27;
86:9;
Is 45:14;
49:23;
60:14;
66:23;
Jer 16:19;
Dn 8:26;
12:4
11 Dn 12:10
12 Is 40:10;
Ps 28:4;
62:12
13 Is 44:2, 6;
48:12;
14 Gn 49:11;
Gn 2:9;
3:22, 24
16 Is 11:1, 10;
Jer 23:5;
17 Is 55:1;
Zch 14:8

it, take *the water of life*—it costs *nothing*.

¹⁸I warn everyone who hears what the prophecy of this book tells him: *If you add anything to this*, God will *add to you* the plagues *written in this book*. ¹⁹And if you *take away* any words in this book of prophecy,

¹⁸⁻¹⁹ Dt 4:2;
^{13:1}
^{20:19-20}
¹⁹ Gn 2:9
^{2:22, 24}
²⁰ Is 40:10

God will take away your share in *the tree of life* and in the holy city that are described in this book.

²⁰He who spoke these truths says: "Yes, *I am coming* soon!"

Certainly! Come, Lord Jesus!

²¹The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the holy people. Amen.

A Selection of Psalms for 72 Different Needs and Occasions

The Psalms in Our Life

If long ago we had been among God's people going to a festival, we would have sung psalms on the way to Jerusalem, heard them sung in the temple, and hummed them on the way home.

If on that evening before the crucifixion we had been walking along the street outside the upper room, we would have heard above us Jesus and His disciples singing Psalms 113-118. Those who were near the cross heard Him pray psalms in His agony.

And that night when Paul and Silas were in the inner cell of the Philippi prison with their feet fastened in the stocks, the songs the others heard them sing probably were psalms.

The psalms were the language people used to talk to God. They were the stairs on which they stepped up to His throne. They were the incense carrying the people's needs up to the Lord. And so they are the beating heart of the Old Testament. Much of the Old Testament tells us what happened to the people. The psalms tell us what happened in them.

The psalms tell us what man is. Here he opens his heart to pour out his thoughts and feelings. Utterly honest, David and others tell about their sins, unworthiness, bitter shame, anguish, and yearning for God. They tell us what God is—a holy God, crushing the wicked, and yet a God whose fury over sin—as He bends over the blood sprinkled on the atoning cover of the ark—turns to love. This God, Maker of heaven and earth, forgives the sinner and gives him a righteousness that makes him open up like a flower to the sun and reach for fellowship with God, the joy of his life.

Athanasius called the psalms "the mirror of the soul." Here we see our-

selves with the eyes of the psalmist and feel our wrongs with his conscience. With him we find light for our darkness, a cleansing away of every blot, healing for every pain, refreshment when we're weary, hope when we're discouraged, certainty when we're in doubt, and for all our longings a fulfillment in God.

In many psalms we see David, a man after God's own heart. But from them rises another Person, deeper in His being and high as heaven in His majesty, no more like David than a giant is like a baby.

Take Psalm 22. First read it as though it were only David speaking. Was he really forsaken by God, "a worm and no man, scorned by men and despised by people," and completely in the hands of enemies? Were his clothes taken away and divided by lot among his executioners? Was he "laid in the dust of death"? No, it doesn't fit. But now have Christ before your eyes and ask the same questions. Each point fits. And so Psalm 22 concludes:

"Those of a coming age are told about the Lord.

They will come and tell a people still to be born about His righteousness—He has done it!"

the last words giving us the Savior's triumph on the cross (John 19:30).

There are many who fail to see Christ in the psalms. For them they are beautiful lyrics of men living close to God but without the prophetic function of pointing to the coming Savior.

If we don't see Christ in the psalms, our eyes are closed. Jesus said (Luke 24:44-46), "I told you that everything written about Me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must come true." Then He opened their minds to understand the Bible. "This," He told them, "is what is written: The promised Savior will

suffer and rise from the dead on the third day.' " Christ did not project Himself into the Old Testament—He is there! A closed mind can't see Him. An open mind will see Him.

God planned to save us. That plan is centered in Christ. In Him we have God's truth, way, life, and glory. What the psalms say of the Lord of Israel revealing Himself, judging and forgiving His people, saving them, living among them, gathering them, and leading them to Himself comes to us concretely in the Word made flesh, telling the truth from heaven, suffering and dying for our sins, rising, and ascending.

God doesn't want anyone to miss seeing Christ in the psalms, and so He has given us a set of double witnesses, those in the psalms and those in the New Testament, like two parallel sets of spotlights that for every reader light up the person and work of Christ.

This double spotlight is on the Lord's Anointed or Christ

as God's Son	Ps. 2:7,12; Acts 4:25-28; 13:33; Heb. 1:5; 5:5
as Lord	Ps. 110:1; Matt. 22:43-45
as God	Ps. 45:6-7; Heb. 1:8-9
as Prophet	Ps. 22:2; Heb. 2:12
Priest	Ps. 110:4; Heb. 4:14-5:10; 6:20-10:23
and King	Ps. 110:1-3; Heb. 1:1314
To carry out God's plan	
He comes into the world	Ps. 40:6-8; Heb. 10:510
in the Lord's name	Ps. 118:26; Matt. 23:39
as David's Descendant	Ps. 89:3-4,29,36; 132:11; Matt. 1:6-16; Luke 3:24-31; Acts 2:30
to humble Himself and so go to glory	Ps. 8:5; Heb. 2:6-9
to be rejected and become the head	Ps. 118:22; Matt. 21:42-44; Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:7
to be hated without a reason	Ps. 69:4; John 15:25
betrayed	Ps. 41:9; John 13:18
rejected	Ps. 2:1-3; 22:6-8,12-13, 16-17; Matt. 27:21-23, 39,43; Mark 15:29; Luke 23:35; Acts 4:25-27

pierced in hands and feet	Ps. 22:16; Matt. 27:3; John 20:25-27
to have lots thrown for His clothes	Ps. 22:18; Matt. 27:35; John 19:23-24
He cries out	Ps. 22:1; Matt. 27:46
finishes His work and entrusts His spirit to His Father's hands	Ps. 22:31; John 19:30
His body doesn't decay but rises from the dead	Ps. 16:8-11; Acts 2:24-13:35-37
He goes up to heaven	Ps. 68:18; Luke 24:1; Acts 1:9; Eph. 4:8-10
sits at God's right	Ps. 110:1; Matt. 22:45; Acts 2:33-35; Heb. 1:13
where He rules everything	Ps. 8:6-8; 22:27-30; 72:8-11; Matt. 28:18; Heb. 2:7-8
forever	Ps. 45:6; 89:4,29,36-37; Heb. 1:8

The Psalm I Need

(About God)

If I think I can get along without God 127

If I doubt His promises—105

Has He forgotten me—77

I need His love—103

I long for Him—63, 143

I am overwhelmed by His power—66

Astronomy and the Bible—19

God and His enemies—48, 83

God struggling with His people—78

(About the World)

May the world know its God—33, 67

The world is corrupt—14

Crimes—94

Wrong done in my own city—55

Enemies—3, 27, 52, 54, 56, 70

Bad government—82, 101

In war—76, 144

Facing defeat—13, 60

If we would only listen to God—81

Facing a world catastrophe—46, 47, 48

The wicked are successful—49, 73

I envy the wicked—37

Among quarreling people—120, 133

In bad company—26, 50, 141

(About My Being Happy)

I want to be happy—1, 85, 128

I'm suffering for my sin—38

I'm troubled about my sins—25, 130

Forgive my sins—51

When my sins are forgiven—32
The world seems dull—104
In trouble—18, 34, 126
Friends are in trouble—107
I'm not succeeding in business—15, 112
Too ambitious—131
Feeling unimportant—113
Needing to calm down—62
When I leave home—121
Far from home—61
In danger—91
In a storm—29
In prison—142
Having much grief—42, 80
Feeling hunted—35
Needing protection—57, 125
Despised—123
Deserted—31
Alone—139
When others can't help me—146
Feeling defeated—44, 98
Almost despairing—88
Wanting to run away—11
I almost died—30
Life is passing quickly—39, 90
When I'm old—71
I'm afraid—23
(Special Occasions)
Advent: David's other descendants fail—
89
The King above this earth—93
Universal and everlasting—72
Coming to forgive and punish—
99
Coming to judge—96
Welcome the King—24
Christmas
Eve—8
Day—132

New Year's Eve—90
Day—111
Epiphany—2
Palm Sunday: Procession to the temple
—118
We welcome our King—45
Maundy Thursday: song of the exodus—
114
Good Friday—22
Easter—16
Ascension—110
Pentecost—139
Missions—40
Liberty—107
Thanksgiving: To the Creator and
Provider—104
For grain and flocks—65
For food—145
By the world—100, 117,
148
In winter—147
With musical instruments
—147
(With refrain)—136
Church dedication—132
Going to church: To worship the true
God—135
As a flock—95
Like a palm tree—92
Longing for God—42
Wanting light and
truth—43
Praying for pastors—
134
A happy people—84
Living right—15
In the morning—5

We Learn from the Psalms—

A half year of lessons for the Bible class

1. GOD

(Read Psalm 29)

- What does a Psalm call the atheist? 14:1
Give some reasons for atheism. 10:4-6
How many gods are there? 18:31; 86:8-10;
96:4-5
What's wrong with idols? 1. 115:4-8; 2. 97:7
What does the commandment forbid? 81:9
What is God? 1. 90:2,4; 102:24-26a; 2. 102:
26b-27; 3. 145:3; 4. 115:3b; 5. 99:3;
5. 9; 11:7; 6. 7:8-11; 9:4-8; 62:12b; 7.
94:14; 18:30a
Where is God? 1. 139:7-10; 2. 11:4; 3. 68:
16
How does God show His glory? 1. 8:1; 19:
1-6; 29:9b; 2. 145:3-6
What does God need? 50:9-13
What does God know? 7:9b; 33:13-15;
139:1-4,23; 147:5

All praise to God, who rules above,
the God of all creation,
the God of wonders, power, and love,
the God of our salvation!
With healing balm my soul He fills,
The God who every sorrow stills—
to God all praise and glory.

2. THE WORD

(Read Psalm 19)

- Whose word is the Psalm? 45:1
What is God's Word? 1. 119:142, 160; 2.
19:7a; 3. 119:89; 4. 12:6; 119:140
What does God's Word give us? 1. 119:
105,130; 2. 119:50; 3. 119:133; 4. 119:
165
How do we feel about God's Word? 1. 119:
161; 2. 93:5; 119:72; 4. 119:103; 5.
119:97
What should we do with God's Word? 1:2;
119:148
Who teaches us this Word? 71:17
What do we ask God to do in His Word? 1.
119:37; 2. 119:18; 3. 119:36

- What does God teach us? 1. 25:14; 2. 25:
5,8-9,12; 143:10
How may we fail to benefit from God's
Word? 32:9; 92:5-6
How is the Word different from other wis-
dom? 119:98-100

Divine Instructor, gracious Lord,
Come, be forever near.
Teach me to love Your sacred Word
And view my Savior here.

3. GOD MADE THE WORLD

(Read Psalm 148)

- What did God make? 1. 65:6; 74:16-17;
136:4-9; 147:4; 2. 148:(3-5) 6
How did God make the world? 33:6,9
Whom has God also made? 119:73
How did God make you? 139:13-18
Who gives parents children? 127:3-5; 113:9
For whom did God make the earth? 115:16
Is this earth our permanent home? 119:19
Who gives us our food? 145:15-16
How does God produce food? 65:9-13; 104:
10-15,27-28; 147:8-9
What social condition is necessary for us
to get food? 144:13-15; 147:13-14
How many people cut down their food
supply? 107:33-38
What do we owe God for our food? 136:25-
26
Where do we get our strength? 18:1, 32:
84:5-7
- Who made the sky so bright and blue?
Who made the fields so green?
Who made the fields that smell so sweet
In pretty colors seen?
- 'Twas God who made this world so fair,
The sun, the sky, the air.
'Twas God who made the sea, the ground,
And all the things around.

4. SIN

(Read Psalm 53)

- How does sin start? 51:5; 58:3
How many people are sinners? 14:1-3;
143:2
Is a person without sin if he can't think of
any? 19:12
What should we realize in regard to sins
we keep hidden? 94:5-10; 90:8
How is sin pictured in 7:14?
Name some sins. 1. 18:27b; 75:4-5; 2. 37:8;
3. 109:4-5
How does God feel about sin? 11:5-6
Even whom does God punish? 80:8-16; 74:
1-8
In which special way may God punish a
sinner? 1. 7:15-16; 9:15-16; 57:6; 109:
17; 2. 69:27
How does God show He's angry with sin?
1. 27:9; 88:14; 2. 77:9; 3. 74:9; 4. 38:
2-11; 17-18; 5. 80:4-5; 6. 74:1

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Your cross I cling,
Naked, come to You for dress,
Helpless, look to You for grace,
Foul, I to the fountain fly—
Wash me, Savior, or I die!

5. THE WICKED DIE

(Read Psalm 90)

- What makes sin something specially
wicked? 1. 10:2,8,10; 36:4a; 2. 5:10b;
139:20
Why do the wicked continue in sin? 1. 10:
4; 2. 10:11; 3. 10:13; 4. 36:1; 5. 10:6
Describe the success of the wicked. 10:5;
49:11; 73:2-14
Why is the success of the wicked really
not a good thing? 1. 17:14; 2. 50:16;
3. 5:4-5; 4. 66:18; 5. 1:4-6; 37:9-10,
20, 35-36; 73:17-20; 92:7; 6. 49:10; 16:
20
How do the wicked perish? 1. 75:8; 2. 18:
7-8; 12-14; 3. 90:5-7; 4. 119:119; 55:23;
58:7-9; 109:8; 5. 69:28

Lord, I believe were sinners more
Than sands upon the ocean shore,
you have for all a ransom paid,
For all a full atonement made.

6. LIGHT AND LOVE

(Read Psalm 136)

- Where does God's light come from? 80:7;
84:11a
What is darkness in God's sight? 139:12
What does God want to do with His light?
1. 43:3; 18:28; 36:9; 2. 27:1; 3. 89:15
Show that we don't deserve God's love. 8:
3-4; 115:1; 25:6-7
How great is His love? 1. 103:11,13; 108:4;
2. 119:64; 3. 100:5; 103:17; 4. 145:17;
5. 145:9
How does He show His love to us? 1. 1:6;
2. 135:14; 3. 59:10; 4. 119:76; 5. 40:
11; 59:17; 94:18; 6. 84:11; 7. 86:4-5; 90:
14-17
In which way is His love better than
human love? 27:10
How should we feel about His love? 1.
63:3; 2. 89:1-2; 3. 31:23a

Love divine, all love excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down,
Fix in us your humble dwelling,
All Your faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, You are all compassion,
Pure, unbounded love impart,
Visit us with Your salvation,
Enter every trembling heart.

7. GOD CHOOSES PEOPLE

(Read Psalm 114)

- How did Israel get to be God's people?
135:4
What were Israel's special privileges? 1.
147:19-20; 2. 148:14b
Describe the covenant God made. 105:8-11
How did He protect Abraham, Isaac, and
Jacob? 105:12-15
Tell the story of Joseph in Egypt. 105:17-22
How did Jacob's family get to Egypt? 105:
16,23
What turned the Egyptians against Is-
rael? 105:24-25
What did God do with Moses? 1. 103:7;
2. 105:26
Which plagues did God send? 105:27-36;
78:42-51; 135:8-9
What did God accomplish by these mir-
acles? 77:14,15; 81:10; 105:43
What did the people take with them? 105:
37

Describe the crossing of the Red Sea. 66: 6; 77:16-20; 78:13,52-53; 106:8-11; 136:13-15

Describe the traveling through the wilderness. 105:39-41

How did God struggle with His people? 78:14-41; 95:8-11; 106:6-7,13-22

How did Moses and Phinehas rescue the people? 106:23-31

O God of Jacob, by whose hand
Your people still are fed,
You through this weary pilgrimage
have all our fathers led.

Through each perplexing path of life
Our wand'ring footsteps guide;

Give us each day our daily bread
And raiment fit provide.

8. IN THE PROMISED LAND

(Read Psalm 44)

How did God give Canaan to His people? 47:3-4; 135:10-12

How is this pictured in 80:8-11?

Show that Israel didn't get Canaan by its own effort. 44:1-3; 78:54-55; 105:44 (Compare this with your salvation.)

How did Israel treat the Lord in Canaan? 78:56-58; 106:34-39

What did God do with Israel? 78:59-64; 81:11-12; 106:40-43

How could Israel have conquered all her enemies? 81:13-16

What finally happened in 587 B. C.? 79
Tell about the grief of the exiles. 137:1-4

What seemed most dear to them now? 137:5-6

How did God help the exiles? 107:147:2
Tell how happy exiles were to get back to Palestine? 126

Oh come, oh come, Immanuel,
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Immanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

9. GOD'S HOME

(Read Psalm 48)

Why did God choose Zion? 78:68; 87:2-3; 132:13-14

How may the rest of the world feel? 68:16

Is God there in a small space? 99:2
What is Zion? 1. 51:18-19; 2. 2:6; 3. 50:2; 4. 122:1-4; 5. 46:4-5; 76:2-3; 132:16
What does God bring there? 84:1; 102:16
Who will live there? 69:36
What will come from Zion? 1. 135:21; 2. 128:4-6
Whom does God want to help from Zion? 1. 68:5-6; 69:35-36; 2. 50:1-2; 87:4-7
How is the world to be brought there? 43:3
How long should this kingdom continue? 48:11-14; 78:69

The church's one foundation
Is Jesus Christ, her Lord;
She is His new creation
By water and the Word.
From heaven He came and sought her
To be His holy bride;
With His own blood He bought her,
And for her life He died.

10. KING DAVID

(Read Psalm 89)

What is David called? 89:18
How was he made king? 1. 78:67-69; 2. 89:19-20; 78:70-72

How did God protect David? 89:21-23
What did He do for David? 89:24; 18:50
Tell about David's troubles. See headings of 59, 56, 57, 52, 54, 63, 18

What did David vow? 132:1-5
God promised David he would be the ancestor of a line of kings. What was there in this promise that went beyond human kings? 1. 132:11-12; 89:29; 2. 89:25-27

What was David's great sin? See heading of 51.

Describe David's defeat in battle. 60:1-4
How did he suffer from his own family? See heading of 3.

What had God threatened? 89:30-32
What happened to David's line of kings? 89:38-51

What did God mean to do about His covenant? 89:33-37

How did God keep His promise to David? 132:17-18

Hail to the Lord's Anointed,
Great David's greater Son!
Hail, in the time appointed,
His rule on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression,
To set the captive free,
To take away transgression,
And rule in equity.

11. OUR SAVIOR

(Read Psalm 22)

What is the Savior called? 2:2,7
Which persons are there in God according to 2:7; 110:1; 72:1?
Which person is referred to in 139:7-10?
Show how the Psalms distinguish the Savior from other descendants of David? 45:2,6-7; 132:17-18
Where will He come from? 2:6; 14:7; 135:21
Describe His apparent helplessness at His birth. 22:9-10
For what purpose did He come? 1. 40:7-8; 2. 110:4
What did He suffer? 1. 2:1-3; 2. 22:6-8; 3. 22:13-18; 4. 22:1-2,11
Which two periods do we distinguish in the Savior's work for us? 8:5-6; 118:22
What would happen when He died? 1. 16:9-10; 2. 16:11

Oh what a marvelous offering!
See how the Master spares
His servants and their suffering
And grief for them He bears.
God stoops down from His throne on high:
For me, His guilty creature,
He deigns as man to die.

12. OUR SAVIOR'S VICTORY

(Read Psalm 110)

What would Jesus do with His enemies? 2:9; 45:5; 72:9-10; 110:1-2,5-6
What will be the outcome? 45:3-4; 132:17
What two things will He be at the same time? 1. 110:2; 2. 110:4
How will He compare with other kings? 2:10-11; 89:27
What is a mark of those in His army? 110:3
Describe the queen. 45:9-11,13-14

State some characteristics of His kingdom. 1. 72:1-2,4; 2. 72:12-15; 3. 72:3,6-7,16

What are two special divine characteristics of His kingdom? 1. 2:8; 72:8; 89:25; 2. 45:1,6; 89:4,29,35-37

State two characteristics of the worship of this King. 1. 22:27; 72:11,17b; 2. 72:17a; 45:17a

Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
You soldiers of the Cross!

Lift high His royal banner,
It must not suffer loss.

From victory unto victory
His army He will lead
Till every foe is vanquished
And Christ is Lord indeed.

13. GOD FORGIVES SINS

(Read Psalm 32)

What two things does God offer us? 37:22; 85:3-7
Compare His anger with His kindness. 30:5
Why can't man save himself? 49:7-9
Who can rescue us from our sins? 130:7-8
Who can come to God? 50:5
What should we do about our sins? 1. 32:3-6; 2. 38:1-10; 51:3-4; 3. 25:11,18
What do we appeal to when we ask God to forgive us? 78:38; 51:1-2
What does God do with our sins? 65:3; 85:2
In which different ways is it stated that God forgives sins? 1. 32:1b; 2. 32:2; 3. 51:9a; 4. 130:3; 25:7a; 5. 51:2,7; 6. 103:12
What does God give us? 24:5
What effect does the forgiveness of sins have on us? 32:1-2; 51:7-8

Then on Him I throw my burden,
Sink it in the depths below.
Let me know Your gracious pardon,
Wash me, make me white as snow.
Let Your Spirit leave me never,
Make me only Yours forever.

14. GOD GIVES US RIGHTEOUSNESS

(Read Psalm 24)

How is God different from us sinners? 1. 99:9; 51:11; 2. 11:7; 36:6; 145:17

What has He made holy? 1. 20:6; 47:8;
2. 2:6; 24:3; 46:4; 65:4; 87:1; 3. 105:42
What does Psalm 48:10b suggest?
What makes sinners fit to serve Him? 132:
9
Where do we get righteousness? 4:1; 24:
5; 69:27; 103:17
How does God give me righteousness? 1.
103:17-18; 2. 119:123; 3. 4:5; 51:19
What does God do by giving us righteous-
ness? 1. 119:40; 2. 71:2; 143:11
Who gets all the credit for our being
saved? 51:14
Who is to be told about this righteous-
ness? 22:31
How can we continue righteous? 5:8; 23:3

Jesus. Your blood and righteousness
My beauty are. my glorious dress.
Midst flaming worlds in these arrayed
With joy will I lift up my head.

15. THE RIGHTEOUS

(Read Psalm 15)

How can we keep pure? 1. 119:9; 2. 101:3
How precious are God's commandments?
1. 119:47-48,54; 2. 119:127
What is a picture of the righteous? 1:3; 52:
8; 92:12-14
What advantage is there in being right-
eous? 1. 19:13-14; 2. 58:11; 3. 119:5-
6; 4. 40:9-10; 112:4
Describe bad company. 1:1
State two different attitudes toward bad
company. 1. 50:18; 2. 26:4-5,9-10; 101:
4-5,7; 119:115
How may the people we are with be a
grief to us? 1. 120:6-7; 2. 142:4
Whom should we choose as friends? 101:
6; 119:63
What is the value of good friends? 1. 41:
1a; 2. 133; 3. 141:5
With whom are the righteous? 24:3-4
How good is it to be with God? 84:10
Give some pictures of our longing for God.
1. 42:1-4; 63:1; 143:6; 2. 84:1-4
Where will we be perfectly righteous?
17:15

Let us ever walk with Jesus,
Follow His example pure,
Flee the world, which would deceive us
And to sin our souls allure.

Always in His footsteps treading,
Body here, yet soul above.
Full of faith and hope and love.
Let us do the Father's bidding.
Faithful Lord, abide with me;
Savior, lead, I follow Thee.

16. DEATH

(Read Psalm 39)

What is the fate of all people? 89:48
In which different ways is death pic-
tured? 1. 90:5a; 2. 90:5b-6; 103:15-16;
3. 18:4-5
What happens when we die? 90:3; 104:29;
49:12-14
What is stopped in death? 1. 146:4; 2. 30:
9; 88:10-12
What are we? 1. 103:14; 2. 144:3-4; 3. 39:
4,12
What happens to the best we have? 1.
39:6; 2. 39:11; 119:96
What makes death a tragedy for most peo-
ple? 17:14
What is a normal attitude toward death?
Why? 55:4-5; 88:3-7,14-18
What do we hope for even while we know
we'll die? 49:9

In the midst of earthly life
Snares of death surround us.
Who will help us in the strife
With the foes around us?
You only, Lord. You only!
We mourn that we have greatly erred.
That our sins Your wrath have stirred.
Holy and righteous God! Holy and mighty
God!
Holy and all-merciful Savior! Eternal
Lord God!
Save us or we perish in the bitter pang
of death.
Have mercy, O Lord!

17. LIFE

(Read Psalm 33)

Whom does God save? 119:94
How does God save us? 1. 33:16-19; 2. 25:
5; 27:1; 3. 34:22; 4. 24:5; 119:123
Name some things from which God saves
us. 1. 18:16-19; 2. 146:5-9; 3. 34:18-19
What assurance do we have that God's
people don't perish? 1. 51:10; 2. 49:
14-15; 103:4; 3. 36:9; 21:4; 133:3

Why does God give us a new life? 1. 119:88; 116:15; 2. 119:40
What happened to the Savior? 16:10-11
What will happen to us? 1. 17:15; 2. 73:24; 3. 30:12; 61:8; 115:18; 145:1

Christ, the Life of all the living.
Christ, the Death of death, our foe.
Who, Thyself for me once giving
To the darkest depths of woe—
Through Thy sufferings, death, and merit
I eternal life inherit.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.

18. TRUST

(Read Psalm 46)

What is the reason for human misery? 42:5
In what should we not trust? 1. 31:6; 2. 62:9; 118:8-9; 146:3-4; 3. 20:7-8; 147:10-11; 4. 62:10b
Why can we trust God? 1. 90:1-2; 2. 46:7; 84:12; 3. 31:5; 4. 32:10
What does it mean to trust the Lord? 1. 31:14; 2. 18:30a; 33:4; 3. 27:8; 4. 55:22; 10:14; 5. 37:4-6; 6. 18:30b; 62:8; 52:8; 119:114
When should such trust start? 71:5-6
How should we trust God? 26:1
For what can we trust Him? 1. 23:4; 31:20; 2. 9:10; 25:3; 3. 25:5; 31:2; 4. 9:9; 28:7; 57:1; 59:16
What does such trust give us? 1. 33:21; 40:4; 84:12; 2. 31:24; 46:2-3; 56:3,11

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus,
Trusting only Thee;
Trusting Thee for full salvation,
Great and free.

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus;
Never let me fall.
I am trusting Thee forever
And for all.

19. OUR KING AND SHEPHERD

(Read Psalm 24)

How much does God own? 24:1; 89:11-12; 95:4-6
Over what does God rule? 22:28; 59:13; 93:3-4; 103:19,22; 113:4-5

How long does God rule as King? 93:2; 29:10

Describe a bad earthly king. 94:20-21

What are bad judges? 82:2

What are good judges? 82:3-4

Describe a good king. 101

Whose gift is liberty? 111:9

How does God overrule nations? 33:10-11; 46:8-10

Who serves Him? 1. 119:91; 2. 123:1-2

How does God control the earth? 135:6-7; 147:16-18

How does God rule over me? 138:8

What kind of King is He? 24:7-10

In which prayer do we pray the thoughts of Ps. 145:11-13?

God is a Shepherd; who are His sheep? 80:1; 95:7; 100:3

What does our shepherd do for us? 28:9

Describe the happiness of His flock. 23

God the Almighty, the great Creator,
Ruler of sky and land and sea,
All things ordained, and sooner or later
They come to pass unfaillingly.
His rule is over rich and poor,
His promise stands forever sure.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

20. GOD AND MY ENEMIES

(Read Psalm 35)

In which ways can enemies make us suffer? 1. 25:19; 69:4; 2. 55:21; 62:4b; 3. 41:9; 55:12-14,20; 4. 41:5,7-8; 52:2; 64:3-4; 140:3; 5. 41:6; 12:1-2; 6. 38:20; 109:4; 7. 36:11; 8. 35:7,17; 37:32; 38:12; 62:3; 9. 42:9-10; 71:10-11; 83:1-4
What special reasons may there be to fear these enemies? 1. 49:5-6; 2. 35:10; 142:6
What is the faith of the psalmist? 1. 17:8-12; 2. 31:14-15; 57:4; 3. 56:9; 35:1-3; 4. 56:4; 27:1-3; 5. 59:10
What will God do with these enemies? 1. 37:14-15; 57:6; 2. 35:5-6; 3. 37:1-2, 12-13; 129:6-7; 83:9-10

Soldiers of Christ, arise
And put your armor on,
Strong in the strength that God supplies
Through His eternal Son;

Strong in the Lord of hosts
And in His mighty power.
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
Is more than conqueror.

21. GOD'S VICTORY

(Read Psalm 20)

From whom comes a defeat? 44:9-26
From whom comes victory? 149:4
How can we win a victory? 81:13-16
Can we win by our own strength? 20:
7: 44:6-7; 108:12-13
Why does God help us? 44:3
From where does He fight? 20:2-6
Why can He help? 68:17; 89:8-13; 121:1-2
What courage have we with Him? 18:29
Whom does He want to help especially?
12:5; 107:41; 113:7-8
How does He help us win a victory? 1:
18:34; 144:1; 2: 18:37-42
Describe His victory over enemies. 48:4-7;
60:12; 76: 118:10-16

Stand up, stand up for Jesus!
Stand in His strength alone.
The arm of flesh will fail you.
You dare not trust your own.
Put on the Gospel armor.
Each piece put on with prayer;
Where duty calls or danger,
Be never wanting there.

22. GOD PROTECTS US

(Read Psalm 91)

Here are pictures of God's protection;
what do they mean? 1. 121:3-4; 2. 17:
8a; 3. 18:33; 4. 84:3; 5. 63:8; 138:6-7;
6. 121:5-6; 7. 17:8b-9; 36:7; 8. 84:9;
9. 48:3; 94:22; 10. 61:3; 11. 125:1-2;
12. 71:3; 10:1; 91:9
How thorough is His protection? 1. 121:7;
2. 121:8
What do we feel who are protected? 1. 5:
11-12; 2. 145:20; 3. 3:5-8
Who is around the Lord's throne? 99:1;
80:1
How are they different from us? 89:6-7
Describe these angels. 103:20; 104:4
What do they do? 1. 103:21; 2. 35:5-6; 3.
34:7; 91:11-13

Some wait around Him, ready still
To sing His praise and do His will;
And some, when He commands them, go
To guard His servants here below.

23. GOD MAKES US HAPPY

(Read Psalm 112)

What is the source of our well-being? 1
2: 29:11; 36:8
Why are we happy in God? 1. 33:12; 10
5: 2. 149:2b; 3. 37:25,28; 4. 40:16; 14
5: 5. 37:24; 6. 4:8; 5:11-12; 34:8; 7. 4
5: 8. 37:4; 63:5; 9. 128:2; 10. 51:12,1
11. 18:20,24-26; 12. 1:2-3
How is our happiness pictured in Ps. 23:5?
What should we do to stay happy?
128:1; 34:12-14; 37:37; 2. 85:8b; 3. 65:

Savior, since of Zion's city
I through grace a member am,
Let the world deride or pity,
I will glory in Your name.
Fading is the worldling's pleasure,
All his boasted pomp and show;
Solid joys and lasting treasure
None but Zion's children know.

24. GOD ANSWERS PRAYER

(Read Psalm 34)

Who may come to God? 65:2
How should we pray? 1. 66:18; 2. 145:1
3. 22:4-5
What could keep us from trusting He w
hear us? 31:22
Why does God hear us? 1. 4:3; 17:6
2. 50:15
From where does God hear us? 1. 18:6.
57:2-3; 2. 3:4; 3. 145:18
What can we get by prayer? 1. 34
2. 34:10; 3. 138:3
How do we feel about His answering o
prayer? 116:1-2

What a Friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer!
Oh what peace we often forfeit,
Oh what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer!

25. WORSHIP THE LORD

(Read Psalm 100)

- Why do we worship God? 1. 100:1-3a;
2. 5:7; 100:4-5; 145:10; 3. 100:3b
- For what do we worship Him? 1. 9:1-2;
52:9; 92:1-4; 103:2; 2. 103:3a; 3.
103:3b; 4. 103:4; 5. 103:5
- What can we say of the place where we
worship God? 1. 93:5; 118:19-20;
2. 27:4
- What does God want from us in our wor-
ship? 51:16-17; 103:1
- What are our incense and sacrifice?
141:2; 50:14,23
- How should we feel about worship? 122:1;
34:1-3
- What may we use in our worship? 43:4;
150
- What are good times for personal wor-
ship? 1. 5:3; 2. 4:8
- Who should worship the Lord? 1. 66:1-4;
68:31-32; 86:9; 96:9; 117:1; 2. 8:2
- Whom should we teach? 1. 49:1-3; 96:3. 7;
145:11-12; 2. 78:1-8
- What should be our purpose? 51:13
-

God of mercy. God of grace.
Show the brightness of Your face;
Shine upon us. Savior, shine.
Fill Your church with light divine.
And Your saving health extend
To the earth's remotest end.

26. GOD TRAINS ME

(Read Psalm 1)

- Name some trouble. 1. 6:2-3, 6-7; 2. 41:3;
88: heading, 3-7, 14-18; 3. 71:9, 18
- What assurance do we have in trouble?
1. 10:14; 56:8; 2. 9:10; 3. 10:17-18;
4. 30:5, 11; 126
- What is God's purpose in sending us
trouble? 39:10-11; 66:10-12; 119:67,
71, 75
- What are the qualities of a fine person?
1. 101:3; 2. 97:10a; 3. 39:1; 50:19-22;
119:29; 141:3-4; 4. 131:1; 37:16; 5. 7:4;
35:12-14; 109:4-5; 6. 37:21, 26; 7. 112:
7-8; 118:6
-
- Should Thy mercy send me
Sorrow, toil, and woe.
Or should pain attend me
On my path below.
Grant that I may never
Fail Thy hand to see;
Grant that I may ever
Cast my care on Thee.

AN EXTRA LESSON

In another lesson read the introduction
to these Psalms, look up the references in
the Psalms and the New Testament and
see how both picture the Savior.

What the fathers most desired,
What the prophets' heart inspired,
What they longed for many a year
Stands fulfilled in glory here.

INDEX TO MAPS

- | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;">A</p> <p>Abel-beth-maachah B4-2,3</p> <p>Abilene A5-4</p> <p>Accho A3-1; C3-2,3,4</p> <p>Achzib B3-2</p> <p>Acra B3-9</p> <p>Actium B3-8</p> <p>Adam D4-2</p> <p>Adoraim E2-3</p> <p>Adramyttium B4-8</p> <p>Adria, Sea A2-8</p> <p>Afula B3-9</p> <p>Agrigentum B1-8</p> <p>Ai E3-2</p> <p>Akrabbim, Ascent of G3-2</p> <p>Alexandria B6-8</p> <p>Alush C2-1</p> <p>Amathus D4-5</p> <p>Amman E3-9</p> <p>Ammon B4-1; D5-2,3; E5-4</p> <p>Amorites B4-1</p> <p>Amphipolis A3-8</p> <p>Ancyra B5-8</p> <p>Antioch (in Phrygia) B5-8</p> <p>Antioch (in Syria) B6-8</p> <p>Antiochus B6-8</p> <p>Antipatris D2-4</p> <p>Aphek A3-1; D2-2</p> <p>Appian Way A2-8</p> <p>Appollonia D2-4; B3-8</p> <p>Appii Forum A1-8</p> <p>Aqaba E3-9</p> <p>Ar F4-2,3</p> <p>Arabah B3-1</p> <p>Arabia D6-8</p> <p>Aram B4-3</p> <p>Araunah A3-7</p> <p>Archelais E3-4</p> <p>Argob C5-2</p> <p>Armenia B6-8</p> <p>Ascalon E2-4</p> <p>Ashdod B3-1; E2-2,3,4</p> <p>Ashkelon, Ashqelon or Ascalon B3-1; E1-2,3; C2-9</p> <p>Ashtaroth A4-1; C5-3</p> <p>Athens B3-8</p> <p>Attalia B5-8</p> <p>Auranitis C5-4</p> <p>Azekah E2-3</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">B</p> <p>Baal-zephon B2-1</p> <p>Bashan A4-1; B4-2; C5-3,4</p> <p>Beer-sheba B3-1; F2-2; C2-9</p> <p>Beneventum A1-8</p> <p>Berea B3-8</p> <p>Beth-nimrah E4-2</p> <p>Beth-shan A3-1; D3-2; D4-4</p> <p>Bethabara F4-5</p> <p>Bethany E3-4; F3-5</p> <p>Bethany Beyond Jordan F4-5</p> <p>Bethel E3-2,3,4,5</p> <p>Bethlehem E3-2,3,4; F3-5; C3-9</p> <p>Bethsaida (Julias) C4-4; A2, D2, B4-5</p> <p>Bezetha C3-6</p> <p>Bithynia A5-8</p> <p>Black Sea A5-8</p> <p>Bosporus A4-8</p> <p>Brundisium A2-8</p> <p>Byzantium A4-8</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">C</p> <p>Cabul C3-3</p> <p>Cadasa B3-4</p> <p>Caesarea D2-4; C6-8</p> <p>Caesarea Philippi B4-4; A4-5</p> <p>Callirhoe E4-4</p> <p>Cana C3-4; A1, E1-5</p> <p>Canaan A3-1</p> <p>Capernaum C4-4; A2, D2, B4-5</p> <p>Capitolias C4-4</p> <p>Cappadocia B6-8</p> <p>Caria B4-8</p> <p>Carmel F3-2,4</p> <p>Carmel, Mt. C3-2,3</p> <p>Cherethites F1-2</p> <p>Chinnereth C4-2; C3-3</p> <p>Chios B4-8</p> <p>Chorazin D2-5</p> <p>Cilicia B5-8</p> <p>Clauda C3-8</p> <p>Cnidus B4-8</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">D</p> <p>Dalmanutha B4-5</p> <p>Dalmatia A2-8</p> <p>Damascus A4-1; A5-2,3; B5-4</p> <p>Dan A3-1; B4-2,3,4; E2-2</p> <p>David, City of E3-7</p> <p>Dead Sea F3-2,3,4; F4-5; C3-9</p> <p>Debir F2-2,3</p> <p>Decapolis D4-4; B2, F2, C4-5</p> <p>Derbe B5-8</p> <p>Dibon E4-2,3; F4-4</p> <p>Dion C5-4</p> <p>Dophkah C2-1</p> <p>Dor A3-1; C2-2,3</p> <p>Dora C2-4</p> <p>Dyrrachium A2-8</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <p>Edom B3-1; G3-2,3</p> <p>Edrei A4-1; C5-2,3,4</p> <p>Egnatian Way A2-8</p> <p>Egypt C1-1; C4-8</p> <p>Ekron E2-2,3,4</p> <p>El Arish C1-9</p> <p>El Keroak C3-9</p> <p>El Quneitra A3-9</p> <p>Es Salt B3-9</p> <p>Elath C3-1; E2-9</p> <p>Elim C2-1</p> <p>Emmaus (Nicompolis) E2-4</p> <p>En-gannim D3-4</p> <p>En-gedi F3-3,4</p> <p>En-hazor B3-2</p> <p>Ephesus B4-8</p> <p>Ephraim E3-2,5</p> <p>Epirus B2-8</p> <p>Esdraelon, Plain of C3-5</p> <p>Etham B2-1</p> <p>Etham, Wilderness of C2-1</p> <p>Ezion-geber C3-1</p> |
| | | | <p style="text-align: center;">Colossae B4-8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Coos B4-8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Corinth B3-8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Crete C4-8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Cyprus B5-8</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Cythera B3-8</p> | |

INDEX TO MAPS

F-G	I	Lebanon
Fair Havens C4-8	Iconium B5-8	Lebanon, Mt. A4-2,3,4
Gadara C4-4; B2, F2-5	Idumaea F3-4; C6-8	Lesbos B4-8
Galatia B5-8	Ijon B4-3	Libya D4-8
Galilee C3-4; B1, E1, B3-5; C6-8; B3-9	Ilion B4-8	Lod E2-2,3
Gamala C4-4	Illyricum A2-8	Lycia B4-8
Gaudos B1-8	Ionian Sea B2-8	Lycopolis D1-1
Gaulanitis C4-4	Irbid B3-9	Lydda E2-4; C6-8
Gaza B3-1; F1-2,4; E1-3; C2-9	Israel D3-3; C2-9	Lystra B5-8
Gazara E2-4	Italy A2-8	
Gerasa D4-4	Iturea B5-4	M
Gergesa C4-4; A2, E2, B4-5		Ma'an D3-9
Gethsemane C4-6	J	Macedonia B3-8
Geshur C4-2,3	Jabbok River D4-2,3	Machaerus E4-4
Gerar F2-2,3,4	Jabesh-gilead D4-2,3	Madeba C3-9
Gezer E2-3	Jacob's Well D3-4,5	Madon A3-1
Gilead A3-1; D4-2,3,4	Jaffa B2-9	Magdala C4-4; A2, E2, B4-5
Gilgal E3-3	Jahaz E4-2	Magnesia B4-8
Ginaea D3-5	Jazer E4-2	Malta B1-8
Gischala B3-4,5	Jericho B3-1; E3-2,3,4, F3-5; C3-9	Marah C2-1
Golan C4-2	Jerusalem B3-1; E3-2, 3,4; 6; 7; C3-9	Marisa E2-4
Goshen B1-1	Jezreel C3-3	Marmarica C4-8
Greece B3-8	Joppa B3-1; D2-2,3,4, C6-8	Masada F3-4
H	Jordan D3-9	Meah, Tower C3-7
Hadera B2-9	Jordan, River A3-1; D4-2; D4-3,4; C2, F2, D4-5	Medeba E4-2,3
Haifa B2-9	Jotapata C3-4	Megiddo A3-1; C3-2,3
Hammath C3-2,3	Judaea E3-4; F3-5; C6-8	Melos B3-8
Hananeel, Tower C3-7	Judah F3-3	Memphis C1-1; D5-8
Hattin, Horns of E1-5	Julius E4-4	Messana B1-8
Havoth-jair C4-2,3		Midian, Land of C3-1
Hazereth C3-1	K	Miletus B4-8
Hazor B4-2; B3-3	Kadesh-barnea B3-1	Mishneh C3-7
Hebron B3-1; F3-2; E3-3, 4; C3-9	Kenites F3-2	Misrephoth-maim A3-1; B3-2
Heliopolis C6-8	Kibroth-hattaavah C3-1	Mizpah (in Benjamin) E3-3
Helipolis B1-1	Kidron, Valley D4-6,7	Mizpeh (in Gilead) D4-2
Heraclea A3-8	Kir-hareseth F4-4	Mizraim C2-1
Hermon B4-2,3,4	Kir-moab B3-1; F4-2,3	Moab B3-1; F4-2,3
Herodium E3-4	Kiriathaim E4-2	Moabitis F4-4
Heshbon B3-1; E4-2,3	Kishon River C3-2,3,5	Myra B5-8
Hinnom, Valley E3-6,7		Mysia B4-8
Hippos C4-4; B2, C4-5	L	
Hittite Empire A4-1	Laish B4-2	N
Hor, Mt. (Jebel Harun) B3-1	Laodicea B5-8	Naarath E3-2
Horeb, Mt. (Mt. Sinai) C2-1	Larisa B3-8	Nabataea E5-4; C6-8
		Nablus B3-9
		Nain C3-4, F1, C3-5
		Naqb Ashtar D3-9

INDEX TO MAPS

Natanya B2-9
 Nazareth . . . C3-4, B1, E1,
 C3-5
 Neapolis A3-8
 Nebo, Mt. E4-2
 Negev D2-9
 Nicaea B5-8
 Nicomedia A5-8
 Nicopolis (in Palestine)
 E2-4
 Nicopolis (in Achaia) B2-8

O

Oea (Tripoli) C1-8
 Og, Kingdom of A4-1
 Ophel D3-7
 On B1-1
 Ortona A1-8

P

Palestine C6-8
 Pamphylia B5-8
 Panias B4-4
 Paphos C5-8
 Paran, Wilderness of C3-1
 Patara B4-8
 Pella D4-2,4; C2, D3-5
 Pelusium B2-1; C5-8
 Penuel D4-3
 Peraea D4-4; E4-5
 Perga B5-8
 Petah Tiqua B2-9
 Petra D3-9
 Phasaelis D3-4
 Philadelphia E4-4; B4-8
 Philippi A3-8
 Philistia E2-3
 Philistines E2-2
 Philoteria C4-4
 Phoenicia . . . B3-3,4; A3-5;
 C6-8
 Phoenix C3-8
 Phrygia B5-8
 Pithom B1-1
 Polemon, Kingdom of
 A6-8
 Pontus A6-8
 Propontis A4-8
 Prynnessus B5-8
 Ptolemais C3-4; C6-8

Punon B3-1
 Puteoli A1-8
 Pydna B3-8

Q-R

Qumrân, Khirbet E3-4
 Rabbath-ammon B4-1;
 E4-2,3
 Ramallah C3-9
 Ramat Gan B2-9
 Ramoth-gilead C5-2,3
 Raphana C5-4
 Raphia F1-2; F1-3;
 F1-4; C6-8
 Red Sea D3-1
 Rehoboth G2-2
 Rehovot C2-9
 Rephidim C2-1
 Rhegium B2-8
 Rhodes B4-8
 Rome A1-8

S

Salamis (Cyprus) C6-8
 Salmone, Cape C4-8
 Salt, Valley of F3-3
 Samaria D3-3,4; C1, D3-5;
 C6-8
 Samos B4-8
 Samothrace A4-8
 Sardis B4-8
 Saudi Arabia E3-9
 Sarepta B3-4
 Scodra A2-8
 Scythopolis F1, C2-5
 Sebaste D3-4,5
 Sedom C3-9
 Seleucia (in Gaulanitis)
 C4-4
 Seleucia (in Syria) B6-8
 Selucia (in Cilicia) B5-8
 Selinus B5-8
 Semechonitis, Lake B4-4,5
 Sepphoris . . . C3-4; B1, E1,
 C3-5
 Sharon, Plain of D2-2,
 3,4
 Shechem D3-3
 Shiloh D3-2,3
 Shunem C3-3
 Shur, Wilderness of B2-1

Sidon A3-1,2,3,4; C6-8
 Sin (Pelusium) B2-1
 Sinai, Mt. (Mt. Horeb) C2-1
 Sinai Peninsula E1-9
 Smyrna B4-8
 Socoh (in Judah) E3-3
 Sparta B3-8
 Succoth (in Egypt) B2-1
 Succoth (in Gad) D4-2
 Sychar D3-4,5
 Syracuse B1-8
 Syria B3-4; C6-8; A4-9
 Syrians B4-3

T

Taanach C3-3
 Taberah C3-1
 Tabigha A2, D2-5
 Tabor, Mt. E1, C4-5
 Tappuah D3-2
 Tarentum B2-8
 Tarsus B6-8
 Tel Aviv B2-9
 Thessalonica A3-8
 Thasos B3-8
 Thrace A4-8
 Three Taverns A1-8
 Tiberias C4-4; B2, E2,
 C4-5; B3-9
 Tirzah D3-3
 Tishbe D4-3
 Trachonitis B5-4
 Tripoli C1-8
 Troas B4-8
 Tulkarm B3-9
 Tyre A3-1; B3-2,3,4;
 A3-5; C6-8
 Tyrrhenian Sea (Etruscan)
 B1-8

U-X-Z

Ulatha B4-4
 Xanthus B4-8
 Zaphon D4-2
 Zarephath B3-2,3
 Zered, Brook G4-2,3,4
 Zin, Wilderness of
 B3-1; G2-2
 Ziph F3-2,3,4
 Zoar B3-1
 Zorah E2-2

1

2

3

4

5

KINGDOMS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

MAP 3

c. 925-842 B.C.

Scale 0 5 10 20 30
miles

A

B

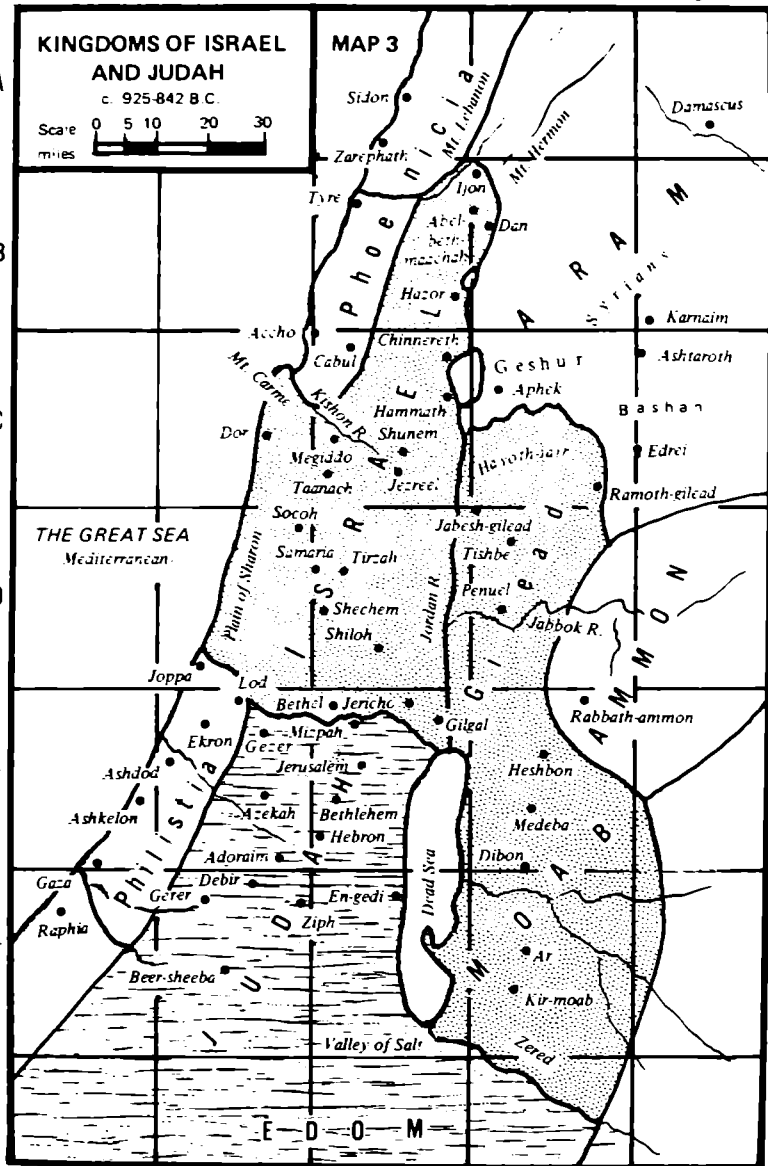
C

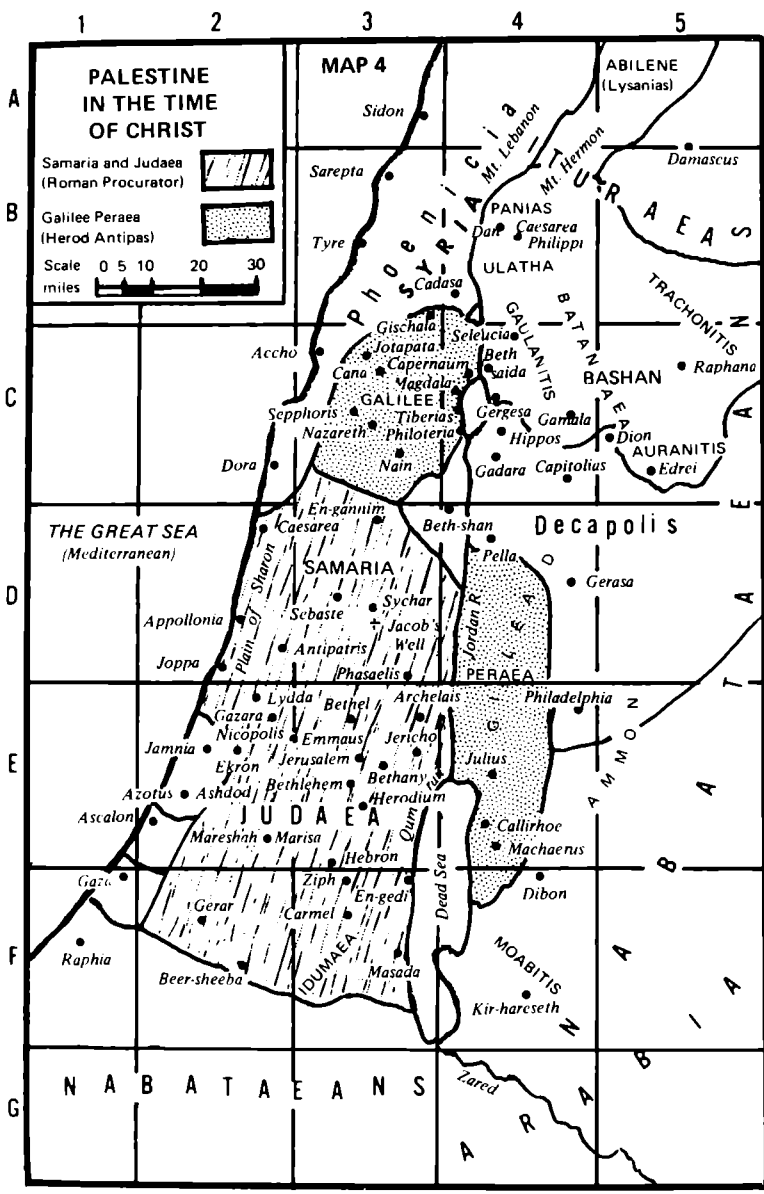
D

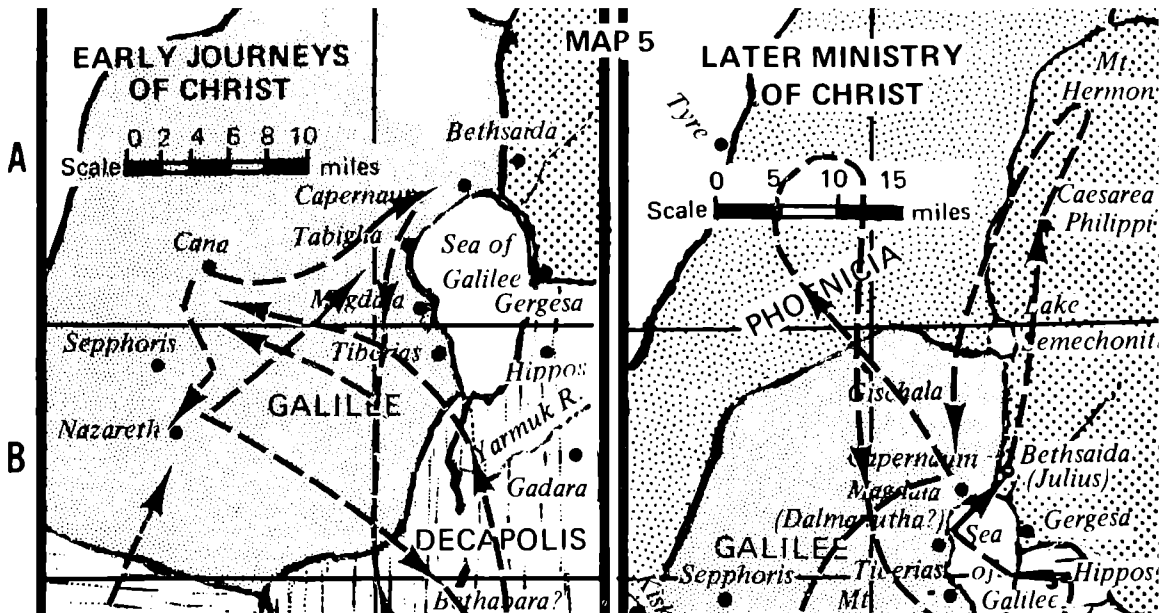
E

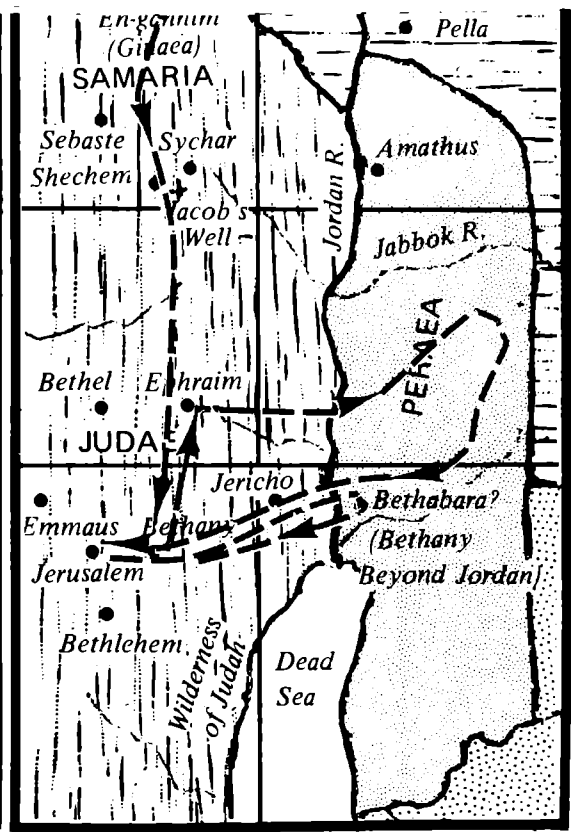
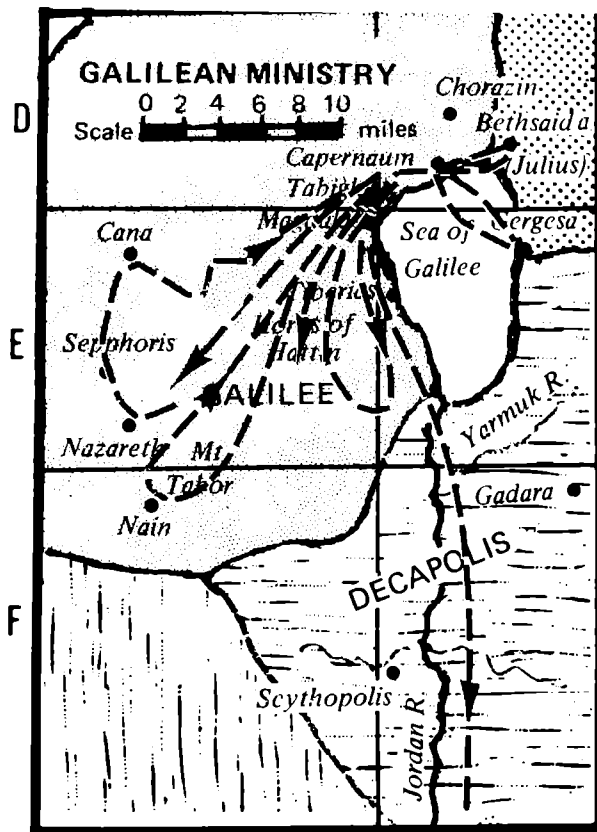
F

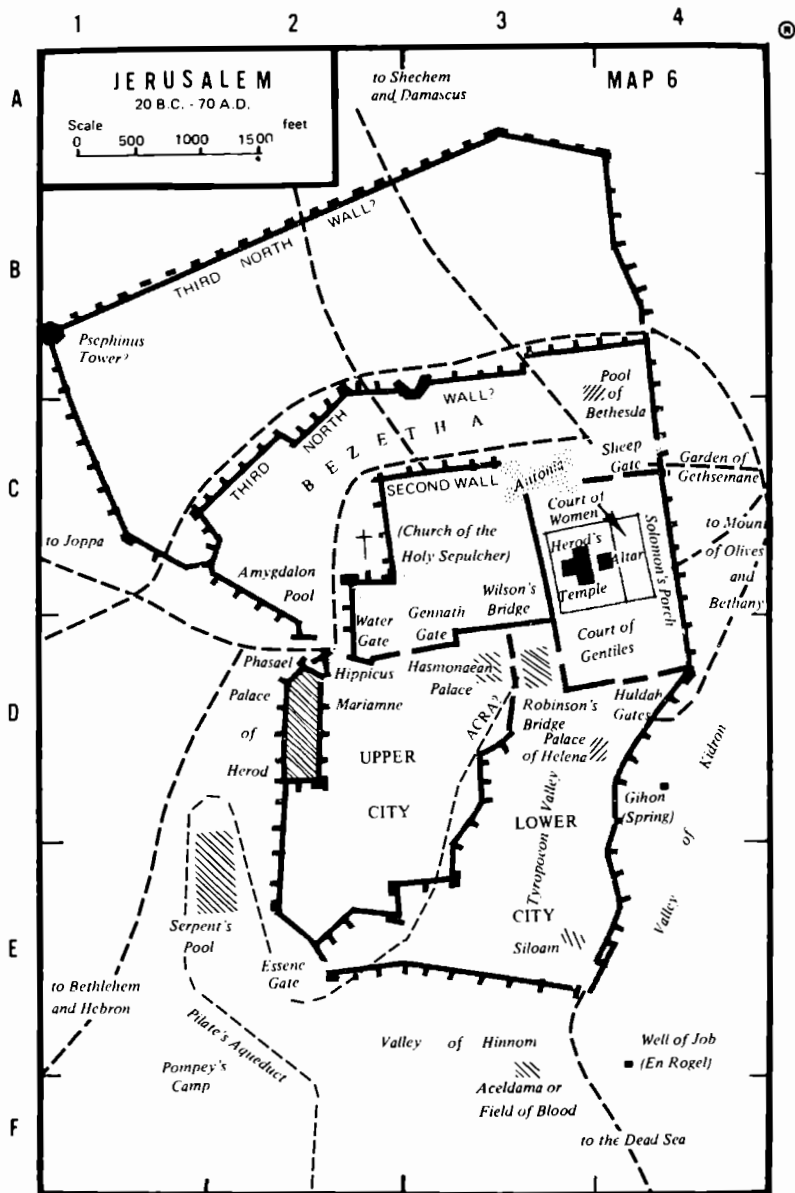
G











1

2

3

4

A

JERUSALEM UNDER NEHEMIAH

c. 445 B.C.

Scale 0 500 1000 1500 feet

Probable extent of Solomon's City

New Quarter added under succeeding kings

One theory excludes western expansion beyond the dashed line

MAP 7

■ Threshing Floor of Araunah
(c. 1000 B.C.)

B

C

D

E

F

